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TSF BULLETIN
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Letters to the Editor

May 1, 1984

Dear Editors,

Browsing through my copy of the most recent *TSF Bulletin* (7/5, May/June, 1984), I was startled to discover your editorial modification of my review of Alan Culpepper's *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*. Whereas I had written, "One might hope that Culpepper's future work would explore further the challenge that reading of John poses to historical-critical orthodoxy," the printed review reads as follows: "One might hope that Culpepper's future work would not explore further the challenge that his reading of John poses to historical-critical orthodoxy." Indeed, I suppose that someone might well cherish the latter hope, but I certainly would not. Nor would I have thought that the editors of *TSF Bulletin* would harbor closet concern for the defense of "historical-critical orthodoxy"; consequently, I assume that some unclean spirit of criticism has tampered with your word processor. I hope that you will apprise your readers of this mischance.

Note also that the quotation from Culpepper in the final paragraph of the review should read, "the gospels, in which Jesus *is* a literary character . . . "

Grace and peace,
Richard B. Hays

March, 1984

Dear Editor,

The report in the March-April *TSF Bulletin* on the "Evangelical Study Group" at the AAR offered an interpretation of that meeting that surprised and disappointed me. I want to offer a differing assessment in two areas. First, the one line about a "hearty exchange among the panelists and a few from the 70 or so in attendance" failed to suggest why it was so "hearty." A major debate ensued over the recent forced resignation of New Testament scholar, Ramsey Michaels, at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and similar actions against Robert Gundry by the Evangelical Theological Society. Panelist Royce Gruenler, a professor at Gordon-Conwell, justified the dismissal on grounds that Michaels had failed to circulate his ideas adequately before publishing them. Within the "evangelical" seminary family, Gruenler explained, they could not tolerate "surprises." David Scholer, the academic dean at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary and a former colleague of Michaels, countered that Michaels' position maintained an orthodox christology and that his views had been, in fact, widely known throughout the twenty-five years Michaels taught at Gordon. Though the board of Trustees and the Faculty Senate recognized publicly that Michaels had affirmed biblical "inerrancy" in good faith, their failure to spell out beforehand precisely what hermeneutical approaches and historical results are precluded by it was and continues to be a serious ethical flaw to many AAR participants. I reasserted (cf. *USQR* 3/23 (1977) 81-94) my charge which I deny. At least Michaels had a trial!

Moreover, the reporter portrays my "homelessness" as the product of unresolved, perhaps directionless, tension in my being "in some ways Pentecostal, in some Evangelical, in some liberal." However, Dayton and I both claimed that precisely such a ghettoizing use of "labels" is completely misleading from a historical and theological perspective. In my view, I could be neither a "fundamentalist" nor a "liberal" because I am not a "modernist." I also tried to describe myself in more positive terms as one seeking to be "ecumenical" in a divided church. At the same time, I must admit that "this world is not my home, I'm just a passin' through." Being "homeless" means that I am simply not comfortable living in a ghetto, even a white, affluent evangelical one during the "Year of the (Christian?) Bible." Instead, I hope in God's grace to act in conformity with a liberating Gospel and seek to articulate a post-modern, non-racist Christian confession that can never claim to do more in words alone than erect "a fence around a mystery" (Augustine's description of church creeds). In sum, I am "homeless" *not* in my Christian faith, only in my affiliation with diverse institutions, which at its best, and to the degree God has given me wisdom, testifies to my vision of God's working at the same time in groups that have often sought through prejudice to ignore, condemn, and belittle each other. I do not want to support this prejudice, for I believe the mystery of the Kingdom is that it sprouts in places where we refused to sow and where through a poverty of imagination we either least expected it or hoped that it could not grow.

Gerald T. Sheppard
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May 4, 1984

Dear Editor,

In the May-June 1984 issue of the *TSF Bulletin*, in a sympathetic treatment of my book *The Ecumenical Moment*, your reviewer, no doubt under pressure of space, makes a statement which in its brevity could be misleading. He writes: "[Wainwright], with Wesley, openly welcomes non-Christians to share in eucharistic fellowship."

Wesley's remarks, in the sermon on *The Meaning of Grace*, about the Lord's Supper as a "converting ordinance" occur as part of his opposition to the quietistic teaching of the Moravians that those seeking full assurance of faith should abstain from prayer, Bible reading, and the Lord's Supper. In 18th-century England, Wesley could count on such persons as already having been baptized, and, unlike the Moravians, he allowed for "degrees of faith." It was, therefore, far from a case of admitting unbaptized unbelievers to the holy communion. Early Methodism was in fact quite strict in its discipline of admission to the Lord's table.

In my own case, the implicitly offending sentence seems to have been: "No one should be refused communion who has been moved by the celebration [of the Lord's Supper] then in progress to seek saving fellowship with the Lord through eating the sacramental bread and drinking the sacramental wine. Then such a person should be brought to the sealing commitment of baptism as expeditiously as possible" 9p.141). A footnote refers to the place in my *Eucharist and Eschatology*, pp.128-135, where I gave the grounds for this view and expressed it in a more nuanced way. In conversation, this view has been shared by several individual Eastern Orthodox theologians, who appreciate that it may call for a charismatic act of discernment on the part of the pastor. This support is the more interesting when one considers that the Orthodox Churches practice a very strict discipline of communion.

Yours,
Geoffrey Wainwright

Ed. Note: The specific mention of Wesley in the review in question is the responsibility of the editors.

MISSION

Linking The Gospel and the Human Predicament: *An Interview with Emilio Castro*

Emilio Castro, an Uruguayan Methodist pastor, recently completed eleven years with the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches. As Director of CWME he organized the Melbourne meeting (1980) which produced the much acclaimed statement, "Mission and Evangelism—An Ecumenical Affirmation," (see "An Evangelical Observes a WCC Assembly" by Clark Pinnock, TSF Bulletin, *October, 1980; and an edited text of the Melbourne statement in the Sept./Oct., 1983 issue). Since leaving his position with CWME, Castro has been completing graduate studies in Europe, and working on plans to return to South America. In January, 1984, he was among the lecturers at the seminars sponsored by the Overseas Ministries Study Center (co-sponsored by TSF). Mark Lau Branson interviewed him at that time. In July, the WCC announced that Castro had been elected General Secretary, succeeding Phillip Potter. Castro will begin his new position in the summer of 1985.*

Castro's old friend and mentor José Miguez-Bonino, a former World Council president, remembers greeting a queue of worshipers after the Easter service at Central Methodist Church in Montevideo, Castro's former parish. "An old woman approached me somewhat mysteriously: 'You meet Emilio Castro sometimes?' 'Yes, of course,' I replied, 'I'll be seeing him in a few weeks.' 'Please greet him for me. You know, he was my pastor. He introduced me to Jesus.'" (Reprinted from The Christian Century, Aug. 29–Sept. 5, 1984.)

TSF: Prior to working for the CWME, you were an active churchman in South America. Could you describe some of your activities?

Castro: I was General Secretary of UNELAM, Commission for Evangelical Unity in Latin America. This was an attempt to bring

churches together through a process of reflection and communication. This movement later on emerged as CLADE, the Conference of the Latin American Evangelical Churches. During this time I spent every moment on Uruguayan soil and was involved with my church. I was president of the church and very much engaged in evangelistic proclamation, especially through the mass media. Those were years of tension and passion in Uruguay; political life was in great in turmoil. Yet it was possible to preach on television. That gave me a chance to put fundamental questions before the country.

A military coup took place in 1973, six months after I left the country. Since then, Uruguay has known almost no freedom. More recently, however, signs indicate that people are striving to get a democratic opening, and I hope the churches will play a role in that process.

TSF: During your years with CWME, what encouraged you the most about the Church?

Castro: I have been encouraged by the willingness of most of the churches to face their respective situations with an evangelistic question in mind. Churches in the Soviet Union and in Western Europe are in entirely different situations. But both are facing the same question—how to convey the gospel in a society submitting to secularizing influences. Such pressure may come through a political party or, in the West, through the whole ideology of the consumer society.

For example, the Russian churches cannot see themselves simply as guardians of the past. They must face the question of how that past can be turned into an instrument for inviting the young people to share the future in terms of Christian beliefs, values and activities. Their recent talks about the evangelistic dimension of the liturgy were very hopeful.

In the Western world the situation is very different. The church has been reduced, radically speaking, to core groups, a remnant. This remnant is confronted with the tremendous masses of people who consider themselves Christians but in their lifestyles do not pay attention to gospel values or practice. Now, some churches have the mistaken idea they are the church of the majority. However, others have discovered their actual minority status and once again are facing the evangelistic question.

For example, there is the Kirchentag in Germany. Once every two years, more than 100,000 young people gather to deal with the gospel and society. They develop all kinds of associations. They have what they called a "market of opportunity." Every group will offer their gift, through theater, music, dancing—all kinds of evangelistic manifestations. Then they have a Bible study in groups of 7000 or 8000. They conclude with the Holy Communion Service. The service last year drew 150,000 people. The impact is not just for those who participate; it affects the whole community. In the last two locations, the question of peace was faced in a way that obliged all political parties to pay attention. It's another way of responding to the anonymity of modern society.

Another response is that of the community of Taize in France. It is the center of Protestant monastic life. Thousands and thousands of young people go there every weekend for meditation and Bible reading. It is a style of pilgrimmage based on the traditions of the middle age, though the message being communicated is much more up-to-date. Taize provide a way to respond to spiritual needs while the local churches are often not able to offer that outlet.

What we have learned from the churches in China is unbelievable! They have gone through this tremendous and terrible Cultural Revolution and have survived and thrived with an evangelistic spirit. We published a small book called *The Household of God in China*, a beautiful story about the church—no success story, no romantic story, but down-to-earth. There is the fear and trembling of their coming together in the morning to celebrate in worship and Bible study. One is suddenly awakened to the reality: here is the Church, it is alive!

People in the middle of a struggle for life discover that in the Gospel are the sources of endurance and resistance. They cannot do that through their own secular ideologies; they need each other and need to find their roots in the Gospel. In that sense, evangelism is essential for churches everywhere.

TSF: What is the definition of evangelism you're working with?

Castro: I consider evangelism to be the linkage, the bringing together of the story of Jesus Christ with the story of a particular person or a particular people. There is no evangelism without recognition of the facts of the Gospel. We talk about the Good News, something that happened in Jesus Christ, we do not talk about a package deal that is declared loudly, but remains irrelevant for today. We talk about Jesus Christ alive today, the Risen Lord. We are retelling the story with the hope and the prayer, that the Gospel story will become alive in the encounter with the story of the peoples who are hearing. Only Christians who are immersed in an incarnational model of community life and are living side by side with the people are able to attempt this linkage.

But the linkage can also come from another direction. Perhaps there are some people immersed in deep human problems who are searching for some sense of direction. Christians could then say, "Listen, this unknown god you are looking for, we know—This is the One who has made himself known in Jesus Christ."

There must always be two dimensions to evangelism—a clear reference to the Gospel story and a clear recognition of the seriousness and reality of the human predicament. The encounter of those two realities should be the moment when the Holy Spirit has a chance to make evangelism work.

TSF: What were the biggest discouragements for you during your time with CWME?

Castro: I would not say that I had any discouragements. I will say that the amount of time we Christians lose in fighting each other is distressing. We provide a good excuse to the nonbelieving world for their nonbelief, because they see us excommunicating each other. I think that once we recognize the joys of life in Christ and see the reality of a world in such desperate need, we can use the nuances and different manifestations of our Christian belief, to help people see their reality in light of the story of Jesus Christ.

Of course the theological task is necessary, of course the ecumenical work has something to do with reciprocal corrections. But, if I must choose between the task of proclamation to the world outside the Church and the task of correcting my Christian brothers and sisters, I know very clearly where my priorities are.

How do we challenge each other to say a clear word to the outer world, to the masses of secularized Christians, or false Christians or to people with other religious persuasions? If our focus is on the missionary task,the correctives that we need will come in the dynamic of ministry.

TSF: What have been some things you've learned that have changed your thinking during the last few years?

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Castro: The basic change concerns the discovery of the Orthodox Church. That is very thrilling. I come from a Methodist evangelical tradition, so I have learned about the depth of evangelical faith and the depth of Christian obedience in the context of difficult struggles. However, now I am faced with this encounter with Orthodox believers. Prior to now, I had only had an intellectual description of them, or caricatures of old people who were very static and very quiet; we all remember the story of what took place during the Russian Revolution. The Orthodox bishops were meeting in Leningrad discussing the color of their hats as the revolt began; now, for me, all those caricatures are being shed.

First, I was taken by the honesty, the candor and the faith of the Orthodox believers. Second, I became aware of the beauty of the liturgy. If I am supposed to love God with all my being, can that also include the beauty in the harmony of colors, or appropriation of the other senses, that draw me to the mystery of God? My Latin American Protestant tradition will reject the Catholic Church and with that will reject what we call "externals of religion." But the externals can become very, very internal when they are made into fine symbols, almost becoming a sacramental anticipation of God's presence. They have been able to dramatize the mysteries of the Gospel and, through these means, to pack all Gospel message into a form that can exist in this situation where the availability of Bibles is not as we would like it to be.

Third, I am impressed by the way in which Orthodox believers have been able to commit generation after generation to the faith of the Church. They have been working for twelve or thirteen centuries in Muslim countries with the prohibition against doing any evangelistic work. An attempt to convince somebody could mean death. What a sense of mission! A sense of presence, evidence, endurance, patience—a waiting for the chance to come. You begin to realize that in such a dramatic situation just the preserving of the faith is a tremendous missionary act. Of course, the Orthodox believers have something to learn from the Western World, from the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches. But, they know that the Church has a priestly responsibility, a responsibility to be representative of the whole. Biblically speaking, the Church is more than the adding of individuals. It's the reality of the Body of Christ that takes presence around the Eucharist. And, as we have learned from the Orthodox believers, the Eucharist is a missionary event.

TSF: Since Melbourne and the publication of "Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation," it appears that bridges have developed between Western-based evangelicals and the ecumenical movement. There seems to be more opportunity for dialogue. How do you evaluate that bridge-building at this point?

Castro: I do not want to use the word "bridge." Rather, I think a document tries to be sensitive to what Christians are saying about the evangelistic missionary responsibility. It seeks to be sensitive to people and aware of the viewpoints that entered into the shaping of the document—Catholic, Orthodox, Evangelical, and Liberal. The document doesn't pretend to be a potpourri; it is an affirmation of all those groups.

If the member churches of the World Council say, "Well, now we are at peace with evangelicals," and then go about business as usual because they believe, somewhat accurately, that we are not so far one from the other, that would be total failure. The important thing is what we are able to provide an instrument to challenge, to inspire, to give guidance to our evangelistic practice. The task of the document is not the facilitation of conversation, it is the call to obedience of every group that reads this document, independent of their presuppositions. If this document gives happiness to evangelicals, but does not challenge, then the document is not good. If this document says, "Okay, we have provided our shibboleth to the evangelicals, now we can go on with business as usual according to the ecumenically-minded churches and people," then it is a total failure. This document should be an opportunity for us to take stock of our main convictions. However, concerning the bridging function, it is incidental, a by-product for which I am very thankful. It should not be considered equal with that fundamental role, with that central role of promoting evangelism.

TSF: What can seminaries do to help promote mission and evangelism?

Castro: Two things: First, we must challenge the traditional theological disciplines to see themselves in the light of the mission of the Church. The progress of history should be analyzed: When did churches grow? When did they fail to grow? How did they relate to their countries and cultures? What was the Holy Spirit saying? These questions will spur the imagination of students and provide a sense of expectancy. Also, students will discover the freedom of the Kingdom in history. So, the professor of dogmatics could not simply teach about the Creation and the Fall, etc., etc.—just so the student will pass an examination—but the professor will help the students understand how dogma relates to the people with whom they will be working.

Second, I think seminaries should give more importance to linking of the theological discussion to the actual world of the parish. Students will often begin their pastoral careers in a small churches, perhaps in rural settings. The congregations will consist of perhaps thirty or forty older people. We have given them, in the three or four years of training, all kind of rhetoric, "World-wide evangelization!" or "Liberation!" or "Revolution!" Then, in their new churches they have the shock of their lives. They can't touch their new reality. Normally, the new pastor tries to survive one or two years in anticipation of moving to something better. A Baptist lady in Montevideo said to me, "I do not know what is wrong with the Holy Spirit! Whenever we have a promising young pastor in our small parish, the Holy Spirit calls him to a better and higher-paid parish. But the Holy Spirit never does it the other way around!" This young pastor has the hope that one day he/she will have a platform for big ideas, but all the time this pastor is losing his or her soul. How do we relate the big dream, the big love, and the big international discussion to the reality of the thirty older people? I am convinced that the local congregation that is able to see themselves in terms of the kingdom dynamic will be transformed! Let's be realistic—older people have much more freedom to commit themselves than do young people or middle-aged people. Young pastors should be helped to discover those potentialities and to create the models for commitment and transformation. We must bring the global affirmations into close relationship with a local context. The young pastor cannot simply imitate the old pastor. It would be very creative and exciting if there were an attempt to bring the dynamics of the kingdom down-to-earth in the local situation.

Evangelism in the seminaries has become a second-class discipline. Perhaps if it were to be more forceful, more provocative, more specific in terms of meeting the needs in the world, it could become recognized on its own terms, be valued as it should and have an impact on the church and the world.

"SPIRITUALITY–FOUNDATION OF FAITH AND MINISTRY"

This 1984 Oak Brook Conference on Ministry will focus on spiritual disciplines and is designed for church professionals and committed laypeople. It will be held October 16 and 17 at Christ Church of Oak Brook, Illinois. Speakers include Donald Bloesch, Fr. Mark Gibbard, Robert Meye and Arthur DeKruyter of Christ Church. For more information, contact Donna Fleck, Christ Church of Oak Brook, Thirty-first and York Rd., Oak Brook, IL 60521.

CONFERENCE ON JONATHAN EDWARDS

"Jonathan Edwards and The American Experience," a conference sponsored by the Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals, will occur October 24-26, at the Billy Graham Center in Wheaton, Illinois. Topics include "The Spirit and the Word: Edwards and Scriptural Exegesis," "History, Redemption and the Millenium," and "Rationalist Foundations of Jonathan Edwards's Metaphysics." Speakers include Nathan Hatch, George Marsden and Mark Noll. For further information contact Joel Carpenter, ISAE, Billy Graham Center, Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL 60187.

Biblical Authority and Interpretation

by Randy Maddox

The affirmation of biblical authority has been a central theme of the evangelical tradition.[1] At the same time, the precise understanding of the nature of biblical authority has been one of the major sources of conflict within evangelicalism. It has been my experience, as one who was nurtured by and has come to identify with this tradition, that the question of the nature of biblical authority can most helpfully be answered only after one has gained an understanding of the necessity of biblical interpretation.

I. The Necessity of Biblical Interpretation

The necessity of interpreting Scripture was far from obvious to me as a beginning religious studies major. I assumed if a person wanted to determine what the Bible taught about a particular matter, all that was necessary was to read it. Behind this assumption were the implicit assumptions that the Bible always says what it means in obvious and literal ways, that biblical teachings are homogeneous, and that everyone who reads the Bible with a sincere heart will find the same message in it.[2]

A. Shattering Assumptions: *The "Literalness" of Scripture?*

The first of these implicit assumptions was shattered by the experience of trying to read and understand the whole of Scripture. For example, how "literal" was I to take Jesus' command that every man who casts a lustful glance on a woman should pluck out his eye (Matt. 5:29)? I noticed that the majority of commentators understood Jesus to be using this saying as a graphic illustration of the seriousness of lusting and not as a literal command. While this seemed reasonable, it meant that my former assumption about the "literalness" of biblical material had to be nuanced.

Even deeper questions were raised by material like the Book of Revelation, the ponderings of Ecclesiastes, and those Psalms that rejoice over the battering of Babylonian babies' heads against the ground (e.g., Ps. 137:9). As an evangelical I was committed to the belief that even these passages had some authoritative meaning for Christians today.

And yet, my alarm over arriving at this meaning illustrated that the meaning was not immediately obvious. It was becoming clear that some type of interpretation was necessary to determine the authoritative meaning of any scripture.

Disagreements in Interpretation. This was driven home further when a second of my implicit assumptions—that everyone who reads the Bible with a sincere heart will find the same message in it—was unmasked as false.

I can still recall my alarm when I discovered that during the Civil War there were committed conservative clergy and laypersons in both the North and the South who argued fervently that their position was the biblical position.[3] How was this possible? As I studied defenses of their positions, it became obvious that each side focused attention on the verses that reinforced their positions and avoided or "explained away" the verses that called their position into question. It was not a case of one side using the Bible as an authority and the other drawing on another authority. Rather, both groups were populated by conservative Christians who believed they were using Scripture as their authority and reading it correctly.

Homogeneity of Scripture? The encounter with the different positions on slavery supported by appeals to Scripture also served to call into question the assumption that homogeneity or total agreement through the breadth of biblical teachings.[4] This question was deepened as I continued to deal with Scripture. On one level, there were significant differences between Old and New Testament perspectives and teachings on issues such as war. At an even deeper level, I noticed different perspectives on the significance of Jesus and the nature of the Christian life in the New Testament itself. This posed the question of whether there was any unity among these various perspectives.[5]

B. The Dilemma

Many who have gone through similar experiences conclude that the interpretation of Scripture is arbitrary and, therefore, that Scripture cannot be the final authority in Christian thought. At the opposite extreme there are those who dogmatically declare that *their* interpretation is the authoritative one and that all others are false. The problem, of course, is showing how either of these claims this absolute can be objectively defended. On the one hand, to surrender Scripture as the authoritative norm for Christian faith meant that "Christian faith" then became whatever a particular group of people who called themselves Christians happened to believe at a particular time.[6] On the other hand, the retreat to dogmatic claims about a particular interpretation seemed to ignore or belittle the fact of rival interpretations by equally committed Christians and failed to do justice to the biblical command to be ready to give a defense of one's faith. However, if neither of these alternatives are acceptable, where do we turn?

C. A Clue: The "Hermeneutic Circle"

The most important help I received in answering this question came from the philosophical and psychological study of human understanding and interpretation, that is—hermeneutics.[7] Hermeneutical investigation, at its basic level, deals with the question of how people understand any phenomena such as written text and traditions. An important focus of this investigation has been the analysis of the "hermeneutic circle" or "circle of understanding."[8] This "circle" refers to how we tend to interpret new data by what we already understand and believe. This helps explain some of the problems previously mentioned. The reason, for example, that Southern Christians tend to focus on passages in the Bible that confirmed or condoned their practice of slavery was the conscious and unconscious influence of their prior commitments to slavery. Moreover, the analogous situation was true of the antislavery proponets in the North! That is why each side was blind to the biblical bases (such as they were) of the opposing side.

The natural response at this point is to declare that the problem is the interference of preunderstandings and that the solution is to remove preunderstandings altogether in interpretations. However, this is where one of the crucial characteristics of the hermeneutic circle comes into play. We have come to realize that such a removal is impossible. The essence of understanding is relating some new data to already existing ideas and notions and seeing what changes this new data necessitates or how it fits. This would be impossible if the first step in understanding was to do away with all previous ideas and notions.

Moreover, the ideal of presuppositionless understanding is also problematic from a theological standpoint. As Paul reminds us, the wisdom of God appears as foolishness to non-Christian human understanding. Why? Because they do not understand the word of the cross (I Cor. 1:18–20). That is, prior understanding is necessary to understand the range of Christian truth. In understanding theology, the idea of presuppositionless interpretation must be rejected.

What then? Have we left each interpreter stuck in their own preunderstandings? Have we become mired in total relativism, in which everyone's opinion is equal? Not necessarily! Another important contribution of the analysis of the hermeneutic circle is the methodology it brings to deal with preunderstandings. While we cannot escape the influence of our preunderstandings in the process of interpretation, we can bring these preunderstandings to a level of self-consciousness and evaluate their appropriateness to the subject-matter being interpreted. To accomplish this, we need to cultivate an understanding of the socio-historical context and its influences. The means to developing this understanding is dialogue: dialogue with the text and dialogue with other interpreters and interpretations of the text. Often in such dialogue it becomes clear that some aspect of our preunderstanding is inappropriate to or

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judged by the matter being investigated and can be reformulated.[9] The Copernican Revolution would be a classic example of such a reformulation, showing its possibility and its likely attendent difficulties and repercussions.

D. The Clue Applied

All of this has extreme importance when we return to the issue of biblical interpretation. Our goal should not be to deny or get rid of our preunderstandings and presuppositions and just see "what the Bible says."[10] This is an impossible ideal and soon becomes a cover from which we confuse "what we understand the Bible to say" with "what the Bible says;" we become the final authority rather than the Bible. On the other hand, we need not surrender to a relativism that sees everything as merely someone's opinion. In dialogue with Scripture and each other, those sensitive to biblical authority will seek awareness of their preunderstandings and how they affect their interpretation of Scripture and will test these preunderstandings for their adequacy and legitimacy.

The Role of Biblical Exegesis. It is here that the methods of modern biblical exegesis come into play.[11] The essential goal of these methods is to provide clarity about the original setting (historical and linguistic) and meaning of Scripture. To the degree they are successful, they provide a stimulus to counteract the interpreter's preunderstandings and let Scripture speak in its own voice. As Donald Hagner has recently argued, the distinctive element of evangelical biblical scholarship should not be that we avoid the modern methods of exegesis, but rather that we use them in a positive manner aimed at locating the authoritative teaching of Scripture and obeying it.[12]

The Role of Dialogue. Another important way in which we can test our interpretation of Scripture is through dialogue with other interpreters. If we find significant disagreements between various interpretations, we are obliged to find where either we or the other interpreter, or both, have been misled. To be sure, we will not always achieve a final agreement on an interpretation. Some passages seem to defy clearcut meaning and there is the problem of some diversity in Scripture. However, the dialogue can help eliminate false alternatives.

Particularly for Protestants, it is important to emphasize that this dialogue is not just among contemporary interpreters. Tradition is equally important. The Protestant principle that "Scripture Alone" is our authority does not reject interaction with tradition. It merely rejects an improper elevation of tradition over Scripture. With tradition, as with individual preunderstandings, Scripture must be the ultimate norm, not vice versa. When evangelical Christians turn to tradition, it is not to use tradition to correct Scripture. Rather it is to dialogue with tradition to test our interpretation of Scripture.[13] If we find our interpretation is at odds with the majority of interpreters past and present, then we are obliged to provide significant warrant for our interpretation.

E. Summary

We have seen that the "meaning of Scripture" is not a self-evident commodity that can be appropriated effortlessly by anyone who desires. Rather, adequate understandings of the authoritative teachings of Scripture can be obtained only by a careful process of exegesis and comparative dialogue.

II. The Nature and Scope of Biblical Authority

As suggested earlier, it was only after I gained some understanding of the necessity and role of interpretation in dealing with Scripture that I was able to work through the issues about the biblical authority.[14] For me, these issues did not deal so much with whether Scripture was an authority, but rather with redefining the nature and scope of biblical authority.[15]

A. The Right Approach to the Question

One thing that became increasingly obvious to me as I read the various materials on the authority of Scripture was the way the problem of preunderstanding, discussed above, once again manifested itself. In case after case, it was clear that the authors had first developed a model of authority and then conceived the Bible as that kind of authority. One of the major clues this was happening was that the most crucial arguments in their discussions of biblical authority were drawn from philosophy or tradition—not Scripture. This was particularly true at both extremes of the theological spectrum.

On one hand, there were those who believed modern people could no longer accept some extraneous authority as an ultimate norm for life and thought. For them the Bible became just a collection of exemplary religious literature that was to be accepted or rejected based on its reasonableness.[16] On the opposite extreme, there were the strict inerrantists who were convinced that any document claiming divine authority had to be accurate down to the very dots on the "i's" and in relation to every topic treated. For them, any view that did not see the Bible as this type of authority did not see it as an authority at all.[17]

What was most problematic about these extremes was not their philosophical bases—though these are not above question. Neither was it the extreme differences between the two positions. Rather, it was the unexpected point of agreement between the two—in practice if not in concept. Both positions argued deductively, developing an argument for a type of authority and then imposing this understanding of authority upon Scripture. In light of the potential distorting effect of preunderstandings, this procedure is highly suspect. Ultimately, both these positions made their understanding the ultimate authority over Scripture! It seemed clear to me that *if Scripture is the ultimate authority, then it is an authority on the issue of the scope and nature of its authority.* Therefore, it became crucial for me to proceed inductively, turning to Scripture and seeing what claims about its own authority it warranted.[18] As I did so, three major points became clear.

B. Scripture—A Guide to Living

The first deals with the purpose of Scripture. The clearest teaching on this issue is the familiar passage in II Timothy 3:15–17. There we are told that Scripture is able to make us "wise for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ," that it is "useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness," and that the study of Scripture will equip us thoroughly for every good work. The important point here is that the purpose of Scripture is focused in its instruction in salvation and its training in righteousness. What is not claimed is that Scripture should be treated as a textbook for the sciences, etc.[19]

This is not to say that Scripture is full of false scientific statements, but rather that many of the statements treated as scientific claims by defenders and critics alike were really not intended that way in Scripture itself. A good example is the Genesis prologue. In its Hebrew form this chapter is an artfully crafted and highly stylistic literary piece. This fact, in conjunction with an analysis of its sevenfold structure and symbolic use of names (Adam=humanity, Eve=giver of life, etc.), makes it clear that the prologue is much more a theological account of the source and purpose of creation that a narrowly scientific or historical account of the details of creation.[20] When this realization is related to the growing sensitivity to the differences between such theological reflection and modern scientific explanation, the basis is provided for a constructive integration of the authoritative teachings of the Genesis prologue and the findings of modern science.[21]

C. Divine Word and Human Setting

A second aspect of biblical authority that becomes evident as one deals with the whole of Scripture is the tension between the Divine Word and its human setting. Because the Bible is God's Word,[22] it has eternal relevance and speaks to all cultures. Yet because this Word has been spoken through human words (Cf. Jer. 1:9, Acts 4:25) and in human settings, it is conditioned by a historical particularity. As a result, it is sometimes crucial, in deciding the authoritative teaching of Scripture, to distinguish between the essential Divine Word and its particular historical expression.[23]

Jesus himself provides a model for the necessity of making this distinction in the way he dealt with Old Testament scriptures (Cf. Matt. 5:38–9, Mark 7, and Mark 10:2–12). As James Dunn suggests, when one studies Jesus's use of the Old Testament, it becomes obvious he understood these texts in relation to the historical situation in which they were originally given. Jesus did not deny these scriptures were the Word of God to their original situation. He did say or imply that many of them were no longer God's word to the situation he had brought.[24] A similar analysis could be made of the

way the New Testament authors used the Old Testament.[24] Moreover, the realization that the authors of the New Testament were attempting to apply the same Word of God to different situations helps explain many phenomena such as the presence of four accounts of the Gospel story.

Occasionally, it is said that such an understanding of Scripture lessens its authority and value for Christian life. I have found the opposite to be true. Let me cite one example. In I Corinthians 8, Paul offers guidance to the first century Christians at Corinth on the problem of eating food offered to idols. Since most twentieth century Christians never confront this problem, this passage is often judged to have no contemporary relevance or authority. This verdict can be overturned, however, if we are sensitive to the distinction between the human setting of the particular problem and the authoritative principle that guided Paul's response. In brief, this principle is that those who are stronger in the faith and can see through false moralism must be willing at times to submit to the weaker members of the community in order to protect the latter's faith. This principle can be applied as an authoritative guide to numerous situations in our contemporary setting. Thus, far from being a fatal error, an awareness of the divine/human nature of Scripture can serve to broaden our commitment to and understanding of the authority of the Bible.

D. Christ–The Center of Scripture

The final point that should be noted about biblical authority is the recognition of a certain gradation in this authority. There are clear claims that the authority of Scripture lies in the Bible as a whole, nor just in certain parts of it. We are not free to treat as authoritative only those verses with which we agree (Cf. Pro. 30:5–6). However, this should not be constructed as meaning every part of Scripture possesses equal authority in and of itself. On the contrary, the Christian canon teaches that there is a central focal point for biblical authority—the revelation of Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:1–3). Indeed, the very authority of Scripture itself is derivative of the authority of this revelation. More importantly, the authoritative meaning of any particular verse is a function of the way in which it prepares for, testifies to, or clarifies and applies this revelation.

The recognition that the revelation of Jesus Christ is the focal point of biblical authority provides a helpful perspective on the diversity present in Scripture. As expressions of the gospel in different settings with different agendas, the diversity in Scripture should be seen as a help rather than a hindrance. It presents us with several models of how we can apply the Gospel to our situation. At the same time, the demonstration of an essential unity between these various expressions provides a set of criteria for judging the appropriateness of our application.[26]

Another implication of recognizing that the authority of Scripture is focused in the revelation of Jesus Christ is that it allows us to handle the development or progression of revelation apparent in Scripture, particularly between the Old and New Testament. A good illustration would be the biblical teachings on life after death, which are very unclear in the Old Testament, was still debated among the Jews in Jesus' day (Acts 23:6), and only settled for Christians by the experience of the resurrected Lord (I Cor. 15:20). In light of Christ, there is no more room for debate.

E. Summary

To summarize this section, we have seen that: (1) The authority of Scripture is centered on matters of instruction in salvation and training in righteousness; (2) In interpreting Scripture it is often necessary to distinguish between the Divine Word and the human situation; and (3) We must be sensitive to the very important role of the focus of biblical authority in the revelation of Jesus Christ.

III. An Evangelical Agenda

The necessity of interpretation and the nature of biblical authority provide a helpful perspective to the on-going evangelical debates on inerrancy and biblical authority.[27] Simply to defend the authority of Scripture is not enough. Indeed, it is at most the presupposition for the crucial task, which is to develop a responsible contemporary interpretation of authoritative biblical teachings. It is precisely in matters of interpretation that the most significant differences in theological systems can be found.

The elaboration of such an interpretation of Scripture is a major on-going project for evangelical theologians. However, based on the foregoing discussion there are some guidelines for this project I would suggest.

1. We should focus our attention on the issues Scripture claims as authoritative rather than waste time dealing with false confrontations.

2. We must develop an appreciation of the appropriate diversity in Scripture and in contemporary Christian understanding. At the same time, we must develop a more precise understanding of the criteria or boundaries that determine legitimate diversity. In light of the biblical teachings about the Holy Spirit guiding the Church into truth, we should be willing to use the central teachings of the historic Christian Church as a guide in this process.

3. We must continue to develop criteria for distinguishing between the Divine Word and the human situation in biblical teachings.[28]

4. Above all, we must always remember the limitations of our human understanding of these issues when either recommending our own conclusions or judging others'. Scripture is the final authority, not any one person's understanding of Scripture.

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[1] For a perceptive analysis of the various meanings of "evangelical," and an argument for a definition which I find amenable, see two articles by Donald Dayton: "The Social and Political Conservatism of Modern American Evangelicalism: A Preliminary Search for Reasons," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 32 (1977): 71–80; and "Whither Evangelicalism?" in *Sanctification and Liberation*, ed. Theodore Runyon (Abingdon, 1981), pp. 142–63.

[2] These assumptions were actually explicit teachings of the Princeton School that contributed to the development of fundamentalism. See George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (Oxford, 1980), pp. 110–14.

[3] Examples of arguments from both sides can be found in Edwin Gaustad, ed., *A Documentary History of Religion in America*, Vol. I (Eerdmans, 1982), pp. 477–90. For a helpful analysis of the hermeneutical perspectives of each group, see Willard Swartley, *Slavery, Sabbath, War and Women* (Herald, 1983).

[4] For a brief survey of the various positions on the homogeneity of Scripture, see W. Hulitt Gloer, "Unity and Diversity in the New Testament: Anatomy of an Issue." *Biblical Theological Bulletin* 13 (1983): 53–8.

[5] One of the most thorough expositions of the different perspectives in the New Testament and arguments for an underlying unity is James D.G. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament* (Westminster, 1977). The serious student should also consult come critical reviews of this book such as *Themelios* 5 (1979–80): 30–1; *Theology* 81 (1978): 452–5; *Theology Today* 36 (1979): 116–21; and *Journal of Biblical Literature* 98 (1979): 135–7.

[6] This is the position of classical liberalism as illustrated by Friedrich Schleirmacher, *Brief Outline on the Study of Theology* (John Knox, 1966), pp. 71ff.

[7] The best general introductions to this subject are: Josef Bleicher, *Contemporary Hermeneutics* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980); and Ricard Palmer, *Hermeneutics* (Northwestern University Press, 1969). For an application to biblical studies, see Anthony Thiselton, *The Two Horizons* (Eerdmans, 1980).

[8] For a detailed discussion of this concept, see my "Hermeneutic Circle: Vicious or Victorious?" *Philosophy Today* 27 (1983): 66–76.

[9] This methodological prescription is the essential import of Hans–Georg Gadamer's "fusion of horizons." [10] Cf. Grahm Stanton, "Presuppostions in the New Testament Criticism" in *New Testament Interpretation*, ed. I. Howard Marshall, (Eerdmans, 1977), pp. 60–71.

[11] Cf. Perry Yoder, *From Word to Life* (Herald, 1982): John Jayes and Carl Holladay, *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook* (John Knox, 1982); and Walter Kaiser, *Towards an Exegetical Theology* (Baker, 1981).

[12] Donald A. Hagner, What is Distinctive about 'Evangelical' Scholarship?" *TSF Bulletin* 7.3 (January, 1984): 5–7.

[13] Cf. Bernard Ramm, "Is 'Sola Scripture' the Essence of Christianity?" in *Biblical Authority*, ed. Jack Rogers (word, 1977), pp.107–23. An example of a commentary using such a dialogue with tradition in interpreting Scripture is Brevard Childs, *The Book of Exodus* (Westminster, 1974).

[14] The most helpful treatments of the authority of Scripture that I have found are: Donald Bloesch, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology* Vol I. (Harper, 1978), pp. 51–87; James D.G. Dunn, "Authority of Scripture According to Scripture," *Churchman* 96 (1982): 104–22, 201–25; and Robert Johnston, *Evangelicals at an Impasse* (John Knox, 1979), pp. 15–47.

[15] Some evangelical scholars seem to be trying to provide a foundation for the claim of biblical authority by a rational "demonstration" of the inerrancy of Scripture. I find such an approach both impossible and wrong-headed. As Kierkegaard has shown, the idea of basing Divine authority on human arguments is ludicrous. Moreover, as Dunn has argued, it is theologically and pastorally dangerous (Dunn, "Authority of Scripture," pp. 116–8). We would be wiser to remain with Calvin who ultimately based knowledge of the authority of Scripture on the witness of the Spirit (*Institutes* 1, 3, 9).

[16] Cf. L. Harold DeWolf, *A Theology of the Living Church* (Harper, 1953), who precedes his discussion of biblical authority with a long section on rational criteria of faith and then argues for a very selective ascription of authority to biblical materials on the basis that "A reasonable man concedes authority to the best books he can find on a given subject." (p.83).

[17] The argument of James Boice is typical: "God's character demands inerrancy . . . If every utterance in the Bible is from God and if God is a God of truth . . . then the Bible must be wholly truthful and inerrant." Boice, ed., *Does Inerrancy Matter?* (ICBI Foundation series I, 1979), p. 20. Note the narrow definition of truth that is assumed as obvious.

[18] See Hagner "'Evangelical' Scholarship," pp.6–7, for a similar rejection of the deductive approach to the issue of biblical authority in favor of an inductive investigation of scripture. As Bernard Ramm has argued, it is not enough in such an investigation simply to pick out some individual texts that deal with inspiration. Rather, we must grasp the phenomenon of Scripture in its totality. Ramm, "Scripture as a Theological Concept," *Review and Expositor* 71 (1974): 149–61.

[19] See Stephen Davis, *Debate About the Bible* (Westminster, 1977), p. 78; Dunn, "Authority of Scripture," p.108; and Marshall, *Biblical Inspiration*, p.53.

[20] A sensitive evangelical analysis of the literary character of the Genesis prologue can be found in William LaSor, et. al., *Old Testament Survey* (Eerdmans, 1982), pp.70–75.

[21] Good treatments of this issue can be found in Langdon Gilkey, "Creationism: The Roots of the Conflict," *Christianity and Crisis* 26 April 1982: 108–15; and Robert Fisher, *God Did It, But How?* (Cal Media, 1982).

[22] Cf. Marshall, *Biblical Inspiration*, p.22, for a discussion of the various senses in which the Bible is God's Word.

[23] There is an interesting analogy between Scripture and Jesus on this issue. The incarnation is not an account of Jesus taking on humanity in the abstract, but rather of Jesus becoming a particular first-century Jewish male of a certain height, weight, etc. And yet the essential meaning of the incarnation is not located in particularities such as height, weight, or (I think) gender.

[24] Dunn, "Authority of Scripture" p.207.

[25] *Ibid.*, pp.207–14.

[26] The precise understanding of this unity is a matter of much present discussion. See notes 4 and 5 above. For a particular application, see my "The New Quest and Christology," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* forthcoming.

[27] An excellent survey of these debates is Robert Price, "Inerrant the Wind: The Troubled House of North American Evangelicals," *Evangelical Quarterly* 55 (1983): 129–44.

[28] The most helpful evangelical treatment of this issue to date is Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth* (Zondervan, 1982), pp. 60–70.

Women's Realities: A Theological View

by Linda Mercadante

(Keynote address: "Women—Psychology and Theology" Conference, Mennonite Mental Health Services Annual Symposium, April 5-6, 1984, Fresno, CA)

Ever since I heard the theme of this conference and was asked to participate, I've been excited by the concept of bringing together Psychology and Theology in a supportive, interactive setting. I've been excited because these two fields—which often operate at such a distance from each other, and whose practitioners often view each other with such suspicion—really belong together. For psychology's main concern is to facilitate the wholeness of the person. Theology affirms that goal, and does so by redirecting our sights back to the One who has made us personal and who intends for us to be whole.

If there's one thing I've learned in my whole Ph.D. pilgrimage, its that theology is too important to be left to the experts. I want to stress this, because for too long women especially, but also many men, have felt there was a radical separation between their own experience in knowing God and the seemingly more abstract work known as theology.

But in fact, anyone who wants to know God, anyone who tries to understand their own religious experience, and anyone who embarks on a spiritual pilgrimage, struggling to discern the meaning of life, is already in some fashion doing theology. For all *good* theology grows out of the experience that people of faith had in receiving and interpreting God's self-revelation.

I will not pretend that theology in the past has generally served women well—for we all know it has not.

But I will affirm that whatever *good* theology there has been—and there certainly has been some—has always grown out of the experience of faith, the personal and communal reception of God's self-disclosure.

The problem is, however, that for far too long the woman's experience has not been considered "serious" or important enough to warrant careful theological consideration. For example: it's almost as though a map had been drawn listing just those places that men would likely frequent. Did you ever see one of those tourist maps that list all the places of interest in a certain city? Well, the state of theology now is like a map that lists just those sights that men would likely visit.

Of course some of these places would be very interesting to women, too, but they're not on this map, they have been left off. The map-makers considered them of minor importance, or perhaps didn't even take note of them. So, if you are a woman, this map, like much theology today, is only partially useful to you.

When male ministers, for example, talk about pride being the most deadly sin, they are talking about their own experience. Pride, in their experience, *is* the most serious problem, it is a matter of wanting to be in control, to be like God.

Valerie Saiving Goldstein has pointed out that pride is not women's chief problem—far from it. Instead, if we had to point to the chief failing of women, it would more likely be over-dependence upon things or persons never meant to carry that burden.

So if we want to change theology, if we want to change the map, we must begin to speak out about, write about, teach about and counsel out of our own experience, our own attempts to hear the gospel message, our own experience in knowing God.

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There is one very fundamental change that must be made in order to make this all possible. This change is foundational for all other changes. And that is a change in language, particularly our language and imagery for God.

Our culture is in the habit of using exclusively male language and imagery for God. I'd like to explain how we can introduce a theologically sound way to use feminine language and imagery for God. But before I do that, I want to stress that the way we use language is just as important as the language we use.

Several years ago the Presbyterian Church published a very interesting study on the power of language in liturgy and worship.[1] This study said that language functions like a window through which we see our life and surroundings.

Normally, this window is clear and we don't focus on it, but instead look through it. But when the glass gets dirty or cracked, we do start noticing it because it begins to distort our view of life and reality. And this is now the case with our language about God.

Because of the way we use language and imagery, we get into the bad habit of imagining God to be somehow masculine. The results of this, as we know, are often disastrous—not only in the way women have been made subordinate, but also in the way we have actually limited God.

Almost anyone with a little religious training or Sunday school can tell you God is not really a male, but a spirit. Many people now know that in the Bible there are striking examples of feminine imagery for God. Some people are also aware that in the history of the church, feminine imagery for God has been accepted and taught from time to time. But somehow, the message was distorted and there prevails in the culture and in the church the popular belief that God is somehow masculine.

The problem has come about for two reasons. First, we are stuck on a male image of God because the metaphors for God in the Bible and in the religious experience of Christians over the ages have been used and understood incompletely. There is clear warrant in Scripture for feminine imagery for God, and through the ages Christians have again and again envisioned God in feminine ways.[2] But because the culture was not receptive to these images, they were never used to their full extent.

Second, the problem is another huge example of the everlasting sin of idolatry. Feuerbach was partly right when he said that projection is a function of religion. Rather than letting God's reality correct the dominant culture, all too often the dominant culture has projected what it imagines or wants God to be. Mary Daly put it succinctly when she said, "If God is male, then the male is god."

At this point you might be thinking, "Even if there *is* some feminine imagery for God in the Bible and Christian tradition, hasn't it been—just in sheer volume—predominantly masculine?" I'd like to turn that question around. First, we all know the Scriptures were written and received into a very male-oriented set of cultures. Therefore, as Virginia Mollenkott says, the marvel is that so many feminine images for God actually got through that patriarchal mindset. It testifies loudly to the amazing power of God to self-communicate the divine image, no matter what the culture's particular blindness or sin is.

I don't find it so much a problem that Jesus was male, as much as I find it a challenge to our whole notion of gender stereotypes. For Jesus didn't come to image a supposed maleness in God. Instead, Jesus came to overturn, among other things, the terribly ingrained

sin of male superiority. By his radical behavior, which was quite unsterotypical, he judged that lie and other lies along with it.

You've noticed that I've been using the phrase "feminine imagery for God" quite a lot, but I haven't defined it. What does "feminine imagery for God" really mean? We have to think about this very carefully, for here is where the heart of the problem lies for those of us who want to make some decisive changes in theology, in the church and in the culture.

To put the matter simply, depending upon how we use feminine imagery, we will either help dispel the oppressive character of the gender stereotypes we have inherited, or we will reinforce these stereotypes and encourage their continuation.

So what does feminine imagery for God look like? Is it restricted to nurturing, giving birth, comforting, feeling? Is feminine imagery to be used only when talking about these qualities of God, but not when describing God's righteousness, perfect knowledge, power, judgement of evil and the other characteristics traditionally thought of as masculine? Doesn't this start sounding familiar, even though we are talking about imagery for God? Doesn't this sound like an old tune we thought we wouldn't have to sing anymore?

Depending on how we interpret and use feminine imagery for God, we may end up in a worse box than the one we're trying to break out of now. Even if we manage to get feminine imagery for God into our language, our worship, and our theology, we stand in danger of reifying, hardening the stereotypes. Because if a man is only seen as in God's image when he's being strong, and a woman is only seen as in God's image when she's being comforting, have we really changed anything? No, in fact we have made our straitjackets even tighter.

The additional danger is that we'll still rank these attributes, even though they are all in God, thus making the "masculine" ones primary, and the "feminine" ones secondary. This is already being done. One scholar, Donald Bloesch, in his book *Is the Bible Sexist?*, admits freely that there is feminine imagery of God in the Bible, but he wants it known that "the biblical God is primarily Father and . . . and other designations, especially those of a feminine character, are to be seen as secondary . . ." (p.121, n.38).

What does the Bible and Christian tradition actually say? It is true that many of the feminine images for God in Scripture and tradition are maternal, having to do with giving birth, with breastfeeding, with comforting. This was a major role of women when the Bible was written. Now these attributes of God are never ranked second. But there is more. For the characteristics are often used in revolutionary ways that actually challenge the stereotypes.

Virginia Mollenkott shows an interesting use of feminine imagery for God when God is likened to mother eagle. As you may know, the female eagle is stronger than the male. And so it is she who teaches the little eaglets to fly, doing this by balancing them on her wings, swooping down so they have to go it alone for a few seconds, and then catching them when they get tired. When God is likened to a mother eagle, then, we are presented with a God who personifies strength and the ability to teach her children the skills they need to survive in the world. Thus a feminine stereotype is broken.

In another place, God is likened to a determined woman who has lost a valuable coin and searches everywhere until she finds it. When she does, she throws a party for her friends. In this metaphor for God, we learn that women image God just as much, or more, when they are responsible for their own affairs, when they do not give up until they have reached their goal and when they share their resources with others, as when they conform to the gender stereotype of maternal behavior. We find, then, that when Scripture uses feminine imagery for God, it often does so in ways that contradict or revolutionize our own inherited stereotypes. Let's continue to search for the surprises behind feminine imagery for God.

It's very important to realize that in addition to dispelling stereotypes on the human side, what we are also trying to do by using feminine imagery for God is to dispel the distorted images we have of God. For even God has become stereotyped! To help people turn back to God, we must work to dispel these false views.

By using exclusively male language and imagery for God, we have in this age played into the Victorian father picture—the remote man whom everyone feared and called "sir," even his wife. By imposing this stereotype on God, we get the one-sided image of God the distant, immovable, stern judge, more transcendent than immanent, a God who lets you suffer to build character, and only promises to feed the hungry, free the oppressed and comfort the afflicted in the *next* life, where he awaits them after they've passed all their tests down here.

This is a distorted view. For while God *is* powerful, greater than this world of time and space, a righteous judge, and a builder of character, God is also closer to us than a sister, one who hears and responds, a comforter, a liberator, a mother, a friend and a lover.

The crucial factor is that in our enthusiasm to portray the latter set of God's attributes—the ones we feel have been neglected—we must be careful not to throw out the former. Of course, some of the former characteristics—the ones associated somehow with stereotypical maleness, such as transcendence and power, may have to be rethought and re-evaluated.

We can't say, on one hand, that God is static, immovable, and yet that God hears and responds to our prayers. But Scripture never said God was static. It said God is changeless in the sense of being always trustworthy, always loving, always righteous, always opposed to injustice—someone you can count on at all times.

I've been talking about expanding our vision of God by using gender-inclusive imagery. Maybe you're wondering why we don't just avoid the whole problem of stereotyping by using impersonal language for God. In fact, there is theological precedent for using at least some impersonal terms for God. For instance, we can draw on such biblical metaphors as God the rock of salvation, or God the consuming fire, or expand on descriptions of God as Love, Peace, and Justice.

We should continue and perhaps even increase our use of such language in order to break the hold of exclusively male language for God. But this is not a total solution. For the most important disadvantage in using only impersonal language is that all through the Bible, as well as through the history of Christian experience, God has been encountered in a profoundly *personal* way.

Maybe another solution has come to your mind. If impersonal language has only limited usefulness, how about using personal but non-gender specific language—that is, words for God that carry no gender—like Sustainer, Redeemer, and Creator.

This is another possible option, but it's also seriously limited. Because all persons as we know them are either "she" or "he." Of course God is a spirit, and therefore out of the realm of our experience with human beings. But even so, in a relationship as intimate as the one God desires to have with us, eventually personal pronouns become necessary—not just so that our language isn't awkward—but, more importantly, to insure that we do not think our relationship with God is any less personal and intimate than our human relationships.

There have been times when I've tried to use exclusively feminine imagery for God. I knew that theologically there was no more warrant to refer to God only as "she" than there was to use only masculine language. But I was excited about the feminine imagery I was seeing in Scripture and tradition and wanted to proclaim it.

I tried it once at an all-women's camp one summer up in Massachusetts and the results were exciting.

Most of the women were either from non-religious backgrounds or so alienated from their former traditions that even the word "church" made them angry. Yet when they were introduced to the biblical feminine images for God, many of them were surprised and delighted. There had been a real longing to renew the spiritual dimension of their lives, but they had been blocked by the exclusively masculine imagery.

I have also tried using just feminine imagery for God in more traditional settings. One time I was invited to give a lecture at a theological college in Berkeley. My topic was imagery for God, and I closed the lecture with a prayer I had written based solely on the feminine images for God in Scripture. After the lecture, people commented on how moving and freeing the experience had been for them. But one professor hung back, looking troubled. Finally he came up to me and said "Oh, I get your point now. I see what you mean. I got your message completely. I've never felt so oppressed and excluded in my life!"

While I had not intended to exclude anyone—that was the op-

posite of my message—we both learned something that day. He learned something of what women have felt all along. I learned that we must mix our metaphors carefully in order not to repeat the exclusivity we've been subjected to.

I want to share some of the specific ways we can introduce gender-inclusive language and imagery for God. First, search for the hidden examples of feminine imagery for God in the Bible and in Christian tradition. Don't be put off by the fact that past interpretations may not have brought all of this to light. Biblical scholars can be blinded by cultural prejudices just like anyone else—some people would say more so! But my book *From Hierarchy to Equality* makes it clear that we must always be wary of the cultural presuppositions of biblical interpreters. And that includes our own blindnesses. We are all bound up in our culture. The paradox is that unless we realize this, we actually limit God from speaking a fresh word to us.

Another suggestion: build on the cues the Bible and the history of our tradition have given us. You might have to look in unexpected places sometimes. The Shakers, for example, developed the concept of the Father-Mother God. I think the concept has potential as long as we make it clear we are not talking about two gods, but about one fully inclusive God. The parental image of God is still a good one, even though we need to augment it, because it not only points to the power of God, but it helps us trust a God who takes a loving parental interest in us.

But God is also a friend. Here is a place feminine imagery could be used effectively. The image of God as friend was developed especially well during the middle ages. One Cistercian, Aelred of Rievaulx, noted that the inner dynamic of friendship is one of equalizing. Real friends try to be on a par with one another. Jesus said he called us slaves no longer but friends. So we are actually being fashioned into God's friends—quite a mind-boggling idea.

Another place I see a strong theological avenue for feminine imagery is in our speaking and thinking of the Holy Spirit. Now I am most definitely *not* advocating that we should have "two "he's" and one "she"." But there is some real theological room here, because the Holy Spirit has been the least stereotyped of all three divine persons or "modes-of-being." The true identity of the Holy Spirit has eluded Christian thinkers, and they have tended to fuse the Spirit with the other two, sometimes calling the Spirit an energy or a bond of love. Yet because of the Spirit's anonymity and hiddenness, she is especially close to the role of hiddenness women in our culture have had to assume. And so here is a place we can seize the stereotype and revolutionize it.

But we must not focus solely on the Spirit as we introduce feminine imagery for God, or else we will end up with, as I put it rather crudely before, "two "he's" and a "she"," which is an equally distorted view of God, since it destroys the unity of the Godhead, the foundation of our faith.

The key issue as we open ourselves to feminine language and imagery for God is to reclaim our birthright—the depth and fullness of knowing God. For we have lost this treasure along with the loss of our own wholeness. By searching for the hidden aspects of God and bringing them to light, we will also bring the fullness of our own selves into the light.

So I urge to expand your knowledge of God. Begin to incorporate the feminine imagery for God into your worship, into your thinking and into your speaking. Recognize that since you are *already* doing theology—let it be *good* theology.

But be careful not to submit again to the yoke of bondage.

Because it is for freedom that Christ has set us free.

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[1] *The Power of Language Among the People of God and the Language about God "Opening the Door"* UPC (U.S.A.) 1979.

[2] Lady Julian of Norwich, 13th C.; Clement of Alex. (2nd C); John Chrysostum (4th C); (Mother hen imagery).

PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

From Knowledge to Wisdom: The Seminary as Dining Hall

by Hal Miller

Theological education ought to be nourishing to the spirit. At least there are texts of Scripture which might give you that impression. Psalm 19 insists that the Law of the Lord makes the simple wise, gives joy to the heart, and tastes sweeter than honey (vv. 7, 8, and 10). A proverb says the one who finds wisdom and understanding is blessed, for these things are worth more than any material treasure (Prov.. 3:13–15). And 2 Timothy sees Scripture as a resource for wisdom and righteousness (3:15–16).

So, it's no surprise that many people enter seminaries with the expectation of gaining not merely knowledge, but wisdom as well. To be able to spend two (or three, or more) years studying the things of God—ah, truly blessed task, one which will surely nourish the spirit. This is not mere "secular learning"; this is pursuit of the very treasures of the kingdom.

Sometimes reality strikes in the middle of memorizing a Hebrew conjugation. Sometimes it invades when one is trying to see the difference between *posse non pecare* and *non posse pecare*. And sometimes it comes during an attempt to figure out a use of the genitive in some Pauline epistle. But whenever it comes, it comes as a shock. This is sweeter than honey? If this is the treasure of the kingdom, why don't I hear the jingle of coins in my pockets? With a jolt, you come to the realization that you might be gaining knowledge, but wisdom is nowhere involved.

That shock is a common part of seminary experience. No matter what goals and desires you entered seminary with, somehow the process of theological learning has turned dusty and dry. It has become so much rote, no different than learning social statistics or western civ. The days when you read the Bible with child's eyes have gone; now it is merely one more document to be mastered. When before you spent every spare hour immersed in theologies or commentaries, now you find yourself watching the clock anxiously, waiting until you can leave off studying with a minimum of guilt.

A good deal of any sensitive seminarian's time is spent trying to overcome this problem and integrate theological studies with spiritual life. I remember poring over lexical studies, spending hours amidst reference books, and wrestling with the likes of Moltmann, Bultmann, or Cullman, wondering what all this had to do with knowing God. The years I had pictured as glorious and sweet turned out to be just another parenthesis in life—something I had to get through so I could go on to what was really important.

Naturally, such a situation is as troubling to those watching the process as to those who experience it. Spouses, parents, pastors, and professors each in their own ways are disturbed by the lack of connection between theological education in America and the spiritual nurture which one can indicate by the word "wisdom.". Among the learned, this distress spawns ever renewed cries to integrate the spiritual with the intellectual in seminaries and theological schools. We all agree: wisdom needs to be added to our knowledge.

But what are the recommendations? Compulsory chapel attendance? Prayer before lectures? Stricter rules concerning lifestyle and deportment? Fine. But all these assume that the problem is merely an organizational one which can be solved by adding (or subtracting) one element or another from theological education. Unfortunately, such a strategy simply places two things—the intellectual and the spiritual—beside each other in the life of a seminarian. And that's not the same as integrating them.

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Furthermore, the very way we ask the question, "how can we integrate the spiritual with the intellectual?" is itself a symptom of the problem rather than a step towards its solution. We implicitly assume that the intellectual dimension is the substance of theological education and the spiritual is simply a kind of lubricant to make it go down smoothly. We seem to think the "spiritual" is something akin to the religious doggerel one can find on greeting cards: edifying, uplifting, but intellectually vacuous. And the intellectual is—sad to say—dry and difficult, but nonetheless the central goal of theological education.

But what if this analysis itself is already a blunder? What if the intellectual and the spiritual are not like two substances which need to be mixed together to make a happy seminarian? What if, rather, they are two different aspects of the same reality? If so, it would mean that the problem does not require us to bring together two disparate, alien things but to find out how *we* have become so fragmented that we can perceive these only as two separate realities. We need to ask why we find ourselves choosing between knowledge and wisdom rather than seeing knowledge become wisdom. Putting it another way, the problem is not to bring together the intellectual and the spiritual (as if they were somehow far apart). The problem is to see the intellectual in the spiritual and the spiritual in the intellectual.

To try to visualize this different kind of solution, maybe we would be better off returning to that initial confrontation with frustration in seminary, the "This is sweeter than honey?" experience. The problem is common indeed, but more important than this it is similar to other problems we experience. And a comparison to one of these can give us a helpful doorway into this problem. I know that it may seem perverse to talk about "theological junk food" or bolting your spiritual meals (both of which I am presently going to do), but I have found some aspects of eating to be not unlike the frustrations I experienced in seminary. For in some ways, the "This is sweeter than honey?" experience amounts to feeling very full of knowledge and hopelessly hungry for wisdom.

Consider this: I have found myself, more often than I would like to admit publicly, rushing around without time for a proper meal. Rather than take steps to make my schedule more humane, I resort to that all-American solution to the problem: fast food. A Big Mac, fries, and a shake later, I'm off and continuing to run.

Yet a couple hours later, although I'm not exactly hungry, I have a vague feeling that something is wrong. I'm unsatisfied. I have a taste for . . . no, that's not it. I need to . . . uh uh, I just ate. The problem is that I didn't just eat. I *thought* I ate; I certainly went through the motions of placing food in my mouth, chewing it briefly and then swallowing. And yet it's some how not satisfying. Even though I did every thing we naively would call "eating", my vague dissatisfaction is the first sign that something is wrong. Maybe the simple act of eating bears closer examination.

Food, after all, has at least two different functions for human beings: it tastes good and it nourishes us. Both of these functions were apparently intended by the Creator. It seems to me that God could easily have made us so we gained nourishment the same way we get oxygen—by a continual, mostly unnoticed process of breathing. Instead, we get our nourishment from food, which exists in a mind-boggling variety of forms. We might easily have been formed to gain our nutrition from some kind of Soylent Green in our environment. But instead, God laid out every different tree of the garden (save one) from which we might eat. This pleasure which God intentionally included in eating involves more than mere variety of taste. Food also gives us sights, smells, and social meanings which are not simply matters of the tongue. Though many of God's creatures feed, we have meals. And our meals are times for fellowship as well as an intricate web of beauty, smells, and tastes. This variety and aesthetic pleasure of food was our Maker's intention, just as much as was the nourishment it gives us.

But nourishment was also part of God's intention for food. The human body needs a wide variety of trace elements and other nutrients. And by eating a reasonable balance of various food, we can get these with little difficulty. But under normal circumstances, we cannot consume unlimited quantities of food. Rather, when our nutritional needs are more or less fulfilled, we become full and desire no more food. If the only function of food were the aesthetic pleasure of taste, we might expect eating to be something more like seeing. We can look at things (and gain pleasure from seeing) almost indefinitely. But because food is for both nourishment and taste, we do not eat indefinitely.

So, it appears that in the bounty and variety of God's good creation we have been given food for two different but intimately related reasons: taste and nutrition. Food nourishes and delights, and doesn't do one without the other. All this, however, is under normal conditions, a phrase which doesn't describe our era very well at all. When we bolt meals to keep up with our own personal rat race, we separate those two aspects of eating. For one "good" reason or another, our fast food mentality drives apart that which belongs together.

We have even managed to separate that which belongs together by creating a whole new kind of food—junk food. Junk food just tastes, that's all; it is taste robbed of nourishment. You don't have to be a natural foods fanatic to see that there is something seriously wrong with that kind of thing. When you eat junk food, you feel like you're eating, and it might even taste quite interesting. The only problem is that your body is fooled into thinking it is being nourished (since no one told it that taste and nutrition could be separated). In reality, however, all you are getting is "empty calories." What is it that is so wrong with this situation? The key thing (and the one which will help us understand the problem of knowledge and wisdom) is that in order to prefer fast food or create junk food, we have to take two things which belong together—the aesthetic and nutritional aspects of eating—and drive them apart by "processing." This processing isn't just done by the nasty old multi-nationals who conspire against us by marketing food without nutrition and then selling vitamin pills to make up for the deficit. We are just as guilty, for we "process" our food to tear apart these meanings as well. The "processing" I chose to do when I rushed for the fast-food solution to my schedule destroyed its significance as a meal. I was merely "feeding," and processed by food so that it gave me nutrition without satisfaction.

It is certainly amazing that our culture has been able to develop a kind of food devoid of nourishment, and a way of eating evacuated of pleasure. But in order to appreciate fully the perversity of this situation, you need to consider the long term effects of this kind of diet. After a while, you actually end up preferring junk food to the real thing. Given a choice between a candy bar and a carrot, what red-blooded American kid would fail to choose the candy bar? After awhile, you become habituated into thinking that food is *supposed* to be like this—merely taste and empty calories. Isn't that why God saw fit to give us multivitamins?

Or think of the other side. If I take the hours necessary to prepare and eat a meal with others, those are hours I will not devote to "important" things. But if I grab a bite here and there, I have more time for studying or appointments or evangelism or . . . If we had been meant to eat slowly, God wouldn't have given us microwaves and Big Macs.

Now you can imagine the effects of this over a prolonged period. An occasional candy bar is a pretty innocuous (even if nutritionally useless) pleasure. And a Whopper now and again may be a necessary concession to the modern age. But if you make such things a steady diet, you should expect your body and spirit to rebel. And in many cases of the seminarian's "This is sweeter than honey?" experience, something analogous to this has happened. All the theological junk food we eat makes the spirit go bonkers; it rebels because all it is getting are empty calories. Add to this the speed at which we are forced to consume what nourishment there is in the curriculum, and is it any wonder many people leave seminary with a severe case of theological heartburn?

Now, use the analogy to try to rethink your theological eating habits. How is it that we have made it possible to consume theological food all day and yet not be nourished by it? How do we end up gaining knowledge without wisdom? Here too, the key lies in the way we "process" things. Sometimes, someone else has done the faulty processing, delivering to our eyes a piece of theological junk food—pure intellectual savor without nourishment. Still, it would be unfair to put the blame onto others. Even theological marshmallow fluff can be interesting on occasion; spiritual malnutrition only happens when you try to live on it.

Overall, I think there are three ways in which we fail to gain wisdom with our knowledge, which you can think of as three bad ways of processing. The first concerns the way we select our theological food: we tend to go for taste rather than nutrition. There are all kinds of exegetical studies, or theological ramblings, or ethical questionings to delight the intellect. And intellectual delight is not to be despised. Yet if intellectual delight is the only criterion you use for choosing a diet of reading, you run the risk of trying to live on theological twinkies. Other, more substantial foods might not give you the instant gratification of a sweet nothing, but they will at least nourish you.

Don't misunderstand me. I certainly don't shy away from the desserts of the intellectual world. The latest controversy out of Germany (or California) attracts my attention as much as anyone else's. But I have learned that I can't make a steady diet of these things and stay healthy. I also need the more earthy nourishment of Augustine, Luther, Anselm, and Edwards, even though I know I have to chew them more thoroughly. I have learned to eat cabbage and squash as well as candy and cakes. And in the process, I have learned that the vegetables taste good too (though liking theological spinach seems to be an acquired taste rather than a natural one).

Second, if you want to gain nourishment from theology, you can't wolf it down and rush off to something else. There is no such thing as spiritual fast food. If you try to eat things quickly, without adequate chewing and savoring, all you'll get is indigestion. Unfortunately, those of us who grew up with TV have a very difficult time understanding this. We are used to the most earth-shaking problems being resolved within 30 minutes, before it's time for station identification. Yet that is a fantasy world. In truth, no theological problem worth thinking about can be solved quickly, and few works worth reading can be read quickly. Anything of consequence takes time; theological nourishment is no exception. It requires long hours of mulling and questioning, and needs to be thought of as more like a leisurely meal than a hamburger on the run.

Third, you cannot get proper theological nutrition by tasting from every one else's plate and never sitting down to your own. Even with physical food, such behavior would be very bad manners; with theological food, it is also injurious. Theological dishes which meet someone else's may or may not meet yours; or, to put it another way, spending all your time nibbling on theological questions in which you have no personal interest is a certain way to remain hungry.

Think of some examples. Does it seem important to you to master the history of Luther's reformation? Or to understand the significance of *hupotassomai* in Romans 13? Or to grasp what Karl Barth was up to? Those are certainly questions which others have thought worth the time spent chewing, but for you to be nourished by those questions, they must become yours. If you try to hover over other people's plates, one after another, without ever sitting down and beginning to chew on the questions which you yourself have, you will certainly remain hungry. But if you eat your own meal, you can also get great delight from sampling from others' plates.

Now, we are in a position to come full circle and see the relation of the intellectual and the spiritual—knowledge and wisdom—in the theological enterprise. Far from being two different things which must be brought together, they are normally two aspects of the same reality, much as taste and nutrition are normally two aspects of eating. To ask how the two can be brought together only show that we have eaten theological junk food for so long that we think we can only get wisdom by adding on a spiritual vitamin pill to our normal diet of Cheetos.

On the contrary, knowledge and wisdom are inherently unified. The reason they are separate in our experience has to do with the way we process them. If this is so, what might be a better process, one which maximizes both taste and nutrition, both knowledge and wisdom? Anselm of Canterbury—whose work falls among the vegetables of the theological world—described such a process as "faith seeking understanding," a phrase which might be worth chewing on.

If theology is "faith seeking understanding," the beginning of the process is in faith, in an orientation of dependence upon and trust in God. But this faith is not static; it is seeking. And if it is seeking, it must be lacking something. Yes—it lacks understanding. To translate this into other terms, one begins the theological process with faith, but not with a smug, satisfied faith. This is a faith which is seeking. How does it seek what it lacks? by asking questions; by looking for answers. What Anselm means by "faith seeking understanding" can be translated just so. He means that the process of theology is a process of "faith asking questions." Most people who go to seminary go because they are asking questions, and want help finding answers. Once they arrive, though, a subtle transformation takes place. Confronted with four or five courses to study—languages, exegesis, systematic theology, pastoral skills, ethics, or whatever—they tend to quit asking questions and start trying merely to absorb answers. Unfortunately, most of these are pre-packaged answers to questions they never asked. They are mere information, filed carefully away to be brought out (maybe) someday. The result is that they spend their time nibbling on others' plates and pay no attention to their own.

Is it any wonder many people leave seminary with a severe case of theological heartburn?

What happened to their own questions? Most likely they too got filed away, somewhere between ecclesiology and eschatology. And the result is that rather than sitting down to a full meal, based on the questions they were really asking, seminary turns into picking from the plates of others, quickly gulping down the morsels one finds there, and (more than likely) choosing far too many of the cute desserts and too few of the coarser but more nourishing dishes.

How can you avoid falling into these three bad ways of processing theological food? One way to go about it is twofold, and is rooted in Anselm's idea of the theological process, which I translated as "faith asking questions." On one hand, you need to give attention to questions that you genuinely have. Most seminary courses are flexible enough that you can mold them toward your own particular issues. Don't be taken away by every theological question which happens to be in vogue—those vary from seminary to seminary and from year to year. If you seriously ask your own questions, you will be better off in the long run than if you superficially ask some one else's. In short, you need to spend some time finding out just what questions you really have, and then pursuing them.

But won't that lead you into a one-sided, idiosyncratic education? Yes; so on the other hand you need to pursue the second side of the theological process—making another's question your own. Let me illustrate. When you find someone (a friend, a professor, or an author) absorbed in an issue which appears silly to you, don't assume that it is inconsequential just because it is not your own question. Rather, try to find out why they see it as important and grasp it for yourself. Notice that this is a very different process than nibbling off someone else's plate. Nibbling implies being a detached diletante in someone else's theological world. The attempt to grasp another person's question means entering that world yourself and being a co-questioner there. In this case, you are seeing the value in a question which some one else has raised, and beginning to ask it yourself.

This double process of faith asking questions—asking your own questions and grasping someone else's questions—can give a way of processing theological food so that knowledge and wisdom are not torn apart, but are left in their naturally integrated state. Being trained in theology, after all, need not be mere intellectual titillation supplemented with spirituality. It can be a feast "sweeter than honey" which leaves you both satisfied and nourished.

How Ellul Transcends Liberation Theologies

by Thomas Hanks

2.1 Christ Alone—Not Marx

As far as I know, just about all the liberation theologians would agree, in theory, that Christ, not Marx, is the supreme authority. But, in practice, this principle does not turn out to be either simple or easy. Many see Marx as a scientific genius; others as a "prophet." But given that so many modern theologians possess a dichotomized worldview, with the authority of Christ and the Scriptures relegated to a nebulous "religious/theological" sphere, in practice the authority of the great "scientist" and "prophet"—like the proverbial camel—very soon to becomes the master of our everyday situation.

On the other hand, the great majority of evangelical Christians find it much too easy "to choose Christ" instead of Marx. Without having suffered poverty or oppression, and having no knowledge of the socio-economic analysis provided by Marx, our "choosing Christ" may easily be an unconvincing "cheap virtue." Ellul would be the last one to pretend to offer the "definitive synthesis" that would resolve the conflict between Marxist teachings and Christian revelation, but he can illumine us with his well-informed writings, which reflect nearly fifty years of living this tension. He attempts to show us how to value the scientific and ethical perceptions of Marx in order to make us more authentically Christian—avoiding the trap of "anticommunism" (the unfortunate error of Solzhenitzyn, according to Ellul).

Reading Ellul disturbs many Christians with right-wing or centrist ideologies because he accepts many Marxist notions. But Christian Marxists are startled by the Ellul's forceful criticism of many of the "sacred cows" in the temples of the left.

Hugo Zorilla, in a book of essays, has objected that another contributor to the same work, Miguez Bonino, falls into the trap of judging "the capitalism of 'already' while proposing a socialism of 'not yet' without judging the exisiting socialisms."[49]

No one could lodge the same complaint against Ellul, who seems to maintain an interminable "lovers' quarrel" with the left. He says little about rightist reactionaries (he dosen't waste energy flogging the horse that Marx had quite effectively slain). Clearly, many Latin American readers, who live under a "reign of death," would prefer that Ellul at least help us a little in our effort to "remove the cadaver" of the horse, since most of us live struggling to breathe under it. But the help Ellul offers us comes much more in the unexpected form of a challenge, purification, and upsetting of the alternatives that confront us. Especially in his most recent book, *Changer de revolution*, it is clear that Ellul's concern is not to resurrect the dead horse of the right, but to free revolutionary forces of their inauthentic elements. This freedom under the lordship of Christ to demystify the sacred cows of Marxism is a characteristic of Ellul's praxis often lacking among theologians of liberation.[50]

2.2 Sola Scriptura—Not the Social Sciences

After his conversion to Marx (1930), Ellul was converted to Christ, during a "somewhat brutal" crisis, through reading the Bible (1932). He completed an entire program of theological study, including Hebrew and Koine Greek (he had been tutoring Classical Greek since the age of 16), but was never ordained. In addition to his theological books, he has published several expository commentaries: on Joshua (1952), II Kings (1966), and Revelation (1975). He has also produced unpublished manuscripts on Micah and Job. After finishing the remaining two volumes of his ethics, Ellul hopes to write a detailed commentary on Ecclesiastes.[51]

We must not think that Ellul is a "conservative Evangelical" with a doctrine of biblical inerrancy *a la* Harold Lindsell (is it possible to imagine Moses, the prophets, John the Baptist, or Jesus and the Apostles considering themselves—or being considered—"conservatives" in their own time?). But, if Ellul does not ally himself with those who incessantly tout a formal definition of biblical authority (verbal inspiration, inerrancy, etc.), the marked prophetic and biblical tone of his writings testifies to his profound search for the sense and message of Scripture. (It is also worthwhile to remember that the principal enemies of Jesus—the Pharisees and scribes—also touted a definition of the authority of Scripture, but without grasping the Scripture's most fundamental sense and message.)

Ellul does not waver in his affirmation of the importance of biblical authority for his work. For example, in the Introduction to *To Will and To Do*, the prolegomena to his ethics, he affirms:

> Lay the cards on the table . . . It would be useless to claim to pursue a moral quest without presuppositions. Such a thing does not exist . . . It is better to have presuppositions which are clear, and which one owns up to candidly, than to pretend not to have any, when such a pretense would reflect only ignorance or a lie . . . I therefore confess that in this study and this research the criterion of my thought is the Biblical revelation, the content of my thought is the Biblical revelation, the point of departure is provided by the Biblical revelation, the method is the dialectic in accordance with which the Biblical revelation is given to us, and the purpose is a search for the significance of the Biblical revelation concerning ethics.[52]

Although Ellul criticized Barth's ethics for failing to take seriously the situation of modern persons as illumined by the social sciences, this dosen't mean that for Ellul the social sciences could usurp the authority of Scriptures. In fact, one can see in Ellul's writings a growing preoccupation with the Word of God, and a zeal to understand and communicate the Bible to modern persons, including non-Christians. For example, in 1982 he led monthly Bible studies on the book of Job for a very heterogeneous group (he explains that his ideal for such groups is to have 25% Protestants, 25% Catholics, 25% Jews, and 25% unbelievers).[53] When explaining the changes in his thought over the last fifty years, Ellul insists that the principal factor has been an increasingly profound understanding of the Bible, an understanding progressively more liberated form philosophical and theological presuppositions.[54]

As in the case of the lordship of Christ, we must not suppose that the practical application of *Sola Scriptura* in relation to the social sciences is simple. Many Christians of the right, just as liberation theologians, want to affirm *in theory* that the Word of God must take priority over scientific hypotheses. But in practice, the whole gamut of human "interpretations" of Scriptures presents us with the difficulty of distinguishing between scientific "hypotheses" and facts.

For example, when ideologically conservative Christians proclaim the Good News to the poor (if it occurs to them to do so), it does not strike them as strange to "complement" (not to say "substitute") the anointing with oil of James 5 with, say, doses of penicillin and much instruction in family planning. However, basic Christian communities, cooperatives, union organizing, strikes, and protest marches—all this strikes them as a "communist" betrayal of the gospel! The nonviolence of the Sermon on the Mount quickly disappears beneath a cloud of "rational-scientific" arguments, "cultural" factors, and twisted exegesis—so that suddenly the Christians of the right are free to support wars in Vietnam and El Salvador, while Christians of the left call for guerrilla warfare (cf Ellul's book, *Violence*).

None of Ellul's readers is completely in agreement with all the biblical interpretations, theological arguments, and scientific affirmations contained in his writings. But the experience of getting to the bottom of the thought of such a respected Christian (one thinks of the atheist Aldous Huxley's reaction to reading *The Technological Society*)[55], a prophetic lay theologian highly skilled in exegesis, can

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provide us with a decisive orientation in our desire to be honest and open before the social sciences and at the same time faithful to the supreme authority of the Word of God. Without denying the value of sound doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture, I believe Ellul shows us how *Sola Scriptura* must be expressed in praxis and understanding, and in the communication of the biblical message to a world in which the social sciences play an increasingly important role.

2. 3 The Option for the Poor—Not Exclusively for the Proletariat

Ellul recognized the decisive influence of Marx in "my decision to side with the poor."[56] Nevertheless, in both his praxis and his writings concerning this theme, he makes a continual effort to recognize as "poor" all those so designated by biblical and sociological criteria—thereby avoiding becoming trapped in the typical ideologies and propaganda of the left:

> For Marx there is a complete analysis of the psychological, sociological, and economic situation of human beings, and the poor person is the person deprived in all these areas. Hence, when I say that Marx oriented me toward always siding with the poor, I am not necessarily siding with those who have no money. I am siding with people who are alienated on all levels, including culturally and sociologically—and this is variable. I will not claim that qualified French workers in the highest category are poor, even though they are subject to the capitalist system. They have considerable advantage, and not just material ones. On the other hand, I would say that very often old people, even those with sufficient resources, are poor, because in a society like ours they are utterly excluded. That is why I keep discovering those who are the new poor in a society like ours.[57]

Ellul insists that "the Christian must be the spokesman for those who are *really* poor and forgotten. . . . Christians specialize in joining struggles that are virtually over and championing those of the poor who already have millions of champions. Which is to say that Christians are very susceptible to propaganda."[58]

Further, Ellul makes us rethink and continually revise our understanding of "poor" and our comfortable and static notion of "opting":

> . . . (T)he Christian *must* change camps once his friends have won; that is, when in the aftermath of its victory revolutionary party assumes power; for the party will immediately begin to oppress the former oppressors. This is the way things regularly go. I saw it in the case of the French resistance to the Nazis.[59]

Nevertheless, Ellul recognized that a situation like that of contemporary Nicaragua is even more complex.[60] The defeated Nazis and French collaborators in the postwar period could not threaten a counter-revolution supported by a great empire. In contrast, the *somocistas* within and without Nicaragua are not in the same situation as the France of 1945 that Ellul describes. Despite the needed clarifications, the option and praxis that Ellul suggests have a great deal of relevance when the Lord of history overturns the powerful. For Christians, love of enemies and the question "Who is my neighbor?" demands that we continually rethink our praxis.

2.4 The Witness to the Truth—Against Propaganda

> You are at liberty to seek your salvation as you understand it, provided you do nothing to change the social order.[61]

Many Christian regard their principal role in the world as the "conserving" of traditional values—as much in society as in Theology—so that they are very comfortable when they receive instructions like the above from their political leaders. Perhaps they would be less comfortable with this reference if they realized that it comes from Dr. Goebbels, Hitler's minister of propaganda! The good German—"conservative"!—Christians did nothing to "disrupt the social order" and thus supported their government in the "just and defensive" war (as all wars are!) that left some fifty million dead, including six million Jews.

When reading the propaganda produced by both governments and almost all the press of England and Argentina during the Malvinas/Falklands war, one realizes that the fundamental problem of propaganda did not disappear with Hitler. It continues to live and flourish under fascist dictators (Argentina) as well as the oldest and most "advanced" democracies (England). And how do Christians respond?

The most common response—as much among Christians as among others—is, in effect, to answer bad propaganda with good (that is, "ours" as opposed to that of "the other side"). Instead of conquering "by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony" (Rev. 12:11), we think to conquer black lies by opposing them with "good propaganda" (public relations, etc.)—or even with "white" lies (1 Jn2:21!)—just so long as they are ours.

I have the profound impression that in circles where liberation theologies are dominant there has not yet been serious reflection—let alone the attempt to liberate themselves—concerning the tyranny of propaganda as an instrument of the state. They have changed sides without manifesting authentic freedom. In some cases they have carefully swept the house clean of capitalist propaganda and permitted the entry of seven even worse demons.

Ellul points out that the dominion of propaganda is one of the fundamental characteristics of technological society, while conformism under this dominion is common to communist, socialist, and capitalist countries. The theologies of liberation currently attract more attention in communist and socialist countries, such as those of Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, China, Cuba—and, above all, Nicaragua. In order to develop a prophetic testimony in such new and distinct contexts, the theologies of liberation will have to confront seriously the phenomenon of propaganda—an area in which Ellul has made a unique contribution as a sociologist and as a Christian.[62]

As Ellul notes, to be molded by propaganda is not so much a problem for humble people, peasants, and the uneducated, but for the "educated" class, with its zeal to have an "opinion" concerning every issue in the world (who almost never deal with issues concerning our experience, but rather depend on the media). Further, even Goebbels recognized that effective propaganda does not so much lie as skillfully select from the many truths the public will be permitted to know.

2.5 The Fight of Faith—Against Violence

We reject the caricature of a certain North American theologian who described Theology of Liberation as "throwing a grenade for Jesus." Nor does it seem to us fair to treat Latin American theologies under the heading "War," as does a prestigious dictionary of New Testament theology.[63] Wars—always just—(Vietnam, Falklands, El Salvador, etc.) play too great a role in the historical praxis and imported theologies of every type that we have swallowed from the North, along with all the Coca Cola. Without doubt, nonviolent and pacifist praxis (of Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Helder Camera, Archbishop Romero, etc..) has had a much better liberation than in traditional theologies.[64]

Many evangelicals, however, have been perturbed to find that some want to interpret the plagues of Exodus not as divine miracles, but as disguised guerrilla activities.[65] Similarly disturbing has been the failure of some to distinguish between the militarism of the sandinistas (the height of "conformism" rather than truly revolutionary!) and the way of the cross—or even the claim that the Kingdom of God has definitively come to earth in Cuba, with Fidel Castro as the "prophet who is to come," the successor to Moses.[66]

Faced with such extremes (which do indeed exist, but are neither as typical nor as dominant as the Coca Cola addicts believe), Ellul's classic little book, *Violence*, which has only recently appeared in Spanish, is of great importance.[67] We have else where indicated that this book, like almost all the writings on this subject, suffers from not having started with a biblical definition of violence.[68] Ellul now recognizes that his argument would be more powerful and convincing had he questioned the definitions that currently dominate—and confuse—the issue.[69]

Nevertheless, it is Ellul (with his years of fighting fascism in Spain and France) who has given us a truly devastating and prophetic analysis of this phenomenon, which is so dominant in our context.

Of particular importance for us is Ellul's refutation of the ar-

gument (so common in theologies of "just war" as well) that seeks to permit violence as a "last resort"—as if Yahweh, the Liberator of the Exodus, who raised Jesus from the dead, had not demonstrated that as long as He lives, there is always another "last resort."[70]

2.6 The Priorities of the Kingdom—Not the Growth of the State with the "Political Illusion"

Who should we credit—or blame!—for having shot the "sweet bird of pietism"? In the U.S. it appears to be the "Moral Majority" of Jerry Falwell and company (with their politicized crusades against abortion and in favor of prayer and Bible reading in public schools, etc.) that has killed the pietistic tradition of "leaving politics at the door" upon entering the sanctuary (usually a naive way of decisively supporting the conservative politics of the status quo).[71]

1. His analysis of authentic liberation (his article on Paul is only a small part of the attention this theme receives in his ethics and other writings);
2. His "rereading" of Marx, springing from his analysis of technique and technology as the dominant factors of the twentieth century (taking the place held by capital in the nineteenth century);
3. His understanding of biblical hope (see *Hope in Time of Abandonment*), which differs radically from the humanistic optimism of Marx, other communisms, and even many Christian theologies;
4. His treatment of authentic individuality and community, almost completely lost in modern society (wherein Ellul accuses both the churches and Marxist groups of conforming rather than offering a prophetic challenge);
5. His discussions of evangelism, conversion, prayer, and biblical exposition;
6. His analyses of diverse political philosophies: capitalism, socialism, communism, democracy, anarchy, etc.;
7. His grasp of the ecological crisis and nuclear issues (energy and arms).

For Christians, love of enemies and the question, "Who Is My Neighbor?" demands that we continually rethink our praxis.

In Latin America it is common to credit the theologies of liberation with the political dimension of the Bible, the gospel, and every ecclesiastical and personal praxis. If the pietism imported by the missionaries is not yet an extinct species, it is becoming as difficult to find as a Quetzal bird in Costa Rica.

With his years in the anti-fascist resistance in Spain and France, followed by two years as the vice mayor of Bordeaux, Ellul came to see that to live out the political implications of Christian faith is not "optional" but "necessary" (whether we do so consciously or not). However, his sociological analysis also enabled him to see the "political illusion" that fails to take into account the realities of totalitarian states in technological societies—and, above all, ignores the preponderant role of bureaucrats and technocrats (who usually determine what the politicians, who claim to be "the decision-akers," must actually say and do).[72] Further, in his expository work on II Kings, *The Politics of God and the Politics of Man*, a part of the canon little known in pietistic circles, Ellul unfolds in a rich and original manner certain transcendent paradigms from the Word of God for the political dimension of our time.

Latin American students observe a common difficulty: they get a "taste" for the political dimension through theologies of liberation, and wind up so "inebriated" by conscientization, campaigns, and political dabbling, that other essential elements of discipleship (personal devotional life, prayer, Bible study, evangelism—which pietism is right to emphasize) become, if not totally eliminated, greatly neglected. They arise from their baptism in the river of liberation looking as skinny as the cows in Pharoah's dream that had gone hungry for seven years. The sudden extermination in so many countries of "pietist sparrows" has left us with a great ecological imbalance!

Ellul's profound analysis of the political dimension of modern life, with its opportunities and its perils and deceptions, and the role of the church (clergy and laity) therein, was written for a different situation. Nevertheless, it contains a great deal of light that can be essential in guiding us through the long dark tunnel of our current situation. The situation of middle class Christians in the older democracies (such as England and the U.S.) is so different that their evangelical theologians cannot even imagine what our questions are, let alone provide us with answers or orientations. Ellul's writings are of particular relevance because they emerge from a similar struggle (in Spain and France) against fascism. In this anti-fascist struggle Christians and Marxists of very different "ecclesiastical" affiliations find themselves dumped together—often surprised and somewhat ashamed—in the same trenches. In this uncomfortable context, both pietists and liberationists may find an unexpected challenge in what Ellul has written from a similar trench.

2.7 Time would fail us . . . (Hebrews 11:32)

Due to the limits shared by writer, readers, and the budget of this journal, we can do no more than suggest some of the other, not yet explored, areas of Ellul's work that would also be useful for developing a more prophetic Latin American theology:

Conclusion

Undoubtedly there are many who would have liked to see this article end—if not begin!—with another section, entitled, "How do the Theologies of Liberation Transcend Jacques Ellul." That would be fair. We don't want to insist stubbornly that the proverbial "old wine"—a Bordeaux, no less!—is undeniably superior to the new liberationist varieties being imbibed so enthusiastically in Latin America. We in no sense desire to deny the transcendent importance of the theological explosion in our context, which we have elsewhere compared to the Reformation itself.[73] But, if Ellul's sociological and theological writings do not constitute all the "fullness" of a liberation theology (which is, in any case, still very much in process of formation), it seems clear to us that the "bordelaise" prophet, like a John the Baptist, has prepared a highway in the desert of our modern technological world.[74]

When we in Latin America read Ellul's writings today, it is vital that we remember they proceeded neither from the Third World nor from the "liberationist" era (1968–83) of our history. We must circumnavigate a certain "hermeneutic circle" to be able to draw lessons and paradigms from them our own context. Nevertheless, it is astonishing that a "little professor" in the Faculty of Law in Bordeaux, on the southwest coast of France, has written with such prophetic discernment about the problems that confront us in current Latin American praxis and theological tasks. Much more than C. S. Lewis, Francis Schaeffer, or other prophetic voices of the Anglo-Saxon world, Ellul has addressed himself fervently to the most important elements of our theological agenda. As Martin Marty has remarked of him:

> . . . (I)f I were asked to introduce one man from the Protestant orbit to let the church know what I think its agenda should be, it would be Ellul.[75]

The importance of Ellul for the communication of the gospel to modern persons is underlined by Robert Nisbet, the Albert Schweitzer Professor Emeritus of Columbia University (N.Y.):

> If, as some have prophesied, a new rebirth and reformation of Christianity awaits us, one which will eradicate the demons of the twentieth century, in which the necessary equilibrium between freedom and moral authority will return, and in which, above all, once again the sense of the sacred, the truly Judeo-Christian-Christian sacred, will become dominant, the writings of Jacques Ellul will be held in the highest

esteem as the fundamental elements that have brought us to this rebirth.[76]

Postscript

Too late for incorporaton into this article, I received the excellent doctoral dissertation of Darrell J. Fasching, *The thought of Jacques Ellul: A Systematic Exposition*, Edwin Mellen Press, New York and Toronto, 1981. Together with the article by John Boli-Bennett (note 29 above), it offers the best available introduction. Fasching does not agree with Ellul's rejection of "utopias" (pp.xxi–xxviii, 170–176). Otherwise, he faithfully expounds many of the areas touched upon in this article.

[49] Hugo Zorilla, "obervaciones y preguntas" (reaction to the paper of Jose Miguez Bonino), in Padilla, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 99.
[50] For more details on the centrality of Christ in Ellul's ethics, see Gill's dissertation (note 26), pp. 240–243
[51] Personal interview, Bordeaux, 1982.
[52] Ellul, *TWTD*, p. 1. For details on the *sola scriptura* principle in Ellul, see Temple's dissertation (note 48 above), pp. 197–461.
[53] Personal interview, Bordeaux, 1982.
[54] Ellul, *ISOS*, p. 75.
[55] Huxley said that Ellul's work, *The Technological Society*, was comparable in importance to Spengler's *Decline of the West*, and that Ellul established the argument he had tried to offer in *Brave New World*; Gill, Introduction to Ellul, *ISOS*, p. v.
[56] Ellul, *POA*, p. 11.
[57] *Ibid.*, p. 12; cp. *BW*, pp. 85-125; *Violence*, pp. 30–35; see the article below.
[58] Ellul, *Violence*, SCM, London, 1970, p. 153.
[59] *Ibid.*, p. 138.
[60] Personal interview, Bordeaux, 1982.
[61] Ellul, *TS*, p. 420.
[62] Ellul, *PK*, pp. 96–136; *Propaganda, passim*; Christians and Van Hook, *Essays*, pp. 128–146.
[63] Colin Brown, ed., *Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1978, III: 972–976.
[64] Pacifist theology and praxis are especially dominant in Chile and Brazil. Interview with William Cook, San Jose, 1983.
[65] Pablo Richard and Esteban Torres, *Cristianismo, lucha ideologico y racionalidad socialista*, Sigueme, Salamanca, 1975, pp. 74–76.
[66] Ernesto Cardenal, *op. cit.*, pp. 20, 31, 57, 85.
[67] Ellul, *Contra los violentos*, Ediciones SM, Madrid, 1980.
[68] Thomas Hanks, *God So Loved the Third World*, Orbis, Maryknoll, 1983, pp. 105–08; Jacques Pons, *L'oppression dans L'ancien Testament*, Letouzey et Ane, Paris, 1981, pp. 27–52.
[69] Personal interview, Bordeaux, 1982.
[70] Ellul, *Violence*, pp. 169–70; cp. Miguez Bonino, *Doing Theology*, pp. 106–31.
[71] Emilio Nunez, "The Challenge of Liberation Theology," in *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, July 1981, pp. 41–42.
[72] Ellul, *The Political Illusion*, Knopf, New York, 1967, *passim*; cp. the critical essays in Christians and Van Hook, *Essays*, pp. 69–90, 128–46; also the dissertation of Fasching, Postscript, note 76, pp. 161–76.
[73] Hanks, *God So Loved the Third World*, ch. 4, "The Bible, The Reformation, and Liberation Theologies."
[74] Gill, "Jacques Ellul: The Prophet as Theologian," p. 9.
[75] Martin Marty, "The Protestant for this Summer," *National Catholic Reporter*, July 3, 1970.
[76] Robert A. Nisbet, "Foreward," in Christians and Van Hook, *Essays*, p. 5. Ellul's last evaluation Ellul has made of Latin American theologies can be seen in the journal he edits, *Foi et vie*, 81:5–6 (December, 1982). In particular, see Ellul's reviews, *"Quelques livres de la Theologie de la Revolution,"* pp. 75–89. The books treated are: Ernesto Cardenal, *Chretiens au Nicaragua, L'Evangile en Revolution*, Caribe-CELEP, 1982, pp. 81–85; Vincent Cosmao, *Changer le Monde*, 1981, pp. 85–89. Ellul has evaluated Cosmao's book as "the first theology of liberation that convinces me" (personal interview, Bordeaux, 1982).

The Politics of Biblical Eschatology: Ronald Reagan and the Impending Nuclear Armaggedon

by Larry Jones and Gerald T. Sheppard

"Pie-in-the-sky" religion is condemned by progressive evangelicals for its lack of political concern, a willingness to postpone issues of social justice in order to meditate on events during the period of the Great Tribulation. So-called "apocalyptic" eschatology appears to be pre-occupied with "things to come," and pays little attention to the way things actually are. Such a neat distinction between piety and politics often proves to be an illusion. Even apocalyptic ideas have direct political consequences for those who hold to them and to the *politeia* who are under their authority or influence. So, too, American politicians have often recognized a connection between public policy and their religious views. More than any other American president in recent history, Ronald Reagan has displayed a keen interest in biblical prophecy. His interest is evidently more than academic, for he has linked a number of political decisions to biblical prophetic scenario familiar to fundamentalist dispensationalism.

Charismatic Christians close to Reagan, Christian journalists, long-time friends and Reagan himself have made reference to the president's interest in prophecy. Reagan met with friends for an afternoon of fellowship on September 20, 1970 to talk about the Holy Spirit and the signs of the unfolding apocalyptic drama. The meeting is described in George Otis's 1971 book *High Adventure* and in Bob Slosser's 1984 *Reagan Inside/Out*.

After his appearance at a charismatic clinic in Sacramento, Pat Boone, his wife Shirley and two friends, George Otis and Harold Bredesen, drove to the Reagan home. Pat Boone told the Reagans of his recent experiences with the Holy Spirit, including the new song he had sung "in tongues." Recent headlines told of civil war in Jordan and Nixon threatened intervention. Reagan listened intently to his old friend.

At some point, Reagan turned the conversation to the subject of Bible prophecy. He told his guests of a story he had heard from Billy Graham. The famous evangelist, a long time friend of Reagan, told him of a talk he had with Conrad Adenauer. The then West German chancellor had asked Graham what the next great news event would be. Graham shrewdly answered, "The return of Jesus Christ."

Reagan, then, listed what he saw as the signs of the times: The scattering of the Jews, the re-gathering of Israel in 1948, and, most especially, the Israeli capture of Jerusalem in 1967. Reagan saw the stage being set for the last act in world history. George Otis described Reagan's using the Bible as a signpost or chronometer of history. For Reagan, the Old Testament prophecies marked the rise and the fall of empires in the timeline of world history. The Bible seemed to him to have authenticated itself by virtue of the complex and intricate "fulfillment of many prophecies." Otis reported that Reagan delighted in the wonderful cadence of history marching with such beauty and precision. Bredesen told the governor that he had failed to mention the most important sign of all, namely, the two great Pentecosts, one of Satan and one of God, which mark the present time as the "last days."

The trial of the cultic Manson murders had only recently filled the television screens and newspaper headlines. For their last fifteen minutes together the little group spoke fervently of their experiences with the Holy Spirit. Pat Boone gave his old Hollywood friend an enscribed copy of his recent book *A New Song*. Boone, Otis, and Bredesen presented Reagan with a copy of an apocalyptic pamphlet they had written, *A Solution to Crisis America*. Before they left the Reagan home, someone suggested they pray together. They joined hands in a circle. In the course of his prayer, George Otis was "possessed by the Holy Spirit." Otis or the Spirit possessing Otis addressed Reagan as "my son" and prophesied that Reagan would one day be "resident of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue." Otis' left hand, the one holding Reagan's right, began to shake and pulsate. Everyone opened their eyes and let go of one another's hands. Ellingwood drove away in the waiting limousine with the visitors. He told them on the ride back to Sacramento that while he held Reagan's left hand, it, also, shook and pulsated when Otis prayed. Later he reported having felt a "bolt of electricity" from Reagan's hand.[1]

Possibly the first published evidence of Reagan's interest in biblical prophecy appeared in the May, 1968 *Christian Life*. In the lead article Reagan's pastor, Donn Moomaw, told of a visit he and Billy Graham had had with Ronald Reagan while he was in the hospital.

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They became "engrossed in a discussion of "Bible prophecy in relation to the signs of the times." The writer, William Rose, confirmed that meeting with Governor Reagan. Reagan said,

> We got into a conversation about how many of the prophecies concerning the Second Coming seemed to be having their fulfillment at this time. Graham told me how world leaders who are students of the Bible and others who have studied it have come to this same conclusion—that apparently never in history have so many of the prophecies come true in such a relatively short time.

Reagan added that he had asked Moomaw for more material on prophecy in order to check it out in the Bible for himself. Reagan's keen interest in biblical prophecy seems to have been especially incited by the 1967 re-unification of Jerusalem.

In October, 1983, President Reagan made an apocalyptic telephone remark to Tom Dine, executive director of the American-Israeli public affairs committee. The remark was published, first, by the Jerusalem Post and then picked up by the Associated Press. Reagan told the pro-Israel lobbyist,

> You know, I turn back to your ancient prophets in the Old Testament and the signs for telling Armaggedon, and I find myself wondering if—if we're the generation that is going to see that come about. I don't know if you've noted any of those prophecies lately, but believe me they certainly describe the times we're going through.

Reagan telephoned Dine to thank him for lobbying efforts of AIPAC to secure votes in favor of continued U.S. military presence in Lebanon. The U.S. embassy in Beirut had only recently been destroyed by a terrorist bomb. Only days after President Reagan's aside to Dine, a similar terrorist attack killed 279 U.S. marines near the Beirut airport.

Later, reporters from *People Magazine*, Dec. 6, 1983, asked Reagan about his remark. According to the transcript published in the weekly compilation of presidential documents, Reagan then asked them where it had been published:

> The President: "Where was that?
> Question: In the Jerusalem Post. And I was going to say,'Is this really true? Do you believe that?"
> The President: "I've never done that publicly. I have talked here, and then I wrote people because some theologians, quite some time ago were telling me, calling attention to the fact that theologians had been studying the ancient prophecies—What would portend the coming the Armageddon?—and have said that never, in the time between the prophecies up until now has there ever been a time in which so many of the prophecies are coming together. There have been times in the past when people thought the end of the world was coming, and so forth, but never anything like this. And one of them, the first one who ever broached this to me—and I won't use his name; I don't have permission to. He probably would give it, but I'm not going to ask—had held a meeting with the then head of the German government years ago when the war was over, and did not know that his hobby was theology. And he asked this theologian what did he think was the next great news event worldwide. And the theologian, very wisely, said, "Well, I think that you're asking that question in because you've had a thought along the line." And he did. It was about the prophecies and so forth.
> So, no. I've talked conversationally about that.
> Question: You've mused on it. You've considered it.
> President: (laughing) Not to the extent of throwing up my hands and saying, "Well, its all over." No. I think which ever generation and at whatever time, when the time comes, the generation that is there, I think will have to go on doing what they believe is right.
> Question: Even if it comes?
> President: Yes.

Two years earlier, while President Reagan was lobbying Congress for AWAC surveillance aircraft for Saudi Arabia, he talked with Senator Howell Hefflin of Alabama about biblical prophecy. Senator Hefflin told reporters:

> We got off into the Bible a little bit. We were talking about the fact that the Middle East, according to the Bible, would be the place where Armaggedon would start. The President was talking to me about the Scriptures and I was talking a little to him about the Scriptures. He interprets the Bible and Armaggedon to mean that Russia is going to get involved in it.[2]

On another occasion, according to the New York Times, President Reagan euphemistically named the MX missile, a first strike weapon, "the peacemaker." His aides objected that this biblically based euphemism was too easily confused with "pacemaker," a word with an unpleasant connotation. Reagan obliqued and changed the missile's name to "peacekeeper," a word which more properly invokes images of old west shoot-outs rather than the Sermon on the Mount.

Herbert Ellingwood, chairman of the Federal Merit System Protection, and longtime Reagan aide, recently told a reporter that Reagan has read and repeatedly discussed Hal Lindsey's *Late Great Planet Earth*. Reagan apparently believes in the apocalyptic scenario popularized by Lindsey, Falwell, and a host of other fundamentalist dispensationalists. According to this scenario, the Gog-Magog war will be a Soviet invasion of Israel. The invading Soviets and their allies will be crushed either by God or the U.S. nuclear arsenal, used as a tool in the hand of God. That war sets the stage for an Anti-christ, totalitarian regime. At the end of seven years of Tribulation, Jesus will come again to defeat the Anti-christ and to establish his millennial kingdom.

George Otis, who prophesied Reagan's presidency in 1970, believes that an Arab-Israeli war will trigger the "Gog-Magog" conflagration in which God/America will destroy the Soviet military machine. Otis writes in his 1974 book, *The Ghost of Hagar*,

> The Bible clearly says that this troop movement WILL still take place one day in the near future. When will this be? Could it be during 'War Number Five' coming up against Israel? The early percolating of War Number Five has already begun. (Otis emphasis)

Otis foresees America coming to the rescue of Israel. "America," he writes, "will be blessed for her sacrificial role during Israel's crisis hour."

Translated into real political terms, this scenario means, arguably, a preemptive American first strike against a perceived Soviet attack on Israel. In order to protect Israel, the U.S. must defeat Russia. In order to "win" the war, a nuclear first strike is necessary. America's "sacrifice" would be the destruction caused by the Soviet second strike retaliation. But Otis hopes to be raptured out before the bombs explode.

George Otis is a former electronics manufacturer who made nuclear weapon system components. He now devotes his time to his "High Adventure" ministry and operated four radio stations in southern Lebanon. The late Major Hadad, a Phalangist leader, was a close associate of Otis. Otis' "Voice of Hope" radio devotes part of its programming to the Phalangist line. He first met Reagan the day he uttered his presidential prophecy. He interviewed Reagan in the 1976 presidential campaign and again during the 1980 presidential campaign Otis was honorary chairman of "Christians for Reagan," an offshoot of Christian Voice.

On a number of occasions during the 1980 campaign, candidate Reagan remarked that "this may be the last generation." Dispensationalists like Hal Lindsey and Tim LaHaye are board members of Christian Voice, which has rallied support for Reagan's moral agenda. For the 1984 presidential campaign, LaHayes's "American Coalition for Traditional Values" (ACTV) is organizing a highly selective, voter registration drive to bring out the "born again" vote. Otis said in a recent interview that Reagan's re-election, "could make a difference in the timing of Jesus' return."

In 1981 Reagan's appointee, James Watt, then Secretary of the Interior, told a House Committee, "I don't know how many future generations we can count on before the Lord returns." Watts remark raised a furor and resulted in perhaps some unfair parody. Watt made his statement so casually because fundamentalist dispensa-

tionalists view the coming Tribulation as a time of purifying violence will cleanse the earth for her millennial replenishment. George Otis, in his 1974 *Millennial Man*, writes, "Earth needs and will soon get her Millennium overhaul." For Otis, as apparently for Watt, the energy crisis was also a sign of divine providence:

> Before all the earth's gears lock up for want of lubrication, this age will close. The oil supplies which God placed in the planet will prove adequate to squeak through this era.

The earth, Otis writes,

> needs to be born again. But before it can, there must be a clearing away of everything decadent. Our all-wise Heavenly Father knows He must 'PLOW UP THE EARTH,' root out and eliminate everything that won't harmonize with His Millennial-life blueprint.

As Otis sees it, the earth must be destroyed first and then Jesus will return with his saints to "re-plant, re-build, and re-organize." This is the same Otis who, in his 1976 T.V. interview with candidate Reagan, asked

> Governor Reagan, concerning another country that is extremely unique . . . Perhaps the most dramatic Bible prophecy which has been fulfilled right in our own day is the re-emergence of Israel as a nation. What do you feel America should do if ever in the future, Israel were about to be destroyed by attacking enemy nations?

Reagan answered,

> Well, here again we have a relationship. We have a pledge to Israel to the preservation of that nation. They are an ally and have been a long time friend and ally and, again, I think we keep our commitments. I think there is a tendency today that goes along with the things you were mentioning earlier in our talk about the easy way and there are many people taking advantage of the war weariness that came from Vietnam, that long conflict. There are many people who would like to say that, that no agreement is worth keeping if it causes trouble to ourselves. We can't live this way; we have an obligation, a responsibility, and a destiny. We are the leader of the free world and I think, to a certain extent, in the last few years we have tended to abdicate that leadership. A very definite withdrawal from moral commitments.

President Reagan has frequently spoken of "God's plan" for America but has not publicly elaborated what he believes God's plan to be. Reagan delighted many evangelicals with his call for a national revival and his own public testimony to Jesus Christ. Privately, the president has talked repeatedly of his belief in an imminent "Gog-Magog war" involving the Soviet Union. Does the president believe that God has planned a national revival before the Tribulation and then an American sacrificial role in a nuclear Gog-Magog war? Just what the president's thinking is on the question of the secret Rapture is unknown. The president has, in a 1984 public speech to the National Religious Broadcasters, quoted from post-tribulationist Pat Robertson's *Secret Kingdom*. The apocalyptic coalition supporting Reagan includes the entire pre-, mid-, post-tribulationist spectrum. Reagan's longtime friends Pat Boone and Billy Graham are pre-tribulationists. But the difference between pre- and mid-tribulational views is sometimes left up in the air. The people in Reagan's eschatological support group have learned to agree to disagree on certain nuances. Regardless, presidential beliefs in matters of biblical prophecy become a public issues if he sanctions, even by his public silence, this eschatological rationalization for the nuclear build-up for what seems to his supporters to be an inevitable nuclear conflict in the Near East.

Certainly Reagan's fundamentalist dispensational views, obtained through popular literature, like that of Hal Lindsey and George Otis, should not be equated with the essence of "apocalyptic" interpretation. While not rejecting the value of apocalyptic literature in the Bible, an evangelical New Testament scholar, George Ladd, wrote one of the more persuasive criticisms of these particular dispensational claims in his *The Blessed Hope*. Some Marxists associate themselves with apocalyptic expectation, and a major contemporary theologian, Jürgen Moltmann, has persistently placed a positive stress on apocalyptic themes in his "theology of hope." Black theologian James Cone has similarly spelled out the importance of the "eschatological and future expectation" essential to the black church's understanding of the salvation story, often in terms of "the gospel train."[3] Moreover, "dispensational" views can be found from the time of Augustine and in the work of John Calvin as a way to express views of God's progressive revelation in different periods of history. However, Reagan's statements reflect a particular type of dispensationalism which has only been an option in Christianity since a little more than a century ago.

For example, prior to the nineteenth-century, no figure in Church history advocated the belief in a "pre-tribulation rapture."[4] This doctrine finds its origin in the prophetic studies of J. N. Darby in the 1830's. Yet, now in the twentieth-century, the publishing success of *The Late Great Planet Earth* has given the impression to the public that this position is one commonly accepted by biblical and theological scholars in seminaries across the county. The opposite is the case. In fact, most scholars have for so long ignored the whole position that many would not know the intricacy of its terms enough to refute it. They may be correctly challenged to take more seriously the popular views within the church and to address more adequately the eschatological questions too often casually side-stepped in seminary lectures and sermons, but they know that these views have almost no standing among their seminary colleagues.

In Timothy Weber's recent study of dispensationalism, he observes that the popularity of prophecy conferences during the last half of the nineteenth-century had subsided by the beginning of the twentieth-century because premillennarian views lacked any consensus among evangelicals. Nevertheless, World War I attracted renewed attention to matters of biblical prophecy and the dispensational pre-millennialist claimed that the break-up of the Ottoman Empire confirmed exactly their predictions based on Scripture. By 1919 prophecy conferences gained renewed popularity and sprouted up across the country. Favorite teachers and their elaborate, colored charts sought to diagnose the future of world politics.[5] Eschatological charts carried their own psychological apologetic, often more persuasive than the technical arguments, for instance, between C. I. Scofield and H. A. Ironside, over the exact nature of "literal interpretation" and how strictly one must distinguish between the church and Israel in Scripture for "the system" to be exegetically sound. Many pentecostal groups, for example, adopted dispensational outlooks corresponding to these charts but generally neither understood nor endorsed the underlying hermeneutic of Scripture which justified the charts.[6]

Because of the timing and success of these new prophecy conferences after the World War I, Weber notes,

> By 1920 premillennialist revivalists could afford to repress their doctrine, while before then they had been careful to remember premillennarialism's distinct minority status withing the evangelical mainstream.[7]

If one can, as historian E. Sandeen has argued, think of "fundamentalism" as a movement in reaction to "higher criticism" from the 1860's, it was only in the 1920's that the term "fundamentalist" was invented to describe a wedding of conservative historical views of Scripture on one hand, with a pretribulation rapture, premillenarian estimate of biblical prophecy on the other.

Weber, and Lewis Wilson in his *Armaggedon Now*, review the ensuing history of speculation by fundamentalist dispensationalists regarding current events through the outbreak of World War II, the founding of the state of Israel, the cold war with Russia, and the present period of increasing nuclear tensions.[8] Of course, everyone has a right, perhaps an obligation, to try to estimate what will happen in the future. The very symbolism of the endtimes within biblical prophecy invites a yearning for more precise revelation about the future of this planet. At this point, in our judgment, fundamentalists exhibit their most serious misuse of Scripture. By insisting on a rigorous, historical type of literalistic exegesis of the Bible, they strive to secure additional information hidden from the ordinary reader in the ambiguity of apocalyptic texts. They think they can peep behind veils which were not drawn aside for the author of the book of Revelation. But this dispensationalist ap-

proach, again, in our judgment, misconstrues the nature of the "sensus literalis" of Scripture, for literal interpretation of a "symbol" must *sustain* the text as symbolic or it ceases from being, any longer, "literal." Unless a biblical text is really a secret code (perhaps of parables, cf. Lk. 8:10) which only the insiders rightly understand, then the very power of symbolic texts lies in their multi-valency, their endless ability to contribute to the imagery and imagination of faith without allowing a single translation to end their symbolic interpretation once and for all or in favor of *our own* views of the world.

Only the return of Jesus Christ could end the symbolic interpretation of these apocalyptic prophecies in the same way as did the person and work of Christ in the first-century regarding the Christian eschatological interpretations of the Hebrew Bible. A prime example of the danger in premature speculation, like that proffered by so many fundamentalist dispensationalists, can perhaps be found in the Gospel story of Peter's confession of Jesus in Matt. 16:13–23. Recall how Jesus posed the key question to his disciples, "Who do men say that the Son of man is?" After other disciples volunteer various opinions, Peter responds with the confession, "You are the Christ (lit. "the Messiah"), the Son of the Living God: (v. 16). Jesus seems elated: "Blessed are you, Simon Bar Jona!" We next find the classic text in which Peter is given the so-called "power of the keys" and made the rock upon which a future Christian church will be built.

Then, in this new atmosphere of understanding, Jesus begins to tell his disciples for the first time that he will suffer, die and be resurrected. Immediately, the same Peter, in some sense relying upon his own orthodox eschatology chart regarding the future of the Messiah, rebuffs Jesus, "God forbid, Lord! This shall never happen to you" (v. 22b). This disciple whom Jesus had just blessed, then received the strongest rebuke ever given a disciple: "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me; for you are not on the side of God, but of men." (v. 23) While Peter may have had the correct christology, he had a wrongly presumptuous eschatology which reduced the mystery of God's revelation to his own literalistic assessment of biblical prophecy. Modern views to the degree that they venture the same presumption, often at the price of marginalizing even the "plain" teaching of Jesus, invite the same rebuke from God who will surprise us and in whose hands the future must remain. The idea that America as a nation could tempt Jesus to return by offering him the burnt sacrifice of a world-in-nuclear-flames is a blasphemous parody of Christianity. Prophecy was never offered to sanction such an attack on creation.

The symbolism of prophecy checks those who cannot withstand surprises or mysteries deeper than any flicker of light within a crystal ball. If Augustine can describe even a creed as "a fence around a mystery," a symbolic fence around a mystery like that found in the apocalyptic writings of the Bible ought to make us more cautious than ever.

Our concern with Reagan's comments are, finally, twofold. First, the popular literature upon which he relies on is for us theologically dangerous and presumptuous, risking a rebuke from God like Christ gives to Peter. Of course, this theological critique does not depreciate either the value of apocalyptic literature in Scripture or the necessity of hope, with freedom to imagine what the future might portend. Second, an equally serious concern is that Reagan has been linking these speculative, fundamentalist views of Bible prophecy to his pragmatic vision of the world and to the role his presidential policies play in it. It is one thing to speculate about implications of Bible prophecy, it is another to take one's speculation as seriously as established facts which then can be cited in support of one's political decisions. Reagan has been cautious not to voice his position on biblical prophecy in major public speeches, but he has, at a minimum, confirmed a connection between prophecy and some of his policies to insiders in a casual but direct manner. Moreover, Reagan has openly supported the fundamentalist dispensationalist teachers, like George Otis and Jerry Falwell, who then publicize their special rapport with the President on these matters and leave no doubt that a ballot cast for Reagan is a vote for the right team in the final World Series of these last days.

In sum, not every fundamentalist dispensationalist crosses the line from speculation to confident prediction regarding contemporary political events. But the history of dispensationalists doing so is a long and disturbing one. At stake also is the most difficult issue of how religious belief ought to influence one's decisions in public political office. In 1980, a public confession of being "born again" was almost required of serious presidential contenders. We hope that the presidential election in 1984 does not become a mandate to experimentally test the dispensationalist hypothesis with a war of our own making.

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[1] The description of Reagan's meeting with Boone, Otis, Bredesen, and Ellingwood is a composite draw from published statements and especially through interviews by Joe Cuomo of WBAI, New York City. Cuomo and, at times, Larry Jones, have had extensive telephone conversations about these matters with Otis, Bredesen, and Ellingwood. References to "a reporter" primarily have Cuomo in mind. A documentary on the subject, with Larry Jones and Gerald T. Sheppard serving as consultants and commentators, has been aired several times in the New York City area and will, in a revised form, be aired internationally in the next few months. Among the many recently published journalistic investigations on Reagan and eschatology is "Does Reagan Expect a Nuclear Armaggedon?" which was the lead editorial in *the Washington Post*,, Sunday, April 18, 1984. It was written by Ronnie Dugger, publisher of the *Texas Observer*, with Larry Jones. Another article on the same subject by Dugger and Jones will appear in the next issue of *Mother Jones*.

[2] *The New York Times*, Oct. 29, 1981.

[3] *God of the Oppressed*, (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), p. 56–57.

[4] Timothy Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Premillennialism 1875–1925*, (New York: Oxford, 1979), p. 13-42.

[5] Smith, p. 21-24

[6] Gerald T. Sheppard, "Pentecostalism and the Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism: The Anatomy of an Uneasy Relationship," p. 1–26, in *Pastoral Problems in the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement*, ed. by Harold D. Hunter (Cleveland: Church of God School of Theology, 1982). A paper delivered to the Society of Pentecostal Studies, held Nov. 3–5, 1983.

[7] Weber, p. 52.

[8] Cf., also, E. R. Chamberlin, *Antichrist and the Millennium*, (New York: Saturday Review Press, 1975).

Well's Introduction to Francis Schaeffer's Jeremiad

by Ronald A. Wells

When the editors of the *Bulletin* requested permission to reprint my article from the *Reformed Journal*, the late Francis A. Schaeffer had not yet commented on it. Since then his last book, *The Great Evangelical Disaster* (Crossway Books, 1983) has appeared, so the editors asked that I take that writing into account and append the following for clarification. Even though Mr. Schaeffer is no longer with us, there are many persons who have been influenced by him, and it is with them that I would engage in dialogue.

While Mr. Schaeffer and I may well have disagreed on certain matters, that disagreement always proceeded in an atmosphere of mutual respect. I am very pleased by the high tone and personal grace of his final evaluation of my writing—a tone which is in marked contrast to the critique on the same subject offered by his son, Franky, in his book, *Bad News for Modern Man* (Crossway Books, 1984). The younger Schaeffer's book has rightly been called "an ugly book" by Gilbert Beers of *Christianity Today*. Its treatment of a host of Christian scholars and institutions is beneath criticism, if not contempt, and it will not be discussed here. Francis A. Schaeffer's *Evangelical Disaster*, while hard-hitting, is nevertheless scholarly in tone and intent, and it is at one with the character of the author whose life and was work typified by an unfailing grace.

The subject on which we disagreed was the Reformation, or, more accurately, the uses to which the Reformation may be put

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for apologetic purposes. Throughout his many books, Mr. Schaeffer repeatedly used the term "the Reformation Base." To him the Reformation was the reference point from which modern society ought to be evaluated. In it he finds socio-religious propositions which are re said to be "true," and it is the abandonment of those "true" propositions which account for the malaise of our own time. In short, he asked, if we do not have an ahistorical and propositional basis to judge modern culture, the cause is lost. As he wrote in *Evangelical Disaster*, if one follows my views, "Everything the Reformation stood for is swallowed up in a morass of synthesis and relativity" (p. 118).

I need not remake the points in the above article, but would add a few points of clarification on the relationship of Renaissance humanism to the Reformation. Humanism in the Renaissance was not so much a philosophy as a methodology by which a number of philosophies—both sacred and profane—were possible. At its most basic, humanism was about the right of private conscience to govern action. Some humanists asserted this right individually and contemporaneously, others corporately and historically (what Crane Brinton called, respectively, "exuberant" and "spare" humanisms, in his classic book, *The Shaping of Modern Thought*). Exuberant humanists are clearly forerunners of the democratic individualists of modern times. Most humanists, however, and especially those religiously inclined in Northern Europe, should come under the rubric of "spare." From them, their rebellion was not against authority itself, but "wrong" authority, in their view. But, how was one to know "wrong" authority? Herein is the basis of the humanist methodology—i.e., in its insistence that a better prescription for "right" authority can be found in antique sources, hence the insistence that scholars learn Greek, Latin and Hebrew. The majority of intellectuals in the Renaissance employed the humanist methodology insofar as they judged then-contemporary culture by the standards of the past, to which they had access to the writings of past wisdom (the "classics").

In the Reformation the Protestants employed the "humanist methodology" insofar as they objected to then-current religious doctrine and practice. For most of them, their protest was not against religious authority itself, but against "wrong" authority, in their view. For them, the antique source to which they repaired, via the ancient languages, was the Christian scriptures. This led to the Protestant slogan "scripture alone," by which it was meant that the Bible was the source for Christian believing and behaving. so, most Protestants conformed, methodologically, to the spare tradition of humanism. Let it be restated that humanism was not so much a philosophy but a method by which a number of philosophies were possible. Let it also be said that, while the methodology of referring to antique sources united the users, it is of fundamental difference that one referred to the "wisdom" of Greece and Rome and the other to the Christian scriptures as authoritative. But like any movement based on free choice and selective reading of texts, they could not agree on much more than the Bible was "authoritative" and they were no longer content to remain within the historical church. Moreover, even though Lutherans and Mennonites both were Protestants they shared very little; indeed, if Lutherans had to choose, they would find much more in common with the Roman pontiff than Menno Simons.

Much more could be said on the subject, but suffice limitations of space to say that this extremely complex and paradoxical movement known as Protestantism simply cannot be wrenched out of its time and made a repository of timeless truth. Indeed, which "truth" of the various Protestantisms (singular won't do here) can one cite if a "base" is looked for?

The pity of Schaeffer's work is that his notion of "the antithesis" blinded him to the possibilities of creative interpretations. If one cannot accept the Reformation as a propositional "base," then, in his view, one must be a relativist who accommodates to modernity. This is the unfortunate mind of fundamentalism; in its predisposition to regard things as all-or nothing—either one is "reformational" or one has accommodated to modernity. This is a false antithesis. The Christian message *does* provide an alternative hope for a fallen world, but that message is not the sole province of one expression of the Christian tradition. The Reformation *is* part of the Christian tradition and I am glad to count myself as standing in that expression. But the majority of Christians, after all, stand in other expressions of the faith, and our main evangelical writers must allow them to stand with us, as we accept them and respect their expressions of the faith. The key to understanding Christian history is its continuity, not its change. There has always been a paradoxical relationship between Christianity and culture, and—Calvinist triumphalism to the contrary notwithstanding—that was also true in the sixteenth century. To believe as I do that the Reformation was an important revitalization movement in the history of the church—but not a "base"—is to open possibilities for the gospel, not to close them. It is in that task of bringing the claims of a fully-orbed gospel to bear on modern culture that I would join with all Christians in the various expressions of the faith. The question remains, however, if Schaefferites and other sectarian neo-fundamentalists can leave aside their triumphalism and join the rest of us.

Francis Schaeffer's Jeremiad: A Review Article

by Ronald A. Wells

Social commentators from all ideological persuasions seem agreed on a central proposition: There is something very wrong indeed with modern society, especially American society. Whether it be Robert Heilbroner, speaking for the liberal humanist tradition in *The Inquiry in the Human Prospect*, or Christopher Lasch, speaking for the radical tradition in *The Culture of Narcissism*, intellectuals of note are agreed we are adrift in a sea of indecision in modern culture, that the malaise of the human spirit has nearly reached its nadir. It is no longer necessary for intellectuals to demonstrate that something is fundamentally wrong with Western culture; they assume a reader already knows that, so that the critic may merely illustrate the difficulty on the way to offering a way out.

In Francis A. Schaeffer's *A Christian Manifesto* (Westchester, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1981), we have a best-selling book which is another example of this, but in this instance speaking from an evangelical Christian perspective. Thoughtful Christians, such as readers of this journal, must be immediately interested in the contribution offered by Schaeffer in his latest essay.

Schaeffer's work over the past fifteen years has become a *cause celebre* in evangelical Christianity. He is hailed far and wide as the leading intellectual of the evangelical movement, and his various books, pamphlets, and films have been widely appreciated and commercially successful. Since his work arises out of the Reformed tradition of Protestantism, his latest book should be of considerable interest to people who found their religious lives in the Calvinist tradition.

Schaeffer is a Reformed Presbyterian clergyman who has lived in Switzerland for more than thirty years. With his wife Edith, he founded *L'Abri* (the shelter), a place in the Swiss Alps to which many of us have gone. During the first half of his ministry at L'Abri, Schaeffer was little known. His first essay, *Escape from Reason*, was not published until the late 1960s. *The God who Is There* quickly made Schaeffer a force to be reckoned with in the evangelical movement, an intellectual with an increasingly large popular following. *A Christian Manifesto* rounds out a score of Schaeffer publications over the past fifteen years on a variety of subjects, ranging from biblical criticism to art history to social comment.

I first heard Francis Schaeffer lecture while I was a graduate student in Boston in the mid-1960s. He had not yet published any-

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thing of note, and I saw him plot his now-famous "line of despair" on the chalkboard. Hearing *Escape from Reason* in lecture form was a marvelously stimulating experience for those of us (perhaps pretentiously) styling ourselves as "a new generation of evangelicals" (what Richard Quebedeaux would later call "young evangelicals").

Schaeffer had been brought to Harvard and Boston by Harold O. J. Brown, then minister to students at Park Street Church, now professor of theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. Brown had persuaded some well-to-do New England evangelicals to fund a "Christian Contemporary Thought" lecture series, in which a leading Christian intellectual of evangelical commitment would be brought in for a week of lectures once a year. The first year was launched by the American university debut of Herman Dooyeweerd. Francis Schaeffer was the second year's lecturer. Now, nearly twenty years later, I see a significance in that juxtaposition: Dooyeweerd the leader and pathbreaker, Schaeffer the follower and popularizer.

What Schaeffer popularized and published abroad in his successful publication campaign (nearly a million copies of his various books have now been sold, one hears) is a notion that at first hearing would seem like an academic nuance: *the antithesis*. It, like beauty, has meaning in the eye of the beholder. A crude characterization of it would suggest an entire separation between Christian patterns of thinking and "modern" thinking. In the various versions of this, "the modern mind" can either be "secular scientific humanism" that is, the world-view emanating from the rationalism of the Enlightenment, or can even be "humanism," a world-view emanating from the Renaissance. But whether one finds the origins of modern thought in the seventeenth or fourteenth century, the main line is said to be man's displacement of God as central to the meaning of human existence. Christian thinking, it is said, proceeds from an entirely different basis from modern thinking.

The implications of this are manifold, and Christian intellectuals, especially in the Calvinist tradition, have spent a great deal of time and energy exploring the depth and breadth of this insight. Christians outside the Calvinist tradition will immediately recognize this by a less precise name, noting that since Augustine and Tertullian, Christians have been asking what the city of man has to do with the city of God, or what Athens has to do with Jerusalem.

A Christian Manifesto should be seen in this context. The book is of interest because in it the leading intellectual popularizer of evangelically motivated "antithesis" has laid down the gauntlet to modern American culture and states flatly that things have gone too far. He invites Christians into a headlong confrontation with the institutions of contemporary society. In the remainder of this essay I want to offer a description of Schaeffer's main argument and then a critical analysis of it.

Schaeffer's main point is to encourage Christians to see the relationship between ideas and behavior in modern culture. He suggests that for too long Christians have lost sight of the forest while dealing with the trees. In doing a form of intellectual history in this way, Schaeffer asks the Christian community to relate selected matters of particular concern to the "world-view" of our time, to what Carl Becker called "the climate of opinion."

Those readers familiar with Schaeffer's earlier works already know the outline: Humanism has become the dominant mode of thinking and acting in modern society; in founding institutions on an anthropocentric world-view, society has effectively abolished truth. On this view, Schaeffer says the theocentric world-view of Christianity has been totally obliterated in nations like the USSR, where "humanism" is said to reign supreme. The United States is almost a similarly totalitarian state because the basis for behavior and belief is similarly founded on a world-view that systematically excludes God-consciousness and upholds the "secular religion" that the world is "in reality" only material plus energy, shaped by impersonal chance. As Schaeffer said in one of his earlier books, "the gulf is fixed" between these two world-views, and therefore between the types of social and political institutions required by Christians and non-Christians. While Schaeffer realizes that most Christians already understand this in their purely "religious" lives, he encourages them to extend that understanding to all aspects of life.

Within this framework Schaeffer illustrates the depth to which modern society has fallen because of the "humanist religion." Given his prior interest in abortion it is not surprising that many of the examples given have to do with the Supreme Court and "right to life" issues. But there are other areas of concern as well, most notably the place of Christian schools in secular society, and especially the teaching of evolution or creation in them, and in the public schools. Readers might wonder if, in Schaeffer's view, the cause is not already lost. The answer is that it is *almost* lost to the dominance of humanism, but that victory might be snatched from the jaws of defeat if Christians were to *act now*. It is in this context that he lays out the Calvinist-Reformational notions of God-given law, and the responsibility of Christians to resist the state, to reform it, even to overthrow it if society diverges too far from the requirements set down in God's law.

Shifting now from description to analysis, we must ask if Schaeffer's characterizations of modern society and his remedies are to be accepted and followed. My answer to both is a qualified no. While I laud Schaeffer's attempt to encourage Christians to realize that ideas have consequences, and that religion is related to life, he has offered his work with such sophomoric bombast and careless simplicity that it is very difficult to endorse his characterizations of modern society, much less the remedies he offers.

Readers must realize the difficulty from here on in this essay: I am an academic intellectual, Schaeffer is a popularizer who, by his own testimony, is not a philosopher but an "evangelist." While academic and evangelical work are both honorable callings, they are not the same thing, I take it that Schaeffer, in *A Christian Manifesto*, believes himself to be offering a serious critique of modern society, and I intend to take him seriously and critically. If a reader might wonder what "side" I am on ideologically, I affirm that I am on the Christian side, but a side which does its work with care and honesty, which values truth above ideological solidarity. What follows, therefore, is not mere academic condescension but an utterly serious look at some of the main points of Schaeffer's argument. My critique will question Schaeffer on the meaning of humanism and on the meaning of America.

If humanism be the enemy, it would be helpful to delineate just what humanism is. Yet here is exactly the point: no historian will accept an ahistorical, propositional definition. This has been Schaeffer's difficulty throughout his work, although most notable in *How Should We Then Live?* When "humanism" arose in the context of the Renaissance, it offered a methodology by which persons could challenge "authority" in any realm of life. First artists, then literary critics, then historians, then theologians, and finally political thinkers used a method whereby they could rebel against the authority of the "medieval synthesis." Whether in art, literature, history, theology, or statecraft, persons acted "humanistically" if they asserted the right of private conscience over an authority that prescribed a way of doing things. (Schaefferites would do well to read Crane Brinton's *The Shaping of Modern Thought* on this point.)

The religious authorities in the sacral medieval society of Christendom realized what a threat "humanism" was. The church saw the potential danger of the freedom of conscience, and wondered where it would all lead. I suppose it has led to the sorry state of things Schaeffer illustrates. So, what is my critique of Schaeffer? His confusion rests on his inability to see Protestantism as the religious form of Renaissance humanism. To be sure, Protestants *said* that their consciences were informed by the Bible, on which authority alone rested (*"sola scriptura"*). Yet we all know of Protestant inability to agree on what the Bible said, or even on what kind of book it is.

In his triumphalism, Schaeffer cannot see the ironic and tragic in the Protestant movement, because he refuses to see it as an aspect of the humanist movement itself. In his various works Schaeffer repeatedly invokes the Reformation as the answer to the problem of humanism, when in reality it is part of the problem. I do not say that these religious humanists were "wrong" in invoking the primacy of private conscience, but I accept that when they did so they, among others, loosed a methodology on the world that resulted in modernity.

Schaeffer is half-right, but half-truths are sometimes more dangerous than falsehoods. What Schaeffer must come to grips with some time is the tragic and ironic entrapment of Protestantism's development at a time when a new methodology was developing

for other reasons in other aspects of culture. He cannot have it both ways: He cannot lament the excesses of a methodology and at the same time offer critique on the basis of the religious formulation of that methodology.

Throughout *A Christian Manifesto* Schaeffer implicitly endorses what historiographers call "the Whig theory of history." This view of history has had several incarnations, and the details vary, but in general it means that right religion and liberty are on the same side against wrong religion and tyranny. The Anglo-Saxon peoples are especially blessed in this regard, and it is the Protestant nations of northwest Europe and their overseas extensions that are cited as the righteous nations. (At one point Schaeffer becomes explicit, and invokes Northern Europe in this context, and goes on to name the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.) But is is for the United States that the superlatives are reserved in this view of history, and Schaeffer seems to have swallowed the theory whole.

It has been said that the discovery of America was the cause of the greatest liberation of the European imagination. As the Renaissance-humanist world-view drove the voyagers west to go east (they defied the "biblical" authority of a flat earth), the discovery of the Western hemisphere was, as C. S. Lewis wrote, a great disappointment. But, soon that disappointment changed to anticipation, and Thomas More's *Utopia* was the first mature reflection in the Old World on the potential of the New. The general idealism in Europe that mankind could begin over again was widely shared, in both secular and religious circles.

Once again the Protestant movement was not immune from the impulses of its time, and, as is well known, Calvinists came to the New World early in the seventeenth century. Winthrop's sermon, "The Model of Christian Charity," offers the interpretative paradigm for American history: The meaning of America was to consist in "building the city on the hill," in which the light to the Gentiles would shine, and in respect of which, all would one day turn and be converted.

With this model of early American development clearly in mind, Schaeffer turns to the American Revolution. True to Whig theory, right religion and liberty were arrayed against wrong religion and tyranny. Schaeffer correctly notes the evangelical impetus behind the Revolution, and he endorses it. But should it be endorsed? As Nathan Hatch has written in *The Sacred Cause of Liberty*, many evangelicals did believe that there was a British conspiracy against liberty, especially after the passage of the Quebec Act in 1774. While we might have empathy for these evangelical revolutionaries in their context, surely they were deluded if they believed that an "absolute tyranny" was about to be imposed. (Here the Whig theory argues against itself. It was supposed to be the Anglo-Saxon peoples who were on the side of right religion and liberty. How do the British suddenly become "absolute-tyrants?") Surely they acted on a pretentious view of themselves and their cause if they believed they alone were protecting the right of society.

As to the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, Schaeffer is similarly muddled. The Declaration of Independence is an Enlightenment document, whereas the constitution opposes the spirit of both the Enlightenment and the Declaration in requiring liberty to be ordered by law. Once again, Schaeffer is half-right. Jefferson was thoroughly baptized in the Enlightenment faith, but John Adams was not. Of the several books on this subject, Schaefferites would do well to consult Merrill Peterson, *Adams and Jefferson: A Revolutionary Dialogue*. As Richard Hofstadter once said, "The Constitution of the United States was based on the philosophy of Hobbes and the religion of Calvin." Schaeffer is on to something fundamental in suggesting the unique character of the constitution. But his argument is substantially flawed by suggesting a moral-legal consensus among "the Founding Fathers." There were two sets of Founding Fathers, because there were two factions in the revolutionary party, advocating quite different visions of society. As John Adams said in writing the Massachusetts state constitution, the question was whether or not the government would be "a government of law or of men." While Adams clearly advocated "law," for Jefferson the meaning of America and of its revolution was that it would be "a government of men."

It will come as no surprise to readers that the one main sign of hope Schaeffer sees (an "open window," in his terms) is the present-day conservative successes in American politics. One of the founding principles of the neo-conservative faith is the doctrine of return to the principles of the Founding Fathers. What this simplistic view of past reality cannot accept is that the same divisions which bedevil our society were there then as well. Nostalgia will not help us out of our present malaise, nor will rewriting American history.

Schaeffer's confusion rests on his inability to see Protestantism as the religious form of Renaissance humanism.

In fact, Schaeffer's book stands in a long tradition of American history, and is a good example of a literary form which Sacvan Bercovitch calls "the jeremiad," in his brilliant book, *American Jeremiad*. There is a long history of Calvinists preaching the doctrine of return to the vision of Winthrop. In the seventeenth century this form was well developed. The theme is familiar: The people had betrayed the faith, had fallen from grace, but there was still time to return and re-capture the vision. This theme was reasserted in the Revolution, and at regular intervals throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Schaeffer conforms to one important aspect of the genre of the latter-day jeremiad: the enemy within. All the vision that Schaeffer sees as "the base" of American society was founded by immigrants from Protestant countries. The story begins to turn wrong when substantial Catholic immigration begins in the 1840s. While he does not name the Irish specifically, he suggests that 1848 is a turning year, a year in which (of course) migration from famine-ridden Ireland began. He returns to this theme in the conclusion.

Here we have a vestigial remain of that virulant Protestant disease: Anglo-Saxon anti-Catholicism. I am appalled to see Francis Schaeffer appearing to endorse this. Surely a person like Schaeffer, who knows that ideas have consequences, must know that in endorsing such views he is endorsing by extension some of the most undemocratic acts of intolerance in American history, acts of which Protestants must be ashamed. It is too late to be nostalgic about an Anglo-Saxon America.

In the 1950s, when political and religious conservatism had its last revival, several scholars took note of it; and some important books were written which give an analytical perspective on such conservatism in America. Richard Hofstadter wrote of "the paranoid style" in American history (neither Hofstadter, nor I mentioning it, mean to accuse anyone of the clinical phenomenon called paranoia). One nevertheless observes that there have been many movements—ideologically centered on evangelical Protestantism—which fit the typology of social paranoia. The argument proceeds as follows: The precious heritage is about to be lost, both because of the indifference of the brethren but also because of enemies within. While happily falling short of an accusation of "conspiracy" (which would have fit the paranoid style perfectly), Schaeffer nevertheless believes that institutions which specialize in the collection and dissemination of information (universities and the media) are an informal league with the courts to foist the secular-humanist mind onto the American people.

I do not endorse American social behavior and belief as it is. As a committed Christian, I believe my religious principles require me to assert that there is something quite wrong with American society. I share Francis Schaeffer's sense of urgency about matters as diverse as "right to life" and "the battle for the mind." Yet Schaeffer's outrage does not mention much at all about what I believe to be equally important questions—the arms race, institutional racism, the inequities of industrial capitalism. Schaeffer's outrage, and his will-

ingness to be civilly disobedient, seem to be rather shallow in not taking these important matters into account.

Rather than "A Christian Manifesto," Schaeffer's book should have been called "A Fundamentalist Manifesto," because it bears all the marks of that unfortunate movement. Writing in this journal on the "new fundamentalism" (*RJ*, February 1982), George Marsden suggested, in a memorable phrase, that "the Moral Majority turns out to be something of Dooyeweerdianism gone to seed." If that be true, a reading of evangelical fundamentalism's leading thinker will help us understand why. It is cruelly ironic that evangelicalism's philosopher, who spent so much time on "the antithesis," winds up a synthesizer after all. In this book we have a vintage blend of evangelical orthodoxy and the lore of one version of American history. This is a bitter recognition for some of us who, fifteen years ago, thought Francis Schaeffer was a leading light of a new movement in evangelicalism. With his atrophied view of "the antithesis" and his chauvinistic Americanism, Francis Schaeffer becomes less appealing the more he writes.

EDITOR'S NOTE: In a subsequent article (*Reformed Journal* 5/83) Ronald A. Wells responded to some critiques and misunderstandings of this article. Interested readers may wish to consult this piece.

BIBLIOGRAPHY/ETHICS

Early Christian Attitudes to War and Military Service: A Selective Bibliography

David M. Scholer

Bainton, R. H. "The Early Church and War," *HThR 39* (1946), 189–212; reprinted in *The Church, the Gospel and War* (ed. R. M. Jones; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948), 75–92, and as "The Pacifism of the Early Church," Chapter 5 in *Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace: A Historical Survey and Critical Re-evaluation* (New York/Nashville: Abingdon, 1960), 66–84. One of the first of modern (Post World War 2) attempts to deal with the question. A basic article by a prominent church historian.

Birley, E. "The Religion of the Roman Army: 1895–1977," *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Romischen Welt –ANRW II*, 16.2 (1978), 1506–41. While Birley does not deal directly with the question of early Christian attitudes, he deals indirectly with the question since part of the debate is the level of religious obligations assumed by soldiers. Best recent treatment of subject; written at a very technical, advanced level.

Cadbury, H. J. "The Basis of Early Christian Antimilitarism," *JBL 37* (1918), 66–94. A Quaker, early 20th century work. The arguments from many older articles (such as this one) have been picked up and refined, so in that sense they are primarily of historical interest.

Cadoux, C. J. *The Early Christian Attitude to War* (London: Headley, 1919; reprinted New York: Gordon, 1975; reprinted New York: Seabury, 1982). Classic, but still important as a particular expression. For the sake of appreciating the early form of the argument, Cadoux and Harnack are the major tomes on the question, both fairly technical. Cadoux presents a very scholarly approach, but is operating somewhat out of pacifist assumptions (he has a commitment to argue that the church not be involved in military service).

Campenhausen, H. F. von. "Christians and Military Service in the Early Church," *Tradition and Life in the Church: Essays and Lectures in Church History* (trans. A. V. Littledale; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968), 160–170l. Good basic survey article, position closer to Cadoux than Harnack.

Case, S. J. "Religion and War in the Graeco-Roman World," *American Journal of Theology 19* (1915), 179–99. By major scholar in early church history at Chicago. Of historical interest due to the date of publication and prominence of the author.

Crossan, J. D. "Jesus and Pacifism," *No Famine in the Land: Studies in Honor of John L. McKenzie* (ed. J. W. Flanagan and A. W. Robinson; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1975), 195–208. Important essay because written by a modern gospel scholar.

Ferguson, J. "Christianity," Chapter 7 in *War and Peace in the World's Religions* (London: Sheldon Press, 1977), 99–123 [99–106 through Constantine].

_____. "Judaism," Chapter 6 in *War and Peace in the World's Religions* (London: Sheldons Press, 1977), 78–98.

_____. "The Nature of Early Christian Pacifism" *Hibbert Journal 55* (1956–57), 340–49.

_____. "The Pacifism of the Early Church," Chapter 3 in *The Politics of Love: The New Testament and Non-Violent Revolution* (Cambridge: James Clarke/Greenwood, SC: Attic Press, n.d. [ca. 1974]), 53–67. Ferguson is clearly, polemically a pacifist. A scholar of the Greco-Roman empire, he writes in Greco-Roman religion and is trying to expose some of the data that the church was pacifistic. Of his articles listed here, this is the most important.

Fontaine, J. "Christians and Military Service in the Early church," *Concilium 7* (1965), 107–19. Fontaine attempts to provide survey of evidence. That is helpful because there is dispute over what the basic evidence is.

Gabris, K. "The Question of Militarism at the Time of the Apostolic Fathers," *Communio Viatorum 20* (1977), 227–32. Gabris deals with very limited fund of passages.

Gero, S. "*Miles Gloriousus: The Christian and Military Service According to Tertullian*," *Church History 39* (1970), 285–98. Gero, an early church historian, attempts a rereading of Tertullian, whose evidence is essential in the discussion. Very technical article, which critiques both pacifist and non-pacifist sides.

Grant, R. M. "War—Just, Holy, Unjust—in Hellenistic and Early Christian Thought," *Augustinianum 20* (1980), 173–89. This article summarizes pagan and patristic literature on the theory and actual conduct of war. One implication of the article is that Christians often opposed the way in which war was conducted more than the concept of war itself. The article does not deal with the "pacifist" issue in the early Church.

Harnack, A. *Militia Christi: The Christian Religion and the Military in the First Three Centuries* (trans. and intro. D. M. Gracie; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981 [1905]). Harnack isn't afraid to acknowledge that the church got into the military, even though he thinks it wasn't a good thing. First major collection of the evidence in modern times. Harnack leans in a non-pacifist direction. Pacifists think Harnack has overstated his case.

_____. "The Spread of Christianity in the Army," Book IV, Chapter 3, sec. 3 in *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the first Three Centuries, Vol. II* (2nd ed.; trans. and ed. J. Moffatt; London: Williams and Northgate/New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1908), 52–64. This entry covers only one particular point from the previous entry.

Helgeland, J. "Christians and the Roman Army A.D. 173–337," *Church History 43* (1974), 149–63, 200. This is the most sophisticated collection of evidence for Christians in the Roman army. Helgeland's position, that Christians didn't like the army not out of pacifism but because of the religious practices of the Roman army, is key in the modern discussion.

_____. "Christians and the Roman Army from Marcus Aurelius to Constantine," *ANRW II*, 23.1 (1979), 724–834.

_____. "Roman Army Religion," *ANRW II*, 16.2 (1978), 1470–1505. This entry is like Birley in terms of content.

Hornus, J.-M. *It Is Not Lawful For Me To Fight: Early Christian Attitudes Toward War, Violence, and the State.* Scottdale: Herald, 1980 [French 1960]. [Review by J. Ferguson, *Heythrop Journal 23* (1982), 85–86.] A major presentation of the data by a pacifist who self-consciously is critiquing Harnack—as well as everybody else.

McSorley, R. *New Testament Basis of Peacemaking.* Washington, D.C.: Center for Peace Studies, Georgetown University, 1979. Popular level.

Moffatt, J. "War," *Dictionary of the Apostolic Church* 2 (ed. J. Hastings; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1918), 646–73. A famous NT scholar. This is the most hawkish of any of articles, as Moffatt presents the view that Christian entry into military service was quite unproblematic.

Mott, S. C. "Pacifism? Come Now!" *The Other Side* 13:2 (July 1977), 74–69. *The Other Side* is responsible for the title. Mott's argument is that pacifists are reading the data too simplistically. A very basic-level starter article that presents the complexities of the issue.

O'Rourke, J. J. "The Military in the NT," *CBQ 32* (1970), 227–36. Harnack dealt with Jesus' relations to soldiers. O'Rourke deals with these texts.

Ruyter, K. W. "Pacifism and Military Service in the Early Church," *Cross Currents 23* (1982), 54–70. One of more current attempts to assess the complexity of the evidence.

Ryan, E. A. "The Rejection of Military Service by the Early Christians," *ThSt 13* (1952), 1–32. One of more current attempts to assesss the complexity of the evidence.

Swartley, W. M. *Slavery Sabbath War and Women.* Scottdale: Herald Press, 1983. Limited to NT, takes these themes and shows how pro- & anti-people have used the same biblical passages, and what hermeneutical presuppositions are involved. Swartley trys to develop an appropriate hermeneutical stance.

Swift, L. J. *The Early Fathers on War and Military Service. Message of the Fathers of the Church, 19.* Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1983. Helgeland and Swift are the two most significant contemporary scholars who are not self-consciously working out of the pacifist religious traditon. Neither are popular writers. Extremely valuable, now one of starting points for serious reflection. It is a translation of primary sources in English, approximately 100 passages from early church documents, organized primarily chronologically that have any bearing on the question of church participation in war or military service. Brief commentary on every single passage, showing very balanced judgment. This is the first and only collection giving all these passages in translation with commentary. Shows that it is very hard to prove that the church had an articulated position from which it fell.

_____. "St. Ambrose on Violence and War," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association 101* (1970), 533–43. This entry is very specialized, dealing with the late St. Ambrose material.

_____. "War and the Christian Conscience I: The Early Years," *ANRW II*, 23.1 (1979),835–68. This is broader than Helgeland, who is only dealing with the army question. Foundational, absolutely essential survey.

Zampaglione, G. *The Idea of Peace in Antiquity.* Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1973. Contains much valuable information on problem. An interesting source because Zampaglione is trying to talk about attitudes toward war outside the church.

A New Mission Agency in the United Methodist Church

By James Pyke

A significant and controversial event took place on November 2, 1983, in the life of the United Methodist Church. On that day in St. Louis, thirty-four ministers and lay persons unanimously voted to create an alternate mission sending agency. They represented some twenty conferences and all five jurisdictions of the Church.

The assembled ministers needed only a minimum amount of time to arrive at their decision. A paper by Dr. Gerald H. Anderson, a leading mission theologian of the Church, was ready; some vigorous opinions were voiced; but there was no doubt in anyone's mind that the need for the new agency was crucial. The discussion centered around the structure of the new organization, the possible reactions from the establishment of the Church and the immediate steps that had to be taken to bring the agency into being. As the news of the meeting spread across the Church, the foremost question in everyone's mind was: Why do we need a second mission agency?

The short answer to that question is that a growing number of persons, particularly the evangelically-minded, were becoming increasingly frustrated with the philosophy and the policies of the official mission agency of the denomination, the General Board of Global Ministries. A brief historical sketch will illustrate the problem.

New Direction

The stated purpose of Mission as set forth in the Discipline of the Church (which is normative for theology and polity) is: "The World Division exists to confess Jesus Christ as divine Lord and Savior to all people in every place, testifying to His redemptive and liberating power, and calling all people to Christian obedience and discipleship."[1] In contrast to this, there began to emerge in the late sixties and early seventies what came to be known as "Liberation Theology." Springing from Latin American roots, it emphasized the socio-political aspects of the Gospel. This perspective, reinforced by the strongly perceived nationalism of the Third World churches, captured the attention of mission executives of most of the mainline churches. For example, in an article that appeared in the house organ of the GBGM[2] of the United Methodist Church, written by Dr. Tracey K. Jones, the General Secretary of the Board,made the following points: no longer should the Christian mission emphasize Jesus as Savior, or men and women as either "saved" or "lost," but rather Christ as Lord over all men and that all men are to become a "new humanity" in Jesus Christ. The arena of missionary activity should be the liberating of persons from degradation, war and hunger and empowerment of the weak and disinherited.

Those in the Church who adhered more closely to the classical Wesleyan tradition began to fear that a new concept of mission was taking shape, what they started to refer to as "Missions without Salvation." To them it appeared that this "new look" in missions was going to vitiate the very basis of the Gospel as they found it in the Scriptures. They discerned that under the new rubric, mission was to proceed from God's sovereign activity in the world rather than from Christ's Great Commission. The goal seemed to be a this-worldly one of perfect peace and prosperity for mankind. The "new look" meant participating with God in His intervention in world events to overcome evil institutions. To the evangelicals, this meant that the Church was no closer to God than the world, and that the frontier between the Church and the world, between the "saved" and the "lost" had been erased. In this view God no longer held out a universal call to mankind to cross the frontier between death and life. This, according to the opposition, was a "beautiful but unBiblical" idea, for it allowed no understanding of God's gracious provision of salvation and man's response to it. They say the new concept was making Christ Lord only without first being Savior. He was a "Man for Others," the Lord of history with His Incarnation nothing more than His presence within that history.

To Methodists of a more orthodox persuasion, this new trend seemed to be leading the mission of the Church to a place where

there would be no longer any relevance in proclaiming the Gospel to non-Christians. If mission is seen as participation in God's mission proclaimed as His active engagement in history, specifically in the revolutionary movements of our time, then the Church should be engaged in these movements. If God is operating in industrial relationships, economic development, the rejection of political domination and the promotion of human dignity, then mission is identified with social change. The world, not the Word of God, would be determining the agenda of mission. The axiom emerging seemed to be, "Revolution equals liberation equals salvation" (quite unacceptable to the evangelicals). From their reading of Scripture, they say the degradation of society exists not primarily in externals but in the will of man. The real problem of man's sin was in his ability to take any structure, however good and ideal, and twist it into an instrument of evil.

New Policy

In a policy statement put out by the Committee on Missionary Personnel of the Board in November of 1972 it was stated that in view of the global situation the church's mission could no longer be primarily concerned with individual salvation and the world beyond, but with participation in the liberation and development of peoples. The entire statement, having to do with the selection and training of missionary candidates and the implementation of personnel policy, was couched in terms of liberation as God's activity in history and mission as the redress of inequities in society and the amelioration of the existing conditions of poverty, cruelty and injustice.

The evangelical response to this statement was to explicitly disagree with the relegation of individual salvation to the dustbin of mission. To them it was precisely where all Christian mission should begin, though it should not end there. To start anywhere else was to misunderstand the Gospel as reconciliation of man to God. True liberation, in their view, was based squarely in the redemptive Gospel of Christ and a life-changing encounter with Him, which should then be followed by all possible efforts to uplift the conditions of human existence. In other word Christ is Savior first and only in that context can He become truly Lord. It is "witness" and then "service" that draws people to the Person of Christ and builds the lasting Kingdom. The two cannot be separated, nor should they be indefinitely reversed.

Evangelical Missions Council

Because the trend seemed to show no signs of slowing down or halting, a large group of United Methodist Evangelicals in February of 1974 met in Dallas, Texas, to found the "Evangelical Missions Council" with the purpose of giving voice to their concerns and thereby hoping to open a dialogue with the GBGM. They were alarmed not only by the change in philosophy of the Board, but by the fact that United Methodist world mission was going down by about one million dollars and one hundred missionaries annually. They believed that the Board had departed from the stated "Aims of Mission" set forth in the Discipline. They were distressed by the setting aside of the purpose to "evoke in all people the personal response of repentance and faith through which by God's grace, they may find newness of life."[3]

As evidence of their concern they noted a list of "Items of Major Import to the Board of Global Ministries." Under this title items such as the following were highlighted:

The need for political campaign reform
A call for withdrawal of Texaco and Standard Oil of California from Angola and Namibia
Continued aid to Indochina and drought-stricken West Africa
The necessity for tight federal regulation of strip-mining
Support of the Equal Rights Amendment
Aid to refugees from the Chilean government
Watergate and a call for Nixon's impeachment
American Indians and Wounded Knee.[4]

To the persons at the Dallas meeting, the fact that there were no items of evangelistic import in the list was explainable only by the judgment that the philosophy of the Board had radically altered. Indeed it was referred to as being indistinguishable from the "Board of Social Concerns." During the years following the creation of the Evangelical Missions Council considerable correspondence, dialogue and face-to-face conversations were carried on between leaders of the opposing groups. In all the meetings and conversations, however, the Evangelicals did not feel any real concern on the part of the Board for their point-of-view and discerned no change at all in the direction that it was taking.

In a promotional booklet, "Why Global?" put out by the Board in early 1975 there appeared the following sentences: "The focus (of mission) is shifting away from confrontation between Christian and non-Christian, and toward cooperation between Christians and persons of other living faiths. In the new historical situation (mission) means putting our witness in the context of our work together in common human concerns."[5]

In responding to this position an editorial, in the Good News magazine commented that "conversion to Jesus Christ is noticeable by its absence. In its place missions becomes dialogue and human betterment. . . . Many Evangelicals believe that the philosophy of syncretism and universalism expressed so clearly in 'Why Global' spells the death of missions."[6] It must be assumed that many traditionally-minded United Methodists reading that editorial would have nodded vigorous agreement.

Continuing Divergence

To see how little the philosophy of the GBGM was affected by the concerns of the Evangelicals ten years after the World Outlook article one needs only to turn to a statement of the World Division Criteria Committee. The normative declaration is: "All commitments, actions and decisions, of the World Division will be examined in the light of a fundamental commitment to advocacy and support of the empowerment of the poor and oppressed."[7] In a seven-point outline of how this commitment was to be contextually worked out, from theological declaration to funding, from program to missionary personnel, the "poor and oppressed" are specifically referred to.

Evangelicals, believing that the main task of the Church should be cooperation with God in His purpose to reconcile the world to Himself, were convinced that the Methodist denomination as represented by its boards and agencies was not fulfilling that purpose. For some years voices had been raised in favor of an alternate mission sending agency. When the continuing dialogue with the GBGM was not producing any results, these views began to be more and more heeded. The aspects of the Board policies that concerned the Evangelicals seemed to be growing steadily worse rather that better.

As evidence of this, it was pointed out that the missionary force of the Methodist Church was continuing to decline with the likelihood of reaching 300 by 1985, which was the Board's own prediction. Increasingly, United Methodists of whatever age who felt the call of God on their lives for missionary service were having to find other avenues of service, primarily with non-denominational boards such as Wycliffe Bible Translators, OMS International, World Gospel Mission and many others. Millions of dollars once available for Methodist missions had been and were now being channeled beyond denominational boundaries. In effect the GBGM by their policies were forcing many local voices had been raised in favor of an alternate mission sending agency. When the continuing dialogue with the GBGM was not producing any results, these views began to be more and more heeded. In fact, the aspects of the Board policies that concerned the Evangelicals seemed to be growing steadily worse rather that better.

Awareness of Continuing Need

Furthermore, national leaders of the Church overseas had been and were making repeated requests for missionary helpers. In response, a number of churches and some Conferences were entering into agreements with overseas churches and sending their own missionaries. In the face of this situation Evangelicals felt that there should more properly be some legitimate organization withing their own denomination under which volunteers could go and requests from national churches met.

Evangelicals and others were also acutely aware that there are large segments of the world's population, an estimated three billion persons including almost 17,000 people-groups, where there is no Methodist presence, nor indeed any indigenous church whatever.

Even where there is a national church, in most instances it is neither strong nor mature enough to evangelize the vast numbers of their own peoples who have no knowledge of the Christian Gospel. They are concerned also that missionary outreach needs to employ the new technologies, such as radio and TV, available in our day for the spread of the Gospel.

Decision Point

Finally after almost fifteen years had passed since the first alarm signal had gone up and the gap between the two sides had increasingly widened, those in the classical Wesleyan tradition came to the point of decision. Both sides recognized that the problem was one of theology, and theologies do not change easily. The opposition claims that the Board staffers have redefined the central theological terms and given them new meaning. If salvation is deliverance from all forms of oppression instead of from sin, social betterment instead of reconciliation to God through the atonement of Christ, then dialogue becomes, like ships passing in the night. Hence, for the Evangelicals an alternate (or at least a supplemental mission agency) becomes a necessity. A contributing factor and perhaps the final catalyst was the election in September, 1983, of Peggy Billings to head the World Division of the Board; she was a person long associated with controversial social action. The opposition has pointed out that as one of several precedents this same situation arose in the Anglican Church almost two centuries ago; an alternate agency was formed[8] and the two have co-existed throughout these many years.

Thus it was that on November 28, 1983, the St. Louis meeting created a "supplemental mission agency." Dr. Anderson, Director of the Overseas Ministries Study Center, in an address to a group of Dallas-area pastors meeting the previous week, had indicated that he had decided to go public after eight years of painful but loyal silence. The reasons he gave for his decision were similar to those of many others in the Evangelical community: The Board's theological imprecision, the imbalance of its policies and the fact that it had be unresponsive to the pluralism of of United Methodism. The convenor of the founding meeting was Dr. L. D. Thomas, pastor of the First United Methodist Church of Tulsa, Oklahoma, who was elected chairman of a steering committee, to work out the details of the new organization.

Establishment Reaction

Predictably the reaction from the establishment of the Church was adverse. The President of the Board of Global Ministries, Bishop Jesse R. DeWitt of Chicago labelled the new Society a violation of church rules and a discredit to the entire system. The fear was that the new agency would "further erode established patterns of giving . . . and was a threat to the administrative order of the whole church." Another bishop, Edsel A. Establishment of the Michigan area, stated that in his opinion, the action was "not only misleading and untimely but illegal, particularly because 'United Methodist' is in the name."[9] Only the General Conference, it was pointed out, had the authority to establish a general program agency.

All the bishops of the five regional jurisdiction expressed concern about the founding of the Society, but some also voiced strong dissatisfaction with the policies and philosophy of the GBGM, citing the long-term "unresponsiveness" of that body to the concerns of the Church at large. A statement issued by the bishops of the South Central jurisdiction called attention to "prolonged efforts by various United Methodists to secure serious consideration of a more representative mission program." They urged the GBGM to take steps to re-evaluate its mission philosophy in light of what "honest critics" are saying. The new Society, they stated, "reflects the deep and longstanding concern of many United Methodist people about the philosophy, policy and program and some of the personnel of the GBFM, some of which concerns we ourselves share."[10] They went on to say that they were of the opinion that the present crisis was very serious, that is represented a far wider base of concern than any one segment of the Church's membership, and that it should be addressed with integrity by the Board before critical deterioration of denominational support should occur. At a December 29th meeting of the Steering committee, the Rev. H. T. Maclin, who was a regional staff representative of the Board, was elected as Executive Director of the new Society. He had served as a missionary in Africa and Asia and had been with the Board since 1953. The name for the new agency adopted at the meeting is: "The Mission Society for United Methodists." Rev. Maclin indicated that he had left the Board for three primary reasons: Complaints from national leaders that the Board was not sending the number or kind of missionaries they wanted, the constant frustration of many United Methodists who feel that the Board was not sensitive to their views, and that in Anglicanism the two mission agencies had added vigor and zeal to their mission effort and had not in any way diminished the Christian witness.

The 1984 General Conference, marking the Bicentennial of American Methodism, was held in Baltimore, in May, and there had been considerable speculation about how it would deal with the new Mission Society. A week before the Conference began, the Council of Bishops adopted a long report on the relationship of the United Methodist Church with the World and National Councils of Churches. At one point in the report the bishops observed that the staff of the General Board of Global Ministries had a "reluctance to be genuinely open to the consideration of other or additional perspectives. As a result, something of a 'siege' mentality was evident, namely that the Board (believes it is) correct in its position and is prepared to utilize what resources may be necessary to defend the core and perimeters of that position."[11]

In his Episcopal Address on the first day of General Conference, Bishop William Cannon of North Carolina, representing his fellow bishops, stated, "We support the Board of Global Ministries as the sole agency of missionaries and disapprove the organization of another sending agency in competition with it. However, in fairness to the concerns of those who feel the necessity for a second agency, we urge that measures be taken to assure our people that evangelization and evangelism are a vital part of the philosophy and practice of mission by the Board."[12]

In the Conference itself the legislative committee on Global Ministries dealt specifically with a petition from a local church in New York state requesting that the General Conference recognize the new mission society as an alternative mission-sending agency. There was an overflow crowd to hear the committee debate the matter. In his statement before the committee Rev. Maclin emphasized that his body did not ask for official recognition and might, in fact, prefer not to have it should it be extended.[13] In the end the committee voted overwhelmingly to support the Board and disapprove of another sending-agency, which action was confirmed by the Conference in plenary session.

Notwithstanding, Rev. Maclin, in a private conversation, with this writer indicated that he was frequently stopped in the halls and corridors of the Conference by delegates and Bishops alike who affirmed the establishment of the new Society and encouraged him and the Society to "keep the pressure on" the Board! In fact, he said he was "overwhelmed" with the amount of verbal support he was given, to the point where he stated that he felt that the new Society had been given "defacto recognition." In any event, "The Mission Society for United Methodists" is fact of life and is likely to remain so.

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[1] *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 1980,* The United Methodist Publishing House, Nashville, 1980, p. 496.
[2] "World Outlook," April, 1969.
[3] Quoted in "Opening Statement," p. 6, Evangelical Missions Council founding meeting, February 6, 1974.
[4] World Division Newsletter, Number 30.
[5] "Why Global," p. 17.
[6] "Good News" magazine, Spring, 1975, p. 48.
[7] September 20-21, 1979.
[8] "The Church Missionary Society," 1799.
[9] "The United Methodist Reporter," Baltimore Conference edition, "The Circuit Rider," January 27, 1984.
[10] The Circuit Rider," January 27, 1984.
[11] "Good News," Forum for Scriptural Christianity, Inc., Wilmore, KY, May/June 1984, p. 39.
[12] "The Circuit Rider," Baltimore Conference edition of "The United Methodist Reporter," May, 1984, p. 3.
[13] *Ibid.* May, 11, 1984, p. 2.

The Challenge of Missions History

by Richard V. Pierard

The Institute for the Study of American Evagelicals sponsored the coloquium "The Challenge of Missions History" at the Billy Graham Center in Wheaton, Illinois on March 16, 1984 as part of its series on research topics in the history of evangelical Christianity. The featured speakers were Professors Charles Weber of Wheaton College and Robert E. Frykenberg of the University of Wisconsin. Weber, who recently completed a doctoral dissertation at the University of Chicago on the Baptist mission in Cameroon and is now working on the Women's Missionary Union, discussed various materials to be found in mission archives in general and the rich collection of the collection of the Graham Center in particular and explained opportunities for using them in missions history research. Among these are photographs, denominational and agency magazines, correspondence, surveys done by missionaries, and oral history interviews. Scholars can view mission organizations in terms of the domestic scenes in which they were rooted, assess how the missions functioned within the indigenous societies where they worked, and carry out comparative historical studies of mission endeavors in different cultures, various societies active among a same people, and church-colonial regime national state relations.

Professor Frykenberg, a prolific writer and leading scholar of the history of South India, examined the problems and prospects in writing the history of world missions. He underscored the general lack of understanding which most people in the North Atlantic community have about evangelical Christianity outside of the West and the consequences of this for scholarship. This factor and the enormous complexities of today's world gravitate against the possibility that we will ever again see a generalist historian of evangelicalism like Kenneth Scott Latourette or Julius Richter. He stressed the need for more ready access to primary sources and put forth the intriguing thesis that a direct correlation exists between the antiquity of a mission organization and the quality of its archival collection. He said the older groups tend to have better archival policies and their materials are more adequately preserved and accessible than is the case with those more recently formed. This is important because agencies which are less concerned about preserving the record of their origins and development probably do very little critical thinking about their own ministry. Their work tends to be more promotional in nature and accounts of their history propagandistic, and when scholarship is directed toward this, it is more airy or theoretical and less empirical. He urged that missionary endeavors be studied as part of an indigenous culture on its own terms, as well as part of the wider history of religions and general history of mankind, and that it be done in a wholistic, interdisciplinary manner. The legacies of poor historical understanding can be seen in the suffering of Christians in Uganda and elsewhere, the Christianization of alien, pagan concepts, and the factionalism that flows from the quarreling and competition among the different mission societies.

At a banquet which followed, the ISAE co-directors, Professors Mark A. Noll of Wheaton College and Nathan O. Hatch of the University of Notre Dame, spelled out the achievements and goals of the group (currently funded by the Lilly Endowment), and President Kenneth Kantzer of Trinity College, Deerfield delineated the benefits which evangelicals may derive from the study of history. Also, ISAE has inaugurated a news letter, *Evangelical Studies Bulletin*, and will bring together the leading scholars on the life and thought of Jonathan Edwards in a national conference on October 24–26, 1984. For further information write ISAE administrator Joel Carpenter, Billy Graham Center, Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL 60187.

Sixth Evangelical Women's Conference

by Linda Mercadante

The Evangelical Women's Caucus International is now ten years old. As the sixth plenary conference convened at Wellesley College, it was clear that this would be a time of stock-taking with an eye toward the future, as well as a time of celebration for the careful scholarship, personal support and international networking that has come out of this diverse group in the past decade.

Organized by the Greater Boston Chapter of EWCI, the five-day conference drew some 500 participants from across the United States and Canada, as well as Norway, the Philippines, Australia and Panama. The theme "Free Indeed—The Fulfillment of our Faith" was examined from a variety of angles, from the biblical and theological to the psychological and social action perspectives. But rather than begin with a didactic or exhortative message, the conference began far more effectively with a dramatic one-woman play based on the life and writings of the medieval anchoress Lady Julian of Norwich. Written by J. Janda and performed by Roberta Nobleman, the play made clear that Julian's struggle to live true to the voice of God was no easier, nor less rewarding, than our own.

Fortified by this message, the participants began the round of plenary sessions and workshops that would last for the remaining four days. But as the week progressed, it became clear that this would not be simply a repetition of the past conferences, where the necessary hard grappling with the liberating message of the Gospel was accomplished largely through educational means and personal interaction. This type of activity was of course, a significant part of the sixth plenary conference, but in addition the membership of EWCI began to ask through the week, "Where do we go from here?" The Evangelical Women's Caucus began in 1975 as an outgrowth of Evangelicals for Social Action. Since that time it has successfully grown to international proportions, has nurtured a fellowship of women and men in local chapters across North America, and has been especially effective in encouraging scholarship on the issue of the biblical warrant for liberation from gender-role stereotypes, toward the goal of the free and full service of God. But this year people were asking whether it was indeed time to expand the horizons and the outreach of EWCI. The two directions proposed included, first, taking a stand on social issues grow out of or impinge upon biblical feminism, such as speaking against militarism and for peace, and second, expanding the mission to include service to disadvantaged women here or in other lands.

The themes chosen by the various plenary speakers seemed to converge on the necessity of reasserting the primary goals of EWCI, but also possibly redefining them to include a new element of "risk-taking." Ruth Schmidt, president of Agnes Scott College, urged members to expand their vision to include "macro charity." Attorney Betsy Cunningham explained that since "for many of us the choice was feminist ideology" or a repressive brand of theology until they discovered Christian feminism, we must now use this new-found freedom to serve as a global political force for peace, justice and liberty.

Charles Willie, professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, insisted that "persons who wish to be free must cease cooperating in their own oppression" and directed sights toward the suffering servant tradition, the path of courage and compassion. Kathleen Storrie, assistant professor of sociology, Saskatoon, warned of the organizational strength of the "new submission of women movement," led by such figures as Bill Gothard, while Anne Eggebroten exhorted participants to grow towards a new level of "risk-taking." These themes came to a climax at the business meeting where the group debated at length how to address the challenge.

Some members believed that the strength of the organization and the clarity of its basic intent would be lost if other goals were interposed. The social issues, they said, could be better tackled if members worked under the aegis of other groups whose primary focus was, for instance, peace or poverty. Others, however, said that it was time for EWCI to move beyond its initial methods of personal support and educational efforts, and move into making an active witness for social issues that relate to the biblical feminist mission.

The membership decided to do two things. First, to devise a new method of group decision-making, since the standard method had failed to promote sustained discussion, and second, to carefully study the issues, members' attitudes towards them, and possible actions, with a view toward some resolution at the next plenary conference.

In the meantime, participants were left with a rich assortment of biblical, theological, and practical helps, as well as the necessary encouragement and personal support, to sustain them on their journey toward the full freedom of the Gospel.

A Christian Critique of the New Consciousness

by Douglas Groothuis

The Turning Point: Science, Society, and the Rising Culture,
by Fritjof Capra (Simon and Schuster, 1982)
The Reenchantment of the World,
by Morris Berman (Cornell, 1981)
The Aquarian Conspiracy,
by Marilyn Ferguson (J. B. Tarcher, 1980)

A new social force is struggling to reveal itself and so transform all areas of life with its potency. Evidences of influence crop up in everyday discussion, the media, literature, and academia. Those disenchanted with a secularized modernity or traditional Christianity search for a new model of the universe, society, and persons adequate to address the challenges of the age. They may turn to yoga, read books on Eastern religions, search for a guru, integrate pantheistic themes into their theology, interpret modern science as substantiating Eastern mysticism, lobby for meditation in the public schools, write scholarly or popular books on social transformation, or engage in any number of activities associated with what is called the New Consciousness or New Age movement.

To try and get to the heart of this movement, we will concentrate on the specific agendas of a scientist, a cultural historian, and a journalist each aglow with messianic expectations of personal and global transformation. A world-view revolution encounters us, they tell us. These apologists and prophets announce its arrival by proclaiming "the God within," a new, spiritual physics, an updated animism, and the evolution of consciousness. Agendas are set to revive a deadened modern mind.

Science speaks, says Fritjof Capra in *The Turning Point: Science, Society, and the Rising Culture* (Simon and Schuster, 1982), and we must listen. After three centuries of simplistic, atomistic, mechanistic models of the universe developed by people like Bacon, Descartes, and Newton, we face the embarrassment and challenge of modern physics which shows us that "reality can no longer be understood in terms of these concepts" (p. 16). Einstein, Bohr, Heisenberg, Planck, and other physicists have uncovered unnerving and entrancing enigmas at the heart of the matter. The "new paradigm" portrays a vibrant and pulsating organism instead of a dead mechanism. Capra says:

> Subatomic particles . . . are not "things" but are interconnections between "things," and these "things," in turn, are interconnections between other "things," and so on. In quantum theory you never end with "things": you always deal with the interconnection. This is how modern physics reveals the basic oneness of the universe (p. 81, 82).

Our physics must be revamped, as must our whole world-view.

The old paradigm fragmented, objectified, and reduced the natural world to a mere machine of separable, individual parts seen in isolation from the whole. God was viewed as a domineering male tyrant who exploited his creation. People viewed themselves as separate from the Lord over nature. Consequently, Western civilization exploited the environment, resulting in our present ecological, economic, and political crisis. After charting the harmful effects of this outdated model ("the Newtonian world-machine")[1] on ecology, medicine, economics, psychology, and politics, Capra—himself a physicist—reevaluates these fields from a "holistic paradigm" informed by the new physics, general systems theory, and Eastern mysticism (which he believes was centuries ahead of science in its unified view of the world).[2]

Capra sees this revolutionary world-view as transforming the world. When we view ourselves to be an interrelated part of the cosmic whole, our societal dilemmas will begin to dissolve. A New Age of incalculable human potential awaits us through the evolution of this New Consciousness.

Morris Berman offers a similar critique, but through the eyes of a cultural historian. His book, *The Reenchantment of the World* (Cornell, 1981), argues for just that—a world revivified after the disenchantment (Max Weber's term) of the West since about 1600. Villainous also for Berman are thinkers like Bacon, Newton, and Descartes who reduced nature to a clockwork contraption comprehended and manipulated through discursive reason, which he calls "non participatory consciousness." This legacy of materialism and scientism must succumb to a "participatory consciousness" as experienced by alchemists, hermeticists, mystics, and certain illuminated moderns (such as Gregory Bateson). In this type of knowing, "everything in the universe is alive and interrelated, and we know the world through direct identification with it, or immersion in the phenomena (subject/object merger)" (p. 343).

Berman synthesizes ancient thought with modern thinkers such as Bateson, Reich, and Jung in order to open us to the non-discursive aspects of knowing and being. Like Capra, Berman sees our time as one of great crisis and great opportunity. "Some type of participating consciousness and a corresponding socio-political formation have to emerge if we are to survive as a species" (p. 22). If this happens we will experience "not merely a new society, but a new species, a new type of human being" (p. 298).

A new human being and a new social order are the passions of Marilyn Ferguson whose popular and influential book, *The Aquarian Conspiracy* (J. B. Tarcher, 1980) charts their potential. She explores the new found powers of consciousness as seen in physics, psychology, parapsychology, holistic health, the human potential movement, and so on. But she not only records discoveries and theories, she reports a movement, an "aquarian conspiracy" of like-minded people from every area of life:

> Broader than reform, deeper than revolution, this benign conspiracy for a new human agenda has triggered the most rapid cultural realignment in history . . . It is a new mind—the ascendence of a startling worldview (p. 23).

Ferguson presents a dazzling range of information—avant garde theories at "the frontiers of science," mystical experience, philosophical speculation, and sociological premonitions—in a whirlwind tour through the New Consciousness. This "conspiracy" is everywhere and the potentialities are tantalizing for "we are in the early morning of understanding our place in the universe and our spectacular latent powers." (p. 279).

Taken together, these books seem to pack quite a persuasive punch. Ferguson excites, stimulates, and challenges—impressing the average reader with the lure of the new and amazing. She showcases a growing movement in search of vital transformations that will infuse us all with hope. And the ideas seem to be catching on—her book has been translated into seven foreign languages. Hers is the manifesto of an activist, not the treatise of a scholar (although it is not without some sophistication). Capra and Berman will interest the generally well educated and more scholarly reader. Capra, as a scientist, charts the history and speculates about the implications of modern science. His book is quite popular, with excerpts published in *The Futurist* and *Science Digest*. Berman, more a philosopher and cultural historian than a scientist, emphasizes philosophical and cultural trends in the Western world.

The apologetic and prophetic voices of the New Consciousness ring out in bold, clear tones. But who is listening and why? World-view revolutions don't come out of nowhere. Our authors have crystalized and systemitized a "paradigm shift" long in the making, which can be most recently and visibly traced to the 1960s.

For all its superficial flamboyance, the counterculture embodied more than passing fashions, mass-marketed gurus, and political disruptions. It challenged the core creed of secular humanism—technocratic materialism. This passionate protest against the modern "wasteland" was cogently codified by Theodore Roszak in *The Making of the Counter Culture* and *Where the Wasteland Ends*, in which he condemns the "single vision" (Blake) of a society stripped of the mystical, or "old gnosis" as he put it. Secularized, post-Enlightenment industrial society suffocated the spirit and immobilized the imagination. But spiritual sustenance was to be found by turning to the Romantics, tribal religions, occultism, psychedelic drugs or the adepts of the East to recharge our dying society. The emptiness and anomie of a "world without windows" (Berger) was met with a "resacralizing" (Roszak) spirit of hope.

While many of the social trends and trivialities of the counterculture quickly dissipated, the basic challenge to the Western materialism remained, only to be refined and expanded by the New Consciousness. What began to surface in the 60s as an adventuresome fling into the exotic is now developing into an attractive world-view, as these authors demonstrate. The counter-culture becomes, to use Capra's phrase, "the rising culture"; and "the Aquarian Conspiracy" grows daily.

Before beginning our critique of the New Consciousness movement and how it should challenge Christians, we must codify its basic philosophy. Three elements emerge: monism, panpsychism, and pantheism.

Basic to the New Consciousness is the notion that our Western mind-set—whether Christian or secular must be reset to see all things as one interrelated, dynamic unity. We must move from a "disenchanted," mechanistic atomism to a "reenchanted" organic holism or monism. As all is one, so all is alive or conscious in some way (panpsychism). Better to have, according to Berman, a modernized animism than a barren world of randomly colliding particles of dead matter. Capra draws on the work of General Systems Theory (Lazlo, Bertalanffy, and Jantsch) which views the whole as greater than the parts (holism) and finds Mind or consciousness not limited to individual living beings, but dispersed throughout the universe. Given this cosmology and the influence of Eastern mysticism, all three writers conclude that all is God (pantheism). Ferguson positively speaks of "God within: the oldest heresy" (p. 382). For Capra, the deity is not "manifest in any personal form, but represents . . . the self organizing dynamics of the whole cosmos" (p. 292), ourselves included. Berman presupposes a kind of pantheism/animism, and speaks favorably of "the God within" (p. 295). This deity is a consciousness, force, power, or presence—not a person. The personal God vanquished, all three writers flirt with if not openly embrace solipism: All is one, all is God, I am God; therefore, my consciousness determines reality. We do not observe what is "out there," we somehow create it.

These sentiments are hardly new. This New Consciousness is really a very old consciousness, and its pantheistic lineage impressively includes American movements such as New Thought and Trancendentalism; European philosophers such as Hegel, Schopenhauer, and Spinoza; Romanticism; philosophies like Gnosticism and Neo-Platonism; much of Eastern religion; liberal pantheistic theologies influenced by Schlieirmacher. In fact, it goes as far back as the serpent himself saying, "You shall be as Gods . . . " Inasmuch as our culture is being entreated to stand on the shoulders of these giants, we need to evaluate the foundation.

First, is this "new paradigm" actually demanded by modern science? Capra and Ferguson labor to build much of their pantheistic world-view on the speculations of quantum physics and brain physiology. Berman also notes the science-mysticism connection in passing. The world of quantum is an indivisible whole (all is one). Various experiments on the brain and consciousness in general reveal our incredible potential. Other theories which Ferguson calls "the frontiers of science" catapult the writers into the monistic, pantheistic, and panpsychic realms quite easily.

It is vital for the New Consciousness to seek credibility from science, for many who would remain aloof from Eastern mysticism per se will move that direction if escorted by scientific respectability. Yet the journey from physics to metaphysics or from human consciousness to cosmology is not so easily travelled.

Scientific theories bend with the times and this elasticity makes for an insubstantial foundation for metaphysics. The subject matter of experimental science (the natural realm) is subject to diverse interpretation and reinterpretation. Today's "frontiers of science" may be explored only to be deserted tomorrow. As many philosophers of science such as Kuhn and Popper have noted, scientific theories are far from "objective" in any final sense. Thus they are hardly metaphysically demonstrative. Even the established fact of heliocentrism, having displaced the earth from the center of the solar system, could say nothing about the inherent worth of our planet or its inhabitants. Astronomy could tell us our location (science) but not of our ultimate worth (metaphysics). Modern physics may tell us something of the physical world, but it alone cannot penetrate ultimate reality. Capra, Ferguson, and a host of others trying to make the science-metaphysics connection are really engaging in an updated natural theology which builds a metaphysic on the shifting sands of scientific speculation instead of on special revelation.[3]

Second, is this "new paradigm" sufficient for a new mind and a new society? Capra, Berman, and Ferguson agree that a totally revamped world-view is required. At this crucial point in history—"the turning point"—we must turn to "the God within." Here the New Consciousness shows its age; it repeats the ancient Socratic and Gnostic view of sin—wrong doing stems from ignorance, not from intentional moral rebellion. But a holistic world-view will not regenerate a hellish heart. Moreover, as one astute reviewer put it, when discussing Capra's book:

> Human ingenuity in creating untold misery did not wait for the development of a mechanistic world-view . . . The holistic world-views that have for thousands of years dominated thought in the Far East have not avoided hunger, violence . . . nor the Cultural Revolution.[4]

As Romans 7 teaches, the good we know we don't do; salvation comes not through actualizing latent potential (looking within), but through faith in the saving work of Christ (looking without). Kierkegaard clearly juxtaposed these two views of sin and salvation in his *Philosophical Fragments*: "In the Socratic view each individual is his own center, and the entire world centers in him, because his self-knowledge is a knowledge of God."[5] Contrariwise, Christ prompts us to see that we are in error and are guilty of sin. This terrible tyranny to sin cannot be broken through the gymnastics of the New Consciousness whether it be yoga, meditation, biofeedback, or "participatory consciousness." While the need for personal transformation is at the heart of biblical sanctification (Romans 12:1, 2), it comes through faith and obedience, not through a fruitless quest for autonomy (realizing the "God within")—which is the essence of sin. All solipsism is judged, such epistemological pride goes before a fall. The idea that "knowledge of self is knowledge of God" could justly be called the idolatry of consciousness.

Third, having abandoned the Creator/creation distinction, these authors see nature, humanity, and God as continuous and interchangeable and in flux (evolution). To be holistic is to include each in all. Such monistic metaphysics tend to confuse distinct ontological categories (jurisdictions of being, so to speak) and so engender epistemological difficulties.

While the atomistic, mechanistic paradigm they are attacking needs criticism, the monistic view is not without problems. If, as Ferguson, says, "relationship is everything," just *what* is related? If "everything is process" (p. 102), by what standard can we gauge process at all? Measurement is impossible without a fixed measuring rod. It seems that in Ferguson's antipathy to static ontologies she has become a partner with Heraclitus and has thus inherited his confusions (which were recognized and refuted ably by Plato long ago).[6] Further, if Berman rejects the distinct ego and all dualisms of "non-participatory consciousness," logic as we normally see it becomes impossible; for it requires the (dualistic) distinction of logic from illogic, truth from error, self from non-self.[7] And if Capra sees the highest state of consciousness as one "in which all boundaries and dualisms have been transcended and all dissolves into universal, undifferentiated oneness" (p. 371), it is difficult to see what is left of consciousness at all. Atomism may lose sight of the connection between entities, but the monistic alternatively tends to lose sight of everything as the world collapses into the dance of Maya (illusion) and implicit irrationalism.[8] This rejection of the subject/object distinction and the accompanying belief in traditional logic has led many in the New Age to embrace what Charles Fair called "the new nonsense," beliefs held by intuition, emotion, or imagination apart from rational appraisal and/or justification.[9] The popularity of astrology, gulibility concerning the paranormal, offbeat holistic health treatments (cosmic quakery)[10], etc. demonstrate this tendency. In some cases a mystical solipsism deems anything real that is believed (created by one's own omnipotent consciousness).

If the danger of a secular, mechanistic paradigm is reductionism and abstraction, the danger of the New Consciousness is total immersion into being and the destruction of transcendence entirely. The God within replaces the God above.

Fourth, a further moral difficulty is presented which is an internal problem for the New Consciousness. Just as monistic world-views tend to erase or downplay ontological distinctions between created entities, so they also relativize or even eradicate the absolute and distinct moral categories of good and evil. If all is one and in unceasing flux, how can we discriminate between disparate moral options? Ferguson's chapter "Spiritual Adventure" repeats the ancient Hindu affirmation, "Thou art That." You are the whole, the All, the Self. She says that "this wholeness unites opposites" in the *coincidentia oppositorium* (p. 381). And if, as Capra affirms, the highest state of consciousness dissolves all "into universal, undifferentiated oneness" (p. 371), we have little ontological/moral ground for valid ethical evaluation. An ontological identification with the Whole or the One does not insure any specific moral motivation. If we are already one, whole, and have transcended all dualities, what is left for us to do? We should heed the warning given several years ago by Professor R. C. Zaehner that monism easily leads to antinomianism. In using the graphic example of Charles Manson (who was a pantheist/monist) Zaehner notes that:

> This is a great mystery—the eternal paradox with which Eastern religions perpetually wrestle. If the ultimate truth . . . is that 'All is One' and 'One is All,' and that in this One all the opposites, including good and evil, are eternally reconciled, then what right have we to blame Charles Manson? For seen from the point of the eternal Now, he *did* nothing at all.[11]

Certainly such a paradigm may prove dangerous, although the three authors avoid the issue. Of course, for the Christian, moral imperatives are anchored in the unchanging and transcendent character of God, so moral distinctions are clarified in the light of God's ethical revelation. God's ways are not our ways, but he is not "beyond good and evil." The prophet Isaiah castigates those who "call evil good and good evil" (Isa. 5:22)

Fifth, besides these moral concerns, our writers open a Pandora's box of supernatural seduction once sealed off by Christian discernment. As Berman notes, the rationalistic "disenchantment of the world" may have left it a cold mechanism, but the previous "enchantments" of pre-Christian religion left much to be desired. Despite its abuses, the

Christianizing of the West did much to to exorcize unsavory religious practices prohibited by Scripture. This notwithstanding, these writers encourage exploration of the paranormal and the openly occult. We should also remember that the sophisticated panpsychism of General Systems Theory discussed by Capra is a close cousin to animism. The shaman returns in scientific guise. We should not view this as a "New" Consciousness but as the struggle to introduce a vanquished pagan orthodoxy, this time with the fanfare of scientific credibility.

Sixth, the political ethics of the New Consciousness prove problematic. Although Capra and Ferguson ostensibly argue for political-economic decentralization ("small is beautiful"), their monistic metaphysic seems to oppose this. Again, if all is ultimately one, then unity engulfs diversity (the one over the many, in philosophical terms), both cosmically and politically. A unified one-world order would be a logical result where sovereign nation states dissolve into the political One. We find a more materialistic type of political monism in the Soviet Union where the state[12] (collectivized Whole—the One) dominates the individuals (the many). Political elitism and the centralized, unifying power-state are logical results of monism because the state can view itself as the all-encompassing reality and center of total power. It becomes the sole source and enforcer of Persia, and Mesopotamia. In speaking of these cultures, Rushdoony notes that:

> If the transcendent and discontinuous nature of the being of God be denied, then god, gods, or powers of the cosmos are continuous with man and identifiable with him. To the extent that they are directly identified with men, to that extent the social order is absolute and a total power.[14] What appears as a New Consciousness democracy where all are God becomes quite easily and naturally a mystic oligarchy where some are more God than others (because they have realized their divinity.[15]

As Rushdoony points out, without a transcendent source of law and authority above the human political realm (as provided in Christian Theism), power becomes immanent in "a state, group, or person, and it is beyond appeal."[16] New Age politics really recognizes no low above human consciousness; instead it opts for mystical autonomy. To the contrary, biblical social ethics limit the perogatives of the state by divine, transcendent law—a "law above the (civil) law."[17] No human institution or ruler may be absolutized or deified, for God alone is divine and sovereign. As Rushdoony notes in relation to the political influence of Christianity in the West: "Divinity was withdrawn from human society [as pantheistic monism claims, "s"] and returned to the heavens and to God. . . . By de-divinizing the world, Christianity placed all created orders, including church and state, alike under God.[18] Christians may agree with some of the proposals on the New Age agenda (solar power, world peace, etc.), but must disagree on ethical/political presuppositions.[19]

Seventh, several other criticisms of the New Consciousness have been raised by non-Christian analysts. Michael Marien criticizes Marilyn Ferguson and much of the New Consciousness for over-estimating their influence and power by simplistically misreading the social situation. Mobilizing interest in the New Consciousness, he points out, is not the same as triggering a global transformation. Nevertheless, he claims the New Age often mistakes its grandiose intentions for actual results through presumptions.[20] An article in the *Wall Street Journal* accuses "exager-books" by Ferguson, Toffler, and Naisbett of "mega-hyping the pseudo-facts" through exaggeration, biased selection of facts, emotional appeal, and other weak methods of proof.[21] A euphoric optimism may smother insightful social analysis and constructive plans for change. Similarly, concern for personal potential and transformation may lead to a selfishness and egotism that ignores others' suffering.[22]

Despite these criticisms, Christians need to face the challenges of the New Consciousness.

First, we are challenged to see the interrelationship between world-views and the shape of civilization. Christian theology must articulate a full-orbed Weltanschauung equal to the modern task. In so doing, we should develop a theology of creation that treats both the sanctity of creation and the transcendence of God with integrity, without lapsing into either pantheism or Deism. The immanence/transcendence of God seen in the Logos doctrine is quite fruitful here.[23] The Logos unifies and directs the created realm in all its multifaceted richness without merging with it. In light of God's sustaining immanental providence, we can forge a biblically holistic approach to creation (ecological theology) which neither ignores the scientific understanding of the natural world, not instantly capitulates to it. Rather than a monistic cosmology, the Bible pictures a creation that demonstrates both the integrity of distinct entities (the many-diversity) and their interrelatedness (the one-unity), as Christ upholds all things by the word of his power (Heb. 1:3). here we might find General Systems Theory's emphasis on the interconnectedness of nature quite helpful—without endorsing its pantheism. If secular materialism is philsophically bankrupt, Christianity must not be theologically bashful in advancing Christian alternatives.

Second, the New Consciousness should call us to rethink how we conceptualize theology. Capra, Ferguson, and Berman all castigate scientistic rationalism—the strictly linear, one dimensional, and atomistic cognition so congenial to the West. Without becoming illogical, we should recognize and explore the intuitive, imaginative, and emotional elements of knowing ourselves, the world, and God.[24] Systematic theology is indispensable, but stress on formal propositions at the expense of imagery, poetry, and historical drama may diminish a truly biblical richness. William Dyrness's recent book, *Let the Earth Rejoice: A Biblical Theology of Holistic Mission*[25], presents a theology of mission not by systemizing propositions about God and His plan but by retelling the drama of God's redemptive strategies from Genesis to Revelation. In doing biblical theology he wants to spotlight God in action and so demonstrate God's "project" in the world. We can learn much from this approach.

We must communicate with those enamored with the New Consciousness. Without capitulating to irrationalism, we should be sensitive to the cognitive styles of those so disenchanted with Western humanistic rationalism. Much of modern apologetics is directed against a secular rationalist mentality already abandoned by the New Consciousness. A different apologetic approach is in order, one that affirms the finality of Christ as a personal God over against pantheistic counterfeits, emphasizes the human dilemmas as sin rather than ignorance, and one that engages the intuitive, imaginative faculties so esteemed by the New Consciousness. For this purpose Christian fiction and poetry may be more effective than classical apologetics. We might also learn form Kierkegaard's method of "indirect communication" in which he challenges the structure of our subjectivity to prepare us for our need of redemption instead of focusing only on objective arguments.[26]

The New Consciousness offers a New Age of hope, a rebirth of our lurking potentials smothered by Western materialism. Inasmuch as it successfully caters to this hunger it will have many beggars at its banquet, at both the scholarly and popular tables. Beside the general popular interest in human potential concerns (meditation, various New Consciousness therapies, consciousness-raising seminars, etc.), a growing number of sophisticated New Consciousness writers—in addition to Capra and Berman—such as the cultural historican William Irwin Thompson and psychological theorist Ken Wilber are enticing the academic arena with their eloquence. Journals concerned with humanistic and transpersonal psychology are beginning to wedge into more scholarly circles, despite the present cultural tenacity of secular materialism. A few years ago, Bantam books launched a new series of "New Age Books" ranging from the popular to the scholarly. Universities are using books like *The Turning Point* for texts.[27] This expansion of the New Consciousness should not be surprising since, as C.S. Lewis noted, "pantheism is in fact the permanent natural bent of the human mind."[28] Yet a "natural bent" is not immune to supernatural grace. As ever, Christians are called to affirm Jesus Christ as the way, the truth, and the life, and to cultivate a full—morbed world- and life-view conversant with, but never compromised by the challenges of the age.

[1] Newton was actually not so much to blame for the mechanistic view as was Descartes. See Bryce Christensen, "The Apple in the Vortex: Newton, Blake, and Descares," *Philosophy and Literature* 6 (1982): 147–161.

[2] A point made in many recent books. For a Christian critique see Mark Albrecht and Brooks Alexander, "The Sellout of Science," *Spiritual Counterfeits Journal* (August, 1978): 19–29.

[3] For a critique of classical natural theology see Carl F. H. Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 6 vols. (Texas: Word, 1976) 2: 104–123.

[4] Marie Jahoda, "Wholes and Parts, Meaning and Mechanism," *Nature* 296, (April 8, 1982): 498. On the cultural implications of non–Christian holism/monism see Gary North, *None Dare Call it Witchcraft* (New Rouchelle, New York: Arlington House, 1976), pp. 171–181.

[5] Soren Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princton University Press, 1974), p. 14.

[6] Gordon Clark, *Thales to Dewey* , (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957), pp. 66–69.

[7] Berman flip-flops between rejecting the individual ego entirely and transcending it. See pp. 158–165, 170, 179, 297–299 for inconsistencies.

[8] See Berman, pp. 151, 152 where he seems to undercut objective truth entirely. For a treatment of specific epistemological problem inherent in monism see David Clark, *The Pantheism of Alan Watts* (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity, 1978).

[9] Charles Fair, *The New Nonsense* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974).

[10] See Paul C. Reisser, Teri K. Reisser, John Weldon, *The Holistic Healers* (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1983).

[11] R.C. Zaehner, *Our Savage God: The Perverse Use of Eastern Thought* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1974), p. 72.

[12] The Soviet state follows the impetus of Hegel's philosophical and political monism embodied in his statement that the state is "the march of God through the world."

[13] At several points Capra argues for Statist control and regulation of the economy and environment, pp. 333, 338.

[14] Rousas Rushdoony, *The One and the Many* (Fairfax, Virginia: Thoburn Press, 1970), p. 58.

[15] See David Spangler, *Explorations* (Scotland: Findhorn Publications, 1980), p. 106.

[16] Ibid., p. 60.

[17] See John Warwick Montgomery, *The Law Above the Law* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Bethany Fellowship, Inc., 1975).

[18] Rushdoony, p. 124.

[19] For a Christian critique of the roots and results of modern statism see Herbert Scholssber, *Idols for Destruction* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publisher, 1983), pp. 177–231.

[20] Michael Marien, "The Transformation as Sandbox Syndrome," *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, Vol.23, no. 1, Winter 1983, pp. 7–15; Marien "Further Thoughts on the Two Paths to Transformation: A Reply to Ferguson," *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, Vol. 23, no. 4 Fall 1983 pp. 127–136.

[21] Anthony Downs, "They Sizzle, but Their Predictions Fizzle," *The Wall Street Journal* April 6, 1983.

[22] Marien, "The Transformation as Sandbox Syndrome," p. 10.

[23] See Carl F.H. Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 3: 164–247.

[24] See Stephen G. Meyer, "Neuropsychology and Worship," *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, Vol. 3. no. 4 (Fall, 1975), pp. 281–289.

[25] William Dyrness, *Let the Earth Rejoice: A Biblical Theology of Holistic Mission*, (Westchester, Ill: Crossway Books,1983).

[26] See C. Stephen Evans, *Subjectivity and Religious Belief*, (Grand Rapids, Mich: Christian University Press, 1978).

[27] A nutrition class at the University of Oregon at Eugene used Capra's book. Larry Dossey's, *Space, Time and Medicine*, (Boulder and London: Shambhala, 1982), is also used. This applies the New Consciousness to health concerns.

[28] C.S. Lewis, *Miracles*, (Macmillan, 1974), p.87.

The Search for Christian America
by Mark A. Noll, Nathan O. Hatch, and George M. Marsden (Crossway/Good News, 1983, 188 pp., $6.95). Reviewed by John G. Stackhouse, Jr., Ph.D. student at the University of Chicago Divinity School.

This book will not be read widely. And it deserves to be. It is a careful, temperate, critical examination of the popular idea that America once was much more "Christian"—indeed, that America once *was* "Christian." This idea, which has animated many conservative American Christians to pursue particular social and political programs, is seen as a myth by the authors.

The volume initially points out the ambiguities in the adjective "Christian" when it is applied to societies. First, "'Christian' . . . can have a weak generic meaning as simply describing some connection with the Judeo-Christian heritage." Second, "Christian" can refer "to the presence of many individuals in a culture who were apparently Christians." Third, "Christian" can indicate "cultural phenomena produced by apparently Christian persons who not only are attempting to follow God's will but who in fact succeed reasonably well in doing so."

Authors Noll, Hatch, and Marsden—reputable historians all—proceed to examine the formative events in the myth of "Christian America." Puritan New England, the Great Awakening, and the Revolutionary War. They find that in each case the verdict is ambiguous: these were: "Christian" events in the first two sense, but not in the third. They conclude that "early America and the early American form of government, while relatively good and influenced by some Christian traditions, were products also of substantial non-Christian influences."

The authors go on to draw out the practical implications of their historical conclusion. First, if we *don't* qualify our endorsement of early America as "Christian," we actually, if unintentionally, attribute the authority of revealed truth to what were in fact compromises between Christian and non-Christian influences. Second, this kind of confusion keeps us from distinguishing between what is truly Christian in our heritage, and hence what is worth reconsidering and perhaps changing.

The book rests on literally hundreds and hundreds of pages of the authors' own published research, as well as that of others. It clearly and calmly makes its case, with evident concern to be charitable to all—especially Schaeffer *père et fils*—with whom it disagrees. It does not shout, it does not draw bold, black lines, it does not sweep over contradictory evidence.

And it is precisely these virtues of deliberation, nuance, and qualification which will keep this book from being read. Evangelicals generally don't like to read careful books which deal honestly with ambiguity: the sales records show how well other books sell which steamroller opposing ideas and press historical evidence willy-nilly into their service. Let's face it: these latter books are a lot *easier* to read.

Moreover, the idea of "Christian America" is making a dramatic comeback, and Robert Handy has had to write another chapter to his book of that title to take account of something he had thought was dead. Some evangelicals—especially those who applaud Mr. Reagan at N.A.E. meetings—see the myth of "Christian America" as a powerful ideological weapon as well as a motivating force in their social and political programs. They are not going to welcome this qualification of that myth because it *is* difficult and sometimes costly to make policies in America in the light of the Word of God and not of "the rockets' red glare." And such policies perhaps will not be so popular and powerful as those which unqualifiedly enlist the support of patriotism.

Nevertheless, evangelicals need this book. It is the antidote to the baptized "America First" movement among evangelicals. As such, it deserves to be widely read. And, as such, it won't be.

What the Bible Says About God the Creator
by Jack Cottrell (College Press, 1983, 518 pp., $13.50). Reviewed by Clark H. Pinnock, Professor of Theology, McMaster Divinity College.

This is a solid book on the doctrine of God which I will be using as a text next session at McMaster. Do not be misled by the title, which sounds a bit simplistic. This is a knowledgable, well researched, and well constructed book on Christian theism, better than any I can think of. It goes deeply into the doctrine of creation, and its implications. It takes up our knowledge of God and the transcendence of God. It discusses the infinity of God and the fear of God. The book is 500 pages long and comes with a generous bibliography and indices. It is the first of a three volume set on the doctrine of God. The second will treat divine providence, and the third will be entitled *God the Redeemer*. Cottrell himself has his doctorate from Princeton and his MDiv from Westminster, and is an Arminian theologian in the Christian churches (Campbellite). For those who might wish to know, the press is located in Joplin, Missouri.

One of the themes which the author himself is particularly concerned about is the "Christological fallacy." He deplores the way Barth and others confuse creation and redemption and deny the priority of creation over redemption. One should not reduce creation as the stage on which redemption is to be played out, he believes. It has importance in God's sight in itself.

I will take issue with Cottrell at two points. First, he takes a hard line approach to the salvation of the unevangelized. He denies that general revelation can be of any help to them in this regard. Responding favorably to that light will not take anyone to heaven. While I am used to hearing this from Calvinists, it sounds a little strange from an Arminian. If God desires to save everyone, and fairness suggests everyone should have a chance to accept the offer of grace, why eliminate a major way by which God's mercy could be effective for much of the world's population? After all, Scripture itself points to the salvation of people outside the "church" (Melchizedek, Naaman, Cornelius). Did Paul not say God is near all of us, and that we can find him if we feel after him? (Acts 17:27). I guess evangelicals have yet to find their Rahner.

Second, I find his Arminian stance unnecessarily weakened at another point. Cottrell insists on holding to God's timelessness and total omniscience. Apparently God from his timeless vantage point can see the whole reel of time all at once, including all the contingent acts yet to be done. To me this is not compatible with the Arminian belief in genuine human freedom. If God knows infallibly what I will do tomorrow, then I do not have the freedom to do otherwise. It will not do to say God did not determine it but only foresaw it. The action is as fixed and necessary as if God had decreed it. Cottrell has walked into the arms of the Augustinians who know that total omniscience and timelessness imply determinism. I see no way around "limiting" omniscience to what *can* be known (i.e., not future contingents).

Disagreements notwithstanding, I highly recommend this volume as the best doctrine of God we evangelicals presently have.

Joshua
Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 7, by Trent C. Butler (Word, 1983, 304 pp.). Reviewed by Marten H. Woudstra, Professor of Old Testament, Calvin Theological Seminary.

This new Joshua commentary follows the format employed in the *Word Biblical Commentary* series currently in process. A brief Introduction is followed by a verse-by-verse commentary of a scholarly nature. Each pericope or chapter is treated as follows. An extensive bibliography precedes a fresh translation of the text which is followed by extensive textual notes. The commentary section itself is divided into three subsections: Form/Structure/Setting, Comment, and Explanation. From the Editorial Preface we gather that this format was chosen to reach different levels of readership, both academic and non-academic. Yet the general nature of the book is such that one cannot easily benefit from the more popular parts without having first read the scholarly analyses.

The work evidences great erudition and a thorough acquaintance with Joshua studies until the present time. Its approach is that of form criticism and tradition history with an allowance of God's supervising activity during a process that is thought to stretch all the way from the time of Joshua till the exilic period. The author assumes an oral stage of tradition, followed by a cultic celebration stage. Then comes the Compiler who is said to have produced the first literary work, bringing earlier traditions up to date by means of etiological notations. In this long-drawn-out and often complex process God is said to have "used anonymous men to teach his people the divine word" (p. xxiv). Although allowing for the possibility that "the old traditional understandings (of the process of inspiration and inscripturation) may eventually be vindicated" (p. xxx) it is evident that this book follows an approach that is anything but traditional. It needlessly complicates the question of the historical substructure on which the author believes the book of Joshua clearly rests.

Although inevitably influenced at every step by its basic starting point concerning authorship and date of final composition, the commentary contains useful exegetical insights which contribute to an understanding of the book's divinely inspired message. But much reorientation is needed if one wishes to fit these exegetical comments into a more traditional pattern. At many points this task may turn out to be impossible. To say that "the motif of Moses as the servant of Yahweh appears to have arisen in prophetic circles at least as early as Hezekiah" (p. 10) raises the question whether Yahweh at one time actually said to Joshua, as the Scriptural witness said He did, that "Moses my servant is dead" (Josh. 1:2). If the phrase "my servant" as applied to Moses did not arise until Hezekiah's day, Yahweh clearly did not say what Josh. 1:2 says He did. While not a belief in a "Red Letter Edition" of the Old Testament to mark the *ipsissima verba* of Yahweh, the reviewer nevertheless is not able to fit Butler's approach at such points into a biblically acceptable view of inspiration.

In his English translation of the Joshua text the author uses "southern" style English, employing the colloquial "you all" for the plural second person where standard English simply uses "you." Sample: "The you all may return to the land you all possess so that you all may possess that which Moses . . . has given you all beyond the Jordan . . ." (Josh. 1:15b). It remains to be seen whether such regionalism in an academic work will commend itself to the general readership.

Butler's work, published as it is under broadly evangelical auspices, offers a challenge to those who favor another brand of evangelical scholarship than his work presents. As such it may help toward the clarification of issues that are as yet unresolved.

The Shakers: Two Centuries of Spiritual Reflection.

Classics of Western Spirituality edited with introduction by Robley Edward Whitson (Paulist, 1983, 370 pp., $7.95 pb.). Reviewed by Linda Mercadante, teaching fellow and doctoral student in Theology/History of Doctrine, Princeton Theological Seminary.

Although the Shakers are one of the key communication experiments in our American religious heritage, they are also among the most consistently misunderstood. Akin to the popular stereotype of the Puritans as grumpy, dour-faced kill-joys, is the widespread misconception of the Shakers as anti-sex, eccentric utopians with a female Christ. The unfortunate thing about both these stereotypes is that they either stifle interest in these groups altogether, or distort whatever explorations are accomplished, so that the available riches are never fully discovered.

Yet the riches of our Shaker heritage are abundant and contain both theological and practical help for such issues as gender equality, Christian communalism, the function and role of spiritual gifts, leadership forms, liturgical renewal and the simplifying of life-style. The first step in evaluating these contributions is to gain knowledge of Shaker primary sources, and it is here that *Two Centuries of Spiritual Reflection* provides a long-eeded starting place.

Robley Whitson, a Catholic priest, scholar and theology professor, has had a life-long interest in the Shakers, stemming from childhood experience with a Shaker community, as well as a continuing friendship with many of the remaining members. He has spent many years unearthing, compiling and organizing the Shaker primary sources in the expectation that prevalent misconceptions can be corrected and that a time of serious research, appreciation and propriation of the Shaker heritage can be inaugurated.

The Shakers is an edited collection of pertinent excerpts from Shaker theological works, journal articles, letters, personal testimonies and other relevant sources. The lengthy introduction stands on its own as a useful primer to Shaker life and thought, as well as an evaluation of current views about them. For instance, Whitson explains that founder Ann Lee, as well as the majority of the leadership have always been careful to curtail any exaggerated claims that Lee was the female counterpart of Christ, instead of presenting her as a specially gifted or anointed ("Christed") messenger.

In addition, Whitson shows how the well-know Shaker focus on celibacy progressed in their thought from a culturally-conditioned dualism to an acceptance of this state as one of the many special gifts of God. The Shaker realized-eschatology is also of interst because by focusing less on the pervasive inevitability of sin in fallen humanity and more on the victory of Christ, they had the confidence to experiment boldly and to change when necessary.

Throughout the readings, as well as in Whitson's introduction and section comments, it becomes clear that this is not a community that focuses on establishing a static orthodoxy or regulating an ideal orthopraxis, but instead one which stresses continual openness to the leading of God's Spirit. Therefore, no one spokesperson can ever fully represent the Shaker theological stance, since they believe that only in the aggregate and over a period of time do the true doctrines manifest themselves. This rather different understanding of theology and practice may make some readers uncomfortable, especially those used to evaluating a tradition by analyzing its chief proponent or creed. Therefore, Shaker thought should be studied with an eye to its fruit, that is, their life of peacefulness, productivity, practical creativity, gender equality, and long-standing success in achieving harmonious communal living among large numbers of diverse people.

In fact, earlier works on the Shakers had more to do with these factors, i.e., their communal lifestyle, their celebrated furniture-making and innovative domestic goods, and with their equal opportunity for women and ethnic minorities, than with their thought which supported all this. Whitson's book, then, fills a needed gap by bringing the primary sources to the attention of a wide audience.

Formerly, even among historians, little in-depth reference has been made to the writings of the Shakers or to the evolutions in thought which they experience, and this has led to problematic views. The fact that this book has been included in the Classics of Western Spirituality series (subtitled "A Library of the Great Spiritual Masters"), and at a reasonable price, should ensure these Shaker sources a wider audience than they have had in the past.

Ancient Myths and Biblical Faith: Scriptural Transformations

by Foster R. McCurley (Fortress, 1983, xiii + 192 pp.). Reviewed by Tremper Longman, III, Associate Professor of Old Testament, Westminster Theological Seminary.

A modern reader of the Old Testament must recognize the temporal, geographical and cultural foreignness of the texts being read before s/he can begin to understand them. Further, it must be realized that Old Testament books are primarily addressed to the people of Israel. They are contextualized writings directed toward the faithful and those who have chosen to follow the gods of the surrounding nations. Therefore, the study of ancient Near Eastern literature is a significant road to understanding the form and message of the Old Testament and indeed the whole Bible.

Foster McCurley has produced a handy and readable volume that traces the use of three major biblical themes which are shared with and perhaps originate in the literature of the broader Near East (Mesopotamia, Canaan and Egypt). The three themes are not McCurley's own discovery, but he describes them in a manner that will be clear to the nonspecialist and which shows their relevance to the understanding and application of Scripture.

The first theme is the conflict between order and chaos. The Near East produced a number of major texts that describe the struggles between a warrior god (Enlil, Marduk, Baal) and a chaos monster (frequently a sea dragon like Marduk, Leviathan, or Yamm). McCurley carefully shows how the Old Testament describes many of the great acts of Yahweh in history through allusions to these myths of warfare between a god of order and chaos. He rightly categorizes this practice the "mythicazation of history" rather than the "historicization of myth." By this he means that biblical authors begin with the historical act and apply mythological allusions to it, thus giving the act more than simple historical significance. While I agree with McCurley up to this point, I believe he should have stressed the polemical nature of these mythical allusions to the Old Testament. By describing Yahweh and his acts in terms of ancient Near Eastern myth, the biblical writers stress that Yahweh, not Baal or Marduk, is the true provider of order in the midst of chaos.

McCurley also treats the themes of the relationship between divine and human sexuality and the concept of a sacred mountain. With respect to the former, I feel McCurley stretched things a little in relating Sumerian Dumuzi texts to the issue of women's ordination, but his discussion makes the book more interesting and relevant. A highlight of the chapters on mountains is the insight that Golgotha is an anti- or unmountain compared to Sinai, Zion and so forth. While correctly pointing out that the Old and New Testaments associate certain mountains with theophany (like other Near Eastern texts), he provocatively argues that Golgotha, the place of Christ's death, may have been a depression in the ground and not a mountain as tradition remembers it.

McCurley's approach to these themes is indeed unique in that he intentionally brings the New Testament into the discussion. For example, he shows how Jesus is pictured in the Gospels as one who conquers chaos in his calming the sea, rebuking of Satan, and exorcising of demons. The picture of Jesus as Divine Warrior is suggestive and may be supplemented, for instance, by connecting the picture of Jesus ascending and descending on a white cloud with the Old Testament image of God as the cloud-chariot rider.

McCurley's book is an easy-to-read introduction to the benefits of the comparative method. He points out that the biblical authors are engaged in the adaptation or transformation of Near Eastern materials and not crass borrowing. He affirms the biblical text is unique in its original cultural context. I recommend this book for the use of students, pastors and scholars.

Mere Morality: What God Expects from Ordinary People

by Lewis B. Smedes (Eerdmans, 1983, 282 pp., $14.95). Reviewed by Dennis Hollinger, Associate Professor of Church and Society, Alliance Theological Seminary.

Mere Morality is not merely an exercise in abstract moral reasoning. It is a fresh, provocative treatment of God's moral law as it informs and guides human behavior in the midst of life's many difficult choices.

Lewis Smedes, Professor of Theology and Ethics at Fuller Theological Seminary, contends that the moral law of God set forth in the Ten Commandments is not an heroic ethic for a select few, but is a normative framework for all humanity. God's standards, he believes, are deeply interwoven into our humanness and thus are a reflection of what we are as human beings. The Decalogue then is seen to fit life's design and make explicit what all humans already know— at least in part.

In *Mere Morality* Smedes examines five of the Ten Commandments—all from the second table of law pertaining to human relations. (Coveteousness, the tenth commandment is not dealt with except in relationship to the eighth, "Thou shalt not steal.") With each command the author discusses three questions: (1) What does the commandment require? Here he particularly enunciates how the Hebrews would have understood the law as well as how we must hear it today. (2) Why was the commandment given? In these sections Smedes probes to the underlying intent to show that God's law guides us to true humanness and community. As he puts it, "The moral commandments of the Decalogue are not barked at us by a capricious heavenly staff sergeant . . . They match the configurations of life as God created it" (p. 15). (3) How can the command be understood and obeyed within our real worlds of conflict and change? Here Smedes attempts to do moral causistry as he applies each command to numerous contemporary issues such as: capital punishment, abortion, treatment termination, divorce, adultery, treatment of property, and truth telling.

Causistry in Christian ethics is the attempt to apply specific moral principles or laws to designated, concrete situations. Such an enterprise has fallen on hard times in recent years. On the one hand, some ethicists have so relativized Christian ethics that we are primarily left with meta-ethics—discourse about the meaning and significance of moral language. Thus, the refusal to even attempt applied ethics. On the other hand are the absolutists who contend that principles can be applied uniformly to diverse moral dilemmas, without any appreciation for the unique variable in each situation. Smedes has successfully steered a *via media* between these two extremes. He is committed to the universality of God's moral law as commands which can in all places and times direct as to what God expects us to do. But he is also acutely aware of the competing moral claims and ambiguities which often inhere in life's choices. To admit that the application of the Decalogue is not simplistic points "not to a weak spot in divine law, but to the ambiguity that our fallen urges bring to our lives" (p. 237).

There will be those who think that Smedes is equivocating on some issues or is unwilling to declare "Thus says the Lord" about a given issues. But such readers must heed his contention that "we have no ideal world in which to find out what God expects us to do; we have only this changing and broken one. Life changes, and obedience to unchanging commands must adjust to changing conditions" (p. 242).

Mere Morality is delightful reading and sheds fresh light on both the understanding of ethical principles as well as the application of them. The author's attempt to root the Decalogue in the broader universal principles of love and justice is highly suggestive. My major question for Smedes is whether the law of God is just "mere morality"—a morality woven into our humanness. Does such a construction do justice to our fallen nature and thus God's attempt to renew our moral thoughts and actions? Smedes' emphasis is, of course, quite consistent with his Calvinistic heritage which has always eulogized a creation ethic over a Christological one. But it seems to me that God's law is not only a reflection of the created order. It is a call and guide to radical renewal for creatures who since the fall break covenant, disrespect human life, and replace truthfulness with falsehood. Moreover, the creation ethic framework has historically tended in practice to engender a rather static approach to the moral life as opposed to a dynamic approach rooted in redemption.

Despite this minor complaint, *Mere Morality* is a splendid contribution to Evangelical ethics. The book will be extremely useful for pastors, for classes on the Ten Commandments, as well as courses in Christian ethics.

Logic and the Nature of God
by Stephen T. Davis (Eerdmans, 1983, 171 pp., $9.95).
The Concept of God: An Exploration of Contemporary Difficulties with the Attributes of God
by Ronald H. Nash (Zondervan, 1983, 127 pp., $4.95). Reviewed by Keith Cooper, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Washington.

Many who are interested in theology have serious misgivings about contemporary philosophy of religion, either considering it irrelevant or else writing it off as inaccessible (due to its technical machinery). That they are mistaken is, I suspect, often not their fault but that of the philosopher. But not always: in recent years there have been a spate of monographs and journal articles that are philosophically competent, theologically informed, and yes, eminently readable. There is much to be gained, not least by theologians, from an acquaintance with these writings. One may legitimately wonder, though, where one ought to start.

Recent books by Stephen Davis and Ronald Nash provide one answer to that question. Both concern themselves mainly with the *concept* of God. This is not just a holdover from the days of linguistic analysis but a recognition of the topic's importance; after all, if theism's understanding of what God is like is incoherent, if it is logically impossible that a being with *those* attributes exists, then (among other things) the Bible is false and apologetic concerns become moot. Nash, who teaches at Western Kentucky University, provides a well-written and carefully crafted introduction that reviews discussion about God's omnipotence, omniscience, eternality, simplicity, immutability, and necessity. He argues that Process thinkers have erred in limiting the choices to Thomistic theism and panentheism, suggesting rather that one can (if needed) modify the classical concept of God while maintaining orthodox Christian theism. Though proposing that pure actuality, impassibility, and simplicity can safely be given up, he sees no incoherence in retaining God's omnipotence, omniscience, and (properly qualified) immutability, and defends God's logical necessity.

Nash's treatment is helpful at many points: in summarizing Process theology and its weaknesses, in discussing the logical limits to omnipotence, and in explaining how the doctrine of God's simplicity arose in response to medieval debates over realism—providing protection from heterodoxy perhaps not needed today. At other places I think he is just too quick: in the way he reconciles omniscience and human freedom, in claiming that analogies can help us make sense of God's being timeless, and in dismissing the notion of a "factually necessary being" (i.e., and everlasting being on whom everything else depends for its existence) in favor of logical necessity. Also, the arguments he discusses in favor of God's simplicity and immutability would seem to leave *us* simple and immutable, too; surely better ones are available. More serious flaws center around his use of the distinction between "God" as name and as title, and that between essential and nonessential attributes. He wants to argue, for example, that the person who is in fact god (Yahweh) cannot sin, but so far as I can tell only shows that any being who did sin would forfeit claim to deity. But these do not detract from the book's usefulness, so long as one reads it—as one should any book in philosophy—knowing that there will be many points about which others disagree. It is meant only to be introductory, and it succeeds well at that difficult task.

Davis, who teaches at Claremont McKenna College, intends his book to be a contribution to the scholarly literature in its own right; but I think that it too can serve as a useful introduction. It is clearly and sensibly written, and carefully makes its way through many of the same issues that Nash discusses. One has to work hard, in places, to follow Davis' argument, but one finds that the effort is well rewarded—in philosophy, too, the maxim "no pain, no gain" holds true. In claiming that the Christian view of God is philosophically defensible and theologically satisfying, he is refreshingly open about what that view must include: he opts for an everlasting but not timelessly eternal being, who *can* sin but never *will*—and so is praiseworthy for his goodness, and who is immutable where it counts ("God's basic nature and faithfulness to his promises remain the same") while not being changeless. There are excellent discussions of foreknowledge and omnipotence, as well as chapters on the incarnation, the Trinity, and the problem of evil. The latter goes beyond a defense of the logical coherence of a world containing both God and evil, but in an odd way. Davis conflates the philosophical question of whether evil provides *evidence* against the existence of God (he concludes that it does not) with that of how to overcome the "evangelistic difficulties" wrought by evil. Calling this mixture the "emotive problem of evil" does not help! There clearly are pastoral concerns with evil that go beyond what philosophy can provide; but I should think that it would be enormously helpful to be able to say with confidence that suffering provides little if any valid evidence against the goodness of God. Davis argues well for the latter claim, but in a way that is potentially misleading.

I am tempted to say that one should read Davis and recommend Nash, but such general advice is rarely useful. Both are worth considering, as accessible entries to some of the most invigorating thinking occurring in philosophy *or* in theology.

Models of Revelation
by Avery Dulles (Doubleday, 1983, 345 pp., $ 16.95).
Reviewed by Clark H. Pinnock, Professor of Theology, McMaster Divinity College.

This is an important and valuable book on revelation, what it is, and how it has been communicated. It is beautifully created, clearly and thoughtfully written, and will serve its readers well. Like his earlier book on the church, Dulles makes use of five models or ideal types in order to get at the basic issues and to set forth the essential options before us today in contemporary theology. Part one describes these options, and takes stock of their strengths and weaknesses, while part two goes on to a proposal Dulles wishes to offer in which he describes revelation as "symbolic communication." For the reader's benefit let me summarize what the five models of revelation are. They are in order of exposition: revelation as authoritative doctrine, revelation through the mighty acts of God, revelation from the depths of human experience, revelation as encounter with the kerygma, and revelation as breakthrough to a new consciousness. Dulles is very helpful in sorting out a seemingly confused situation. For my part I would have wished to see a clearer line plainly drawn between the classical assumption about revelation that whatever else it delivers certainly gives us truth content of which we are stewards and which must not be denied, and the literal revision which sees revelation not delivering such fixed content. Giving us these five models is helpful, but it obscures what to me is the most important point of all. As it turns out Dulles himself does not wish this point to be too prominent because his own proposal is shaky in regard to content.

Having looked at the five options, Dulles believes that the way to move forward is to collect the strengths of each and avoid the pitfalls of them all, and to construct in effect a sixth model which would be better than any of the five. He feels that revelation is a richer category than any of the five types allows and that we need a model which could represent that richness better. The ninth chapter is the key one to examine because in it Dulles explains his model of revelation by symbolic mediation. Part two is given over to spelling it out and showing its superiority relative to the other models.

What does Dulles mean by revelation through symbols? It is his way of isolating what is truly crucial in the biblical and Christian message. Foundational are the symbols such as cross and resurrection. This is not identical with what the Bible teaches on those topics, since that teaching may be inadequate in places. Nor is it to be equated with historical events as such because they might be shaky when interpreted by modern canons of historiography. Revelation is located in the symbols

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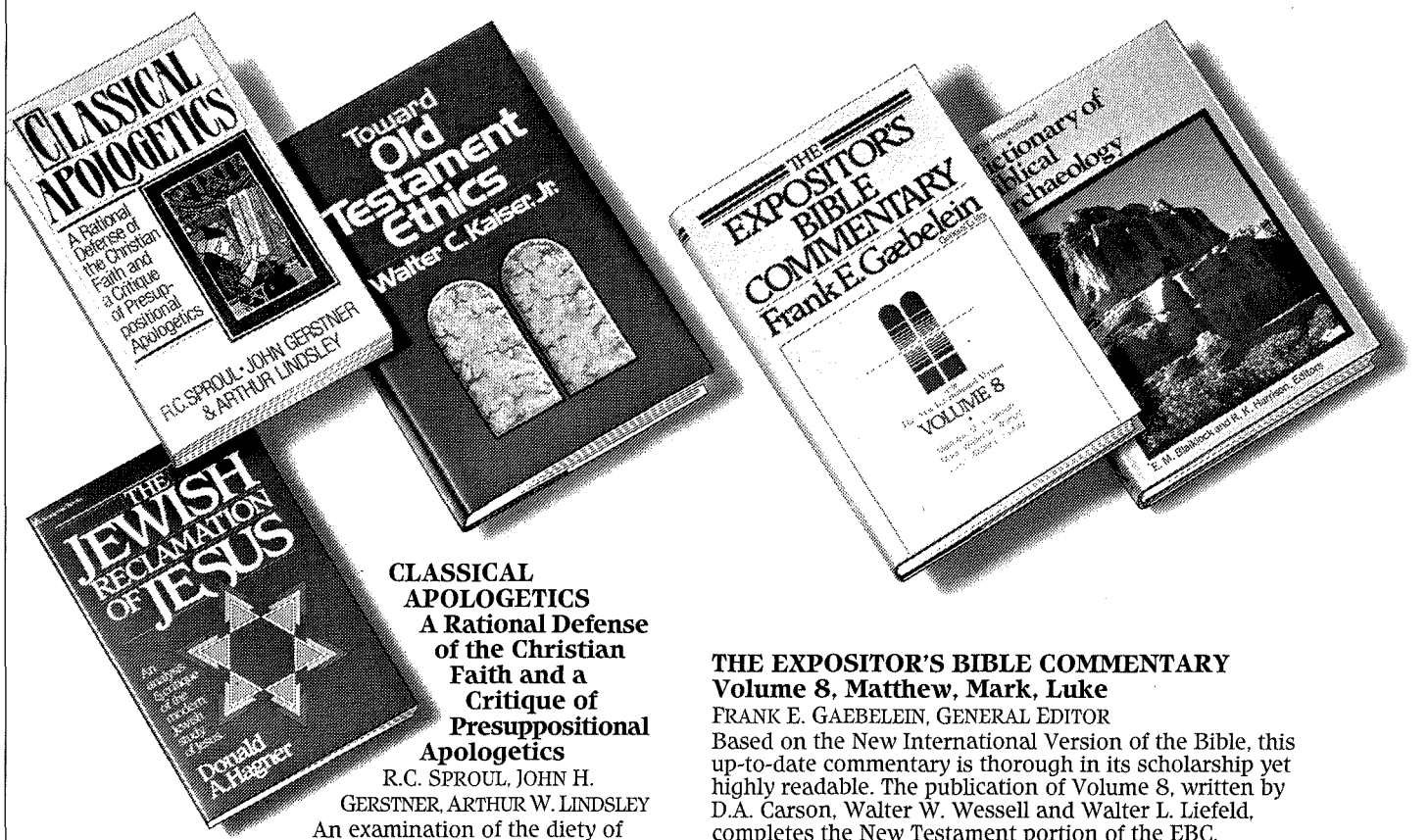

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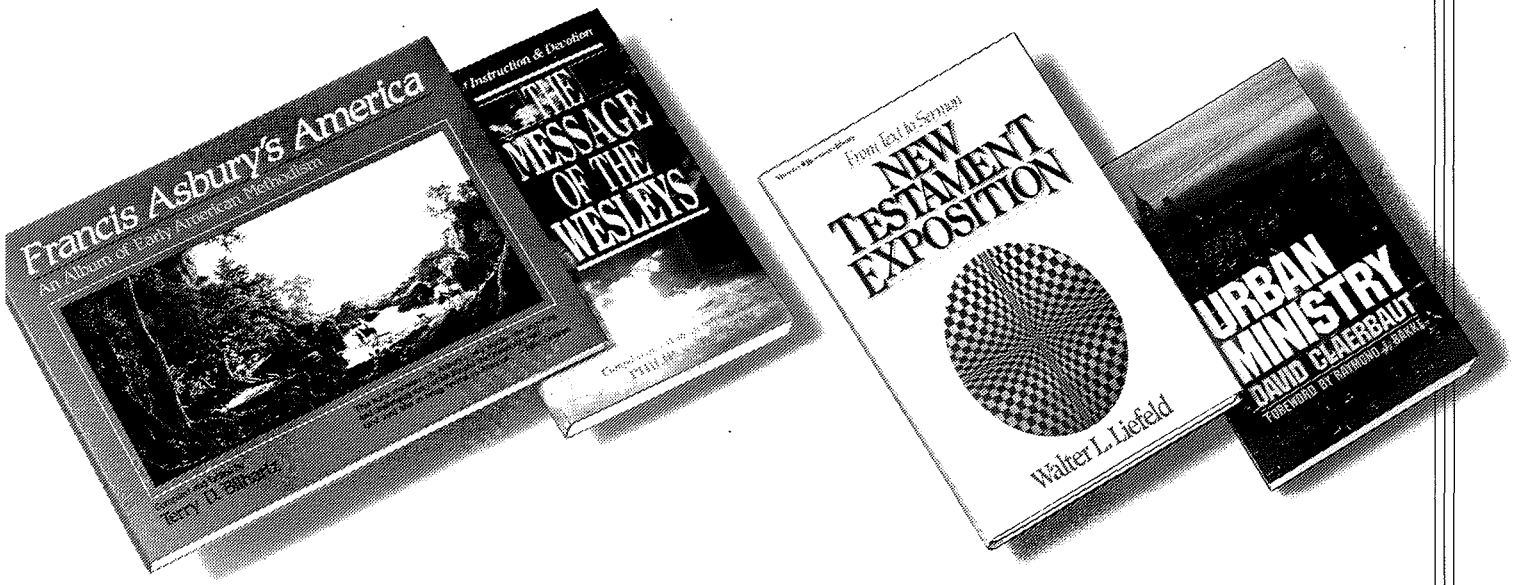

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borne by the biblical teaching and recital but which are deeper than just propositions or facts.

On one side of his proposal then, Dulles wants to distance himself from the kind of orthodoxy which would tie the message down to strict exegesis of biblical passages or have it stand or fall upon some question of historical verification. But on the other hand, Dulles does not want to see the gospel dissolve away into subjectivty. He wants to think of the great scriptural symbols as given by God and permanently binding on us. These are not, he insists, just human poetry, symbols of the human imagination which can transform our lives. He seems to think of them as given by God, divinely inspired even.

My view of Dulles' proposal of revelation by symbolic mediation is that it is rather vague. I am not sure where these symbols came from. Or what exactly they have to mean? Or whether God actually did these things to save us? Do we have to defend the ontological deity of Christ against the functionalists? Do people have to be converted to Jesus Christ to be saved? Can we trust the Bible? It looks to me like Dulles had been too intimidated by certain sceptical objections to Christianity and feels he has to answer then in a very weak form.

What can we make of this proposal? It is a classical sounding proposal in that it stands firm for a solid symbolic structure which is not merely human in origin. But it wants to yield a good deal of ground to those who see it in those terms. It is close to what Tillich, Gilkey, and Baum are saying. He expresses great sympathy for positions which really do deny the teachings of the Bible and the creeds of the church. It leaves me a little confused. Just a few years ago Dulles wrote against a liberalism of accommodation which he found in such theologians as Gilkey, Tracy and Ogden, and he got blasted for doing so in the pages of the *Christian Century* (Nov 9, 1977). I perceived him to be a conservative voice speaking out courageously against heresy in the church. But now, perhaps in painful recoil from that unpleasant confrontation, Dulles seems to be prepared to say this kind of liberal theology really has a lot going for it. I must confess that I prefer the Dulles of *The Resilient Church* to the present one. On the other hand I understand what may be going on in his life—out and out conflict over the faith once delivered can be a bloody and unpleasant business, and I do not blame him for drawing back just a little from it. But I do feel a little sorrow too because we need theologians of his acumen and faith to help us hold back the barbarians.

Theological Investigations, Volume 18: God and Revelation
by Karl Rahner, trans. by Edward Quinn (Crossroad, 1983, 304 pp., $19.50).
Theological Investigations, Volume 19: Faith and Ministry
by Karl Rahner, trans. by Edward Quinn (Crossroad, 1983, 282 pp., $19.50). Reviewed by Robert L. Hurd, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, CA.

Karl Rahner, the great German Jesuit theologian who died this past March, was once described as the quiet mover of the Catholic Church. These are not empty words. It is no little thing to move the Catholic Church even a little bit, but to transform its theological and self-understanding almost overnight—that is something of a miracle. It is not inappropriate, I think, to picture this process of transformation as a rebirth: the Catholic Church (including Catholic theology) was "born again" in the 20th century and Karl Rahner served as midwife. Under the stimulus of Rahner's tireless prompting, something really new came forth from the most traditional sources—from the Fathers, the mystics, Aquinas and the Scholastics, papal and magisterial teaching. The delivery—long overdue—was difficult, exciting, risky and painful and continues to be so. But the pains and risks are precisely those that accompany and signify healthy growth.

Although Rahner's midwifery took numerous forms, he has become most widely known for his theological essays, the new completed 20 volumes of *Theological Investigations*. Having laid the foundations for a real integration of fundamental (philosophical), dogmatic (systematic), and biblical theology in early works such as *Spirit in the World*, *Hearers of the Word*, and book-length lecture notes on grace, creation and the fall, Rahner had a basis for addressing specific topics as the need arose. In his hands the theological essay became a means of getting to the heart of an issue quickly and simply within the space of a few pages. Scholarly detail and citation were generally—not always—passed over in favor of a fresh and bold re-thinking of some theological theme or issue. What makes these essays so powerful and stimulating is the fruitful way in which Rahner's comprehensive theological vision is brought to bear upon specific issues, much as in the age of Aquinas' vision of the whole of reality was operative in each question and article of the *Summa Theologiae*. To one already familiar with the whole of Rahner's theology, it is fascinating to watch the particular application. To one not so acquainted, each topic and essay invites exploration of the whole of theology and its tasks. Indeed, one can gradually acquire a theological education just by tracking down those items in each essay that are unfamiliar.

Volumes 18 (*God and Revelation*) and 19 (*Faith and Ministry*) are the last in the series to appear in English. If the wide range of topics in each volume cannot really be adequately treated in the few paragraphs at our disposal, we can nevertheless indicate a few of the guiding threads which run through the writings of this period (1974–79). First,

one is reminded by these essays that to the end of his life Rahner fought hard to expand the intellectual vision and imagination of the Church of Rome. And he did so in the interest of overcoming apparently insurmountable oppositions between people (among Christian and between Christians and non-Christians). If theology's task is to facilitate understanding of the Faith, then it also has the task of removing misunderstandings. This includes the self-critical role of distinguishing between the substance of dogma and theological interpretations of this substance, the latter of which always involve conceptual models that remain historically conditioned, imperfect, and open to revision. It is one thing, for example, to affirm the notion of Original Sin, another to assume as intrinsic to this dogma itself the Augustinian theory of the Transmission of sinfulness by way of the libido involved in a directly paternal procreation. In the first instance we have, according to Rahner, the irrevisable substance of dogma—in the second case a quite revisable conceptual model for interpreting the dogma. Rahner does not simplistically imagine that one can have the dogma without some conceptual model, but only that one can learn through time to differentiate the two as successively better models or interpretive frameworks are found for the same dogma. With this awareness comes the realization of how dangerous and injurious to both theology and faith is the tendency to strictly equate a particular and perhaps only tacitly assumed interpretation of a dogma with what is essentially meant and binding in the dogma itself. This crucial distinction, which opens the way for a perfectly honest and forthright acknowledgement of the development of dogma, is at work in such essays as "Yesterday's History of Dogma and Theology for Tomorrow," "Magisterium and Theology," "On Bad Arguments in Moral Theology" (all in Volume 18, "The Church's Redemptive Historical Provenance from the Death and Resurection of Jesus,") and "Mary's Virginity" (Volume 19).

In this connection "Pseudo-Problems in Ecumenical Discussion" (Volume 18) should be of special interest to protestant Christians. Touching upon such sensitive topics as the sacraments, Roman primacy, papal infallibility, Marian dogma, and the recognition of the sacramentality of Reform ministries (both in their transmission and exercise), Rahner argues cogently that Catholic dogmatic teaching is much more open on these issues than one is led to believe by either traditional neo-scholastic theology or even present-day Roman doctrinal statements.

A second and related theme operative in a number of these essays—not so much as an explicit topic itself but as a key to dealing with other matter—is the theology of grace. Briefly, as Rahner points out in "On the Theology of Worship" (Volume 19), an interventionist model of grace has been predominant in Christian Theology. The world (nature) is regarded as basically profane and the operation of divine grace in then seen exclusively in terns of a spatio-temporal intervention. Grace, it is assumed, has to be so conceived if one is to hold classically orthodox positions on the fall, the gratuity of grace, the distinction of nature and grace, and the salvific necessity and uniqueness of the Incarnation. Here again, however, a defective conceptual model for interpreting a dogma creates a host of problem not really entailed by the dogma itself. For example, one is pushed—as were Augustine, Aquinas, Luther and Calvin—into predestination schemes which seem to be required at one level but are nevertheless in radical contradiction to God's universal salvific will as revealed and accomplished in Jesus. Since for Rahner creation (nature) is encompassed from its inception by God's freely willed decision to grace it—the fall notwithstanding—God's gracious presence is a transcendental constant as well as an historical, spatio-temporal event. The reader will find that this conception enables Rahner to avoid the pitfalls of an exclusively interventionist model, enhance classically orthodox positions, and at the same time shed new light on matters as diverse as non-Christian religions, sacramental consecration, and the meaning of the phrase "state of fallen nature." Mention must be made, finally of Rahner's fascinating essay "On Angels" (Volume 19). Aside from the provocative suggestions it offers for a theology of the cosmos and a more-biblical-less-Neoplatonic angelology, this previously unpublished study throws additional light on how Rahner understands the foundational metaphysical concepts of spirit, matter, and their interrelation. As Aquinas, Rahner's speculations on the ontology of angels are an extension and reflection of his understanding of human subjectivity.

Facing the Enlightenment and Pietism: Archibald Alexander and the Founding of Princeton Theological Seminary
by Lefferts A. Loetscher (Greenwood, 1983, 303 pp., $35.00).
The Princeton Theology 1812-1921; Scripture, Science and Theological Method from Archibald Alexander to Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield
edited by Mark Noll (Baker, 1983, 344 pp., $14.95 pb). Reviewed by Steven R. Pointer, Adjunct Professor of History, Wheaton College.

Mention of the "Old Princeton Theology" in contemporary American evangelical circles has tended to produce one of two opposite reactions: either one winces at the thought of the ghost of scholasticisms past, or one snaps to reverent attention for those surely enshrined in the hall of the departed heroes of the faith. If the latter sentiment has dominated, its accompanying corollary—the assumed continuing viability of the Princeton Theology—has added to the bewildered incredulity and prompt dismissal by non-evangelical theologians. In all cases, however, what has been sorely missing is a sober *historical* appraisal of the Princetonians' enterprise and contribution. That is, taking Alexander, Hodge, Warfield, et al seriously on their own terms and with due regard for the specific context which (for the most part) nineteenth century American culture afforded them has been the exception rather than the rule. Consequently, the two recent works by Lefferts Loetscher and Mark Noll represent an important redress of that situation precisely because, though different in scope and judgement, they are both successful historical studies.

Both works are accurately described by their subtitles. Loetscher's work is a substantial monograph which combines historical and intellectual biography with a perceptive history of Princeton's place in the American seminary movement of the early nineteenth century. Noll's book, on the other hand, is an anthology of the writings of Archibald Alexander, Charles Hodge, A.A. Hodge and B.B. Warfield. Scripture, science, theological method and polemics are the representative issues addressed in an attempt "to present the Princeton theologians at their best and at their worst, but even more, at their most characteristic." Somewhat ironically, though, these two competent studies emerge from two very different frameworks of theological assessment. Lefferts Loetscher, late professor of American Church History at Princeton Seminary—in the words of Henry Bowden's foreword—"did not share the old assumptions that characterized" nineteenth century Princeton theology. That stance may provide "both detachment and a fondness bred from long historical acquaintance," as Bowden suggests, but it also injects a critical *apologia* which tacitly endorses the twentieth century transformation of Princeton Seminary and theology. Thus Loetscher's theological presuppositions definitely color, but do not necessarily negate, his often astute analysis. For example, Loetscher argues that the dual phenomena of the Enlightenment and Pietism set the formative stages for Archibald Alexander's labors and the birth of Princeton Seminary—yet rationalism and experiential religion were never adequately integrated with each other for the old Princeton tradition. Or again, preoccupation with deism, the mere tip of the Enlightenment iceberg, led the Princetonians (and American churchmen generally) to miss the more substantive, though indirect, influence of the Enlightenment in forming American cultural and social institutions.

Mark Noll, professor of history and church history at Wheaton College and Graduate School, unlike Loetscher, professes a measured sympathy for his subjects. The argument of the anthology is stated tersely in Noll's conviction that "the men of old Princeton can teach us much about nineteenth-century history and the doing of theology, but only if we resist the temptation to treat them as contemporaries." Specifically, Noll calls present evangelicals to consider again "the Princetonians' substantive theology and their general confidence in Scriptural authority" while we minimize areas where they were "most time-bound." Highlighting the major themes of the Princeton Theology—their use of the Bible combined with Reformed confessionalism, Scottish Common Sense Philosophy, religious experience, and nineteenth century American culture—Noll provides the best concise introduction and overview of the Princetonians tradition while still retaining "a remarkable consistency" over its history; this anthology more than fulfills its intention to provide "both an appetizer and an argument." Thus, seemingly independently, evangelical historiography has matured to the point of being self-critical while mainstream Protestant scholarship has deigned to take a second look at American evangelical history as well. Perhaps such a confluence bodes well not only for the doing of history but for theological dialogue as well.

The Sorcerer's Apprentice: A Christian Looks at the Changing Face of Psychology
by M. S. Van Leeuwen (InterVarsity Press, 1982, 151 pp. $5.95 pb.). Reviewed by H. Newton Maloney, Professor of Psychology, Fuller Theological Seminary.

These were the 1982 lectures delivered at the John G. Finch Symposium on Psychology and Religion at the Graduate School of Psychology, Fuller Theological Seminary. Van Leeuwen was associate professor of psychology at York University on leave at The Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship when she presented these lectures. The title for the book comes from Goethe's Ballad: "The Apprentice Sorcerer" which tells about a young sorcerer who attempts to use his master's magic to do the household chores. He turns the broom into a robot water carrier, but is unable to stop the broom from relentlessly going and coming to the well. Van Leeuwen compares psychology's continued adherence to the dictums of natural science as similar to the Sorcerer's dilemna. Although contemporary psychology would seem to know better, it continues to take its cues from natural science empiricism.

Van Leeuwen questions her discipline on this matter. She is well versed in the experimental methodology of social psychology, having taught and practiced its approaches for a significant part of her professional life. Yet she wonders whether continued persistence in following these methodologies does not violate humans as the object of psychological study and the Christian faith's profound understanding of persons from another perspective. She suggests that human reflexivity, human desire for wholeness and the desire for meaning are left untouched by traditional methodology. She proposes a psychology reformed according to a biblical perspective.

Van Leeuwen, in this volume, offers one of the more profound and lucid critiques of modern social and behavioral science. If given a serious reading by even the most erudite practicioners of contemporary scientific psychology, it will provoke introspection and questioning. Van Leeuwen takes no back seat in terms of her credentials and her background. She speaks of her own conversion experience and of the impact of a broader understanding of psychology brought on by her newfound theology and philosophy. This volume could well provide the bridge to integration that has long been sought by contemporary students of the Christian faith and psychology. It is probably one of the few statements by a Christian that can be counted on to have and impact in the non-Christian world.

Van Leeuwen is to be commended for the thoroughness with which she addressed the topic and her broad background in both scientific endeavors and philosophic approaches. Although the volume is not easy reading and will probably not be read widely by lay Christians, nevertheless, will be used for some time to come in both graduate and undergraduate courses where the philosophic foundations of psychology are being probed. I would recommend its use in general philosophy of science courses, as well as in integration courses where a Christian critique is being offered.

I would offer only one temporizing observation. While Van Leeuwen is absolutely correct in objection to the anti-metaphysical, mechanistic bias of much of psychology, there is a sense in which she misses the point and in which she knows better than she does. While she may be correct in her observation that many in modern psychology do not affirm a transcendent dimension to the human being, there are many others who are using empirical methodologies to study segments of human behavior who are as human and human as any Christian scholars I have yet to meet. To discount their motivations and/or their conclusions is a bit naive at best and caricatures at worst. If I may be so bold as to suggest a rationale for this somewhat extreme analysis on Van Leeuwen's part, it could be due to a bifurcation of her own scholarly life into a pre and post Christian period. I know many other scholars who have been Christian all along and who do not see the issues in quite the same fashion. They rely on empirical data for reaching certain types of conclusions and know how to theorize on the basis of inductive reasoning in a manner that does not violate the nature of the human being. The alternative to Van Leeuwen's suggestion that psychology must begin again on a new basis devoid of its natural science base is to suggest that the humanistic and natural science point of view are complimentary rather than contradictory. It would be of interest to see this possibility explored in the literature.

Worship and Politics
by Rafael Avila (Orbis Books, 1981, 144 pp., $6.95).

A book on worship by a Marxist-influenced Roman Catholic with an introduction by a professor at a Southern Baptist seminary? This rather surprising combination speaks of the theological fer-

ment now going on in Latin America. This book attempts to speak to that ferment from the perspective of worship, investigating how the worship of the church has participated in the structures of oppression and how it can liberate people from those structures.

Some of us might quibble with a few of the (to my mind, at least) historically questionable assumptions about the liturgy of the early church and worship directions today. But we are indebted to the author for a rather penetrating study, drawn against the backdrop of political oppression and struggle, of how, liturgy influences Christian life. Thought I might not share the political assumptions of the writer, I did find his analysis of the political dimensions of worship to be most illuminating.

William H. Willimon

A Reasonable Faith
by Anthony Campolo (Word, 1983, 200 pp., $8.95).

"Theology, like good fiction, is always biographical," says Anthony Campolo in his book *A Reasonable Faith*. In this book he attempts to state his personal Christian faith in a way that might prove meaningful to his secularist friends and "... to illustrate that the secular world-view has religious implications in spite of itself." But what is secularism? Campolo borrows Langdon Gilkey's four traits of secularism, which are contingency, autonomy, relativity, and temporality, to answer this question. *Contingency* is the belief that absurdity rules therefore God becomes irrelevant; *autonomy* is the belief that if there is no God then humans are totally free; *relativity* is the belief that all things are relative to culture; and *temporality* is the belief that humans limit reality to time and space.

In responding to the secularist traits, Campolo dialogues with such writers as Freud, Sartre, Kierkegaard, Kant, Nietzche and Durkheim. His desire is to defend his Christian belief in transcendence, human dignity, freedom and order, while defending his secularist friends against Christians. While *A Reasonable Faith* promises much, it sadly disappoints. Campolo takes on more than he can deliver, leaving the reader confused with only scattered insights of theology's encounter with secularism.

–Steve Locke

Ordination: A Biblical-Historical View
by Marjorie Warkentin (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1982, 202 pp., $7.95).

After carefully reviewing the data concerning ordination in the Old Testament, in the Rabbinic tradition, in the early church and in the Catholic/Protestant debate at the time of the Reformation, the author concludes that, on balance, the evidence does not warrant the all but uniform practice of ordination in various branches of the Christian church. Not only is there a lack of consensus on many details—the significance of the "laying on of hands" is particularly illustrative of this point in the author's judgment— but even where there is a measure of consensus, the practice is of doubtful authenticity. For Protestants, as for Catholics, the bottom line is a hierarchical view of authority in the church that is inimical of the mutual service to which all believers are called for the edification of the body of Christ. In its struggle for organizational stability, the church has failed to realize that the Old Testament patterns of leadership are obsolete. As a result, the leaven of sacredotalism—inchoate or explicit—has persisted in the church. The author calls upon her readers to recognize that "ministry" is the privilege and duty of all believers, not that of a few who stand between God and his people. Not a great deal is said about how this view of ministry is to be implemented, but the careful reader will learn much from the historical overview and careful exegesis of certain texts the book contains.

Paul K. Jewett

The Pastor's Guidebook
by Marion D. Aldridge (Broadman, 1984, 159 pp., $9.95).

This little book will prove helpful in many ways, especially to young pastors. There are eight services treated and discussed: (1) The Lord's Day Worship Service; (2) The Baptismal Service; (3) The Lord's Supper Service; (4) The Christian Marriage Service; (5) The Funeral Service; (6) The Parent-Child Dedication Service; (7) Other Dedication or Installation Services; (8) The Ordination Service.

While the general theological approach is that of the Baptist tradition, much appropriate material, especially prayers, are drawn from other sources—Presbyterian, Lutheran and Episcopalian—thus giving the book an ecumenical flavor. This ecumenical breadth is combined with specific instructions on planning each service along with practical, down-to-earth advice concerning the process. Each section, for example, contains a suggested order of worship. In brief, this is a book for those who, though they may be long on theory are short on practice. We commend it for what it claims to be, *The Pastor's Guidebook*, in the confidence that it will serve well the many pastors who wish to lead their congregations in an edifying manner.

–Paul K. Jewett

Christian Apologetics in a World Community
by William Dyrness (Inter-Varsity Press, 1983, 197 pp., $5.95).

Bill Dyrness, now president of New College, Berkeley, wrote this informative book when he was a teacher in the Philippines, a fact which gives it an international flavour. Because he was up against challenges to Christianity which were more than parochially North American, an extra degree of wisdom came to characterize his thought. This is a learned and yet clearly written book designed to help the Christian develop an apologetic framework to use in the work of evangelism.

The volume is divided into two main parts: the first part fills us in on the basic issues in apologetics, while the second part takes on half a dozen specific challenges to faith. Dyrness' approach, like my own in *Reason Enough*, makes use of a variety of evidences which can be employed to create the impression of credibility on behalf of our Christian position. A unique proposal which he makes is that we should see the gospel as a power-encounter which promises to change people and their world. This allows him to conceive of apologetics as much more than a rational argument because salvation is much more than an intellectual belief.

Part two takes on naturalism, idealism, Marxism, and the problem of evil. Dyrness provides an abundance of information on arguements and objections, and adds discussion questions at the end of each chapter and a generous bibliography at the close of the book.

I strongly recommend this book as a handbook in Christian apologetics which can prove useful both for evangelism and for Christian reflection.

—Clark H. Pinnock

To Empower as Jesus Did: Acquiring Spiritual Power Through Apprenticeship
by Aaron Milavec (Edwin Mellen, 1982, 345 pp., $49.95).

Milavec begins with a critical blast at Christianity in America, particularly the "major denominations," none of which he names, and all of which are apparently similar enough that little attention need be given doctrinal, liturgical or educational differences. The problem seems to be a loss of steam, as it were. The solution is the use of apprenticeship in churches, and the author wastes no time in pointing out that "even God depends on human apprenticeships." He quite aptly points out the significant role which parents play in passing along, wittingly or unwittingly, religious perceptions, inclinations and attitudes to their children.

While his intent is clear, and the point is well-made that the home shapes one's sensitivities greatly, Milavec has apparently demythologized the Spirit of God to the extent that inspiration and revelation can come to or be received by only those who have been "apprenticed" in just the right ways. The sweeping generalizations of the book are a source of discomfort and, to some degree, disqualify Milavec's arguments.

In an attack upon the atonement theory it becomes clear that Milavec's apprenticeship theory is the standard against which all theology must be measured. So in the end, Milavec reduces Jesus to the role of great teacher. Here is the tired liberalism of the 19th century Protestantism appearing from the pen of a 20th century Roman Catholic. The few good things which Milavec has to say are rendered a bit suspect by his heavy-handed, rather ideological approach.

—Gary R. Sattler

Sociology and the Human Image
by David Lyon (InterVarsity Press, 1983, 224 pp., $6.95 pb.).

This book is a great improvement over a previous rather defensive attempt (*Christians and Sociology*, IVP, 1975) to consider the interface between Christianity and sociology. *Sociology and the Human Image* positively asserts that sociology needs the critical truths and insights Christian commitment can bring to it, and Christianity needs itself to be sociologically self-critical. Lyon calls for a "critical integration" in which social analysis and theory are informed by biblical revelation and where the "product of integration is both self- and socially-critical, in an ongoing and open-ended manner." Following a critical examination of major sociological theories, Lyon demonstrates his critical integration approach by analyzing both Marxism and feminism.

The author concludes, quite rightly I think, that the term "Christian sociology" is more confusing than helpful, and that we might better speak of a Christian perspective in sociology or of Christian ways of doing sociology. I consider Lyon's book the best written treatment available to date on the integration of Christianity and sociology. There is a need for other social scientists to continue the critical integration process that has begun.

—Jack Balswick

Who are the Peace-Makers? The Christian Case for Nuclear Deterrence.
by Jerram Barrs (Crossway, 1983, 64 pp., $2.95) introduction by Francis A. Schaeffer.

Jerram Barrs breaks no new ground in the debate over national security justice and war in the nuclear age. Rather, this booklet further polarizes a complex debate by offering a simplistic choice between unilateral disarmament and nuclear resistance to global tyranny. The book assumes that biblical argument for the use of lethal force in the protection of justice implies a support for current U.S. nuclear policy.

Barrs begins with a critique of pacifism, and then devotes most of his space to a biblical argument for the use of violence in the protection of justice. Finally, in the last ten pages the author addresses nuclear deterrence and concludes that we need a strong defense against Soviet aggression.

For a published work this book shows an astonishing lack of familiarity with the best recent writings on war, whether pacifist, just war theory or Christian realist. Barrs argues that war is a legitimate vehicle of God's vengence. He denies any distinction between law-governed police force and all-out nuclear war against tyranny. While he appeals to just war theory over against pacifism as "important to God today," God did not honor them at Sodom and Gomorrah. In Barrs' view, the evil of communism and the solidarity of a nation in its guilt, justify total warfare. In the name of God's justice and the protection of the innocent Barrs defends the potential righteousness of genocide.

—Bernard T. Adeney

The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha. Volume I: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments
edited by James H. Charlesworth (Doubleday, 1983, 995 pp., $35.00).

The publication of *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* places an important, updated tool in the hands of the student of the background of biblical literature and early Judaism and Christianity. The previous edition by R. H. Charles was a pioneering classic but was published in 1913. The last twenty-five years have seen a burgeoning of studies on the background documents of the Bible, not to mention the publication of new texts at Qumran. Many of the ancient documents, available in English for the first time, were recovered in the last hundred years.

The term Old Testament "pseudepigrapha" (works authored under a pseudonym) covers those writings attributed to ideal figures of Israel's past, usually claiming some sort of divine inspiration. The collection in volume 1 (volume 2 is due out shortly) covers two major genres of "pseudepigrapha"—apocalypses and testaments. The apocalypse in general is a vision of the heavenly world and the end-time (cf. Daniel 7), while the testament is classically portrayed as the deathbed blessing and prophecy of a biblical hero (cf. Genesis 49).

The collection may include too great a variety of texts from disparate ages, but it thereby avoids the eclecticism and paraphrase of *The Other Bible*, another collection of para-canonical texts that just appeared. For these new annotated translations we owe a debt of thanks to Professor James Charlesworth and his team.

—Stephen F. Noll

Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature
By Richard Rorty (Princeton University Press, 1979, 394 pp., $7.95).

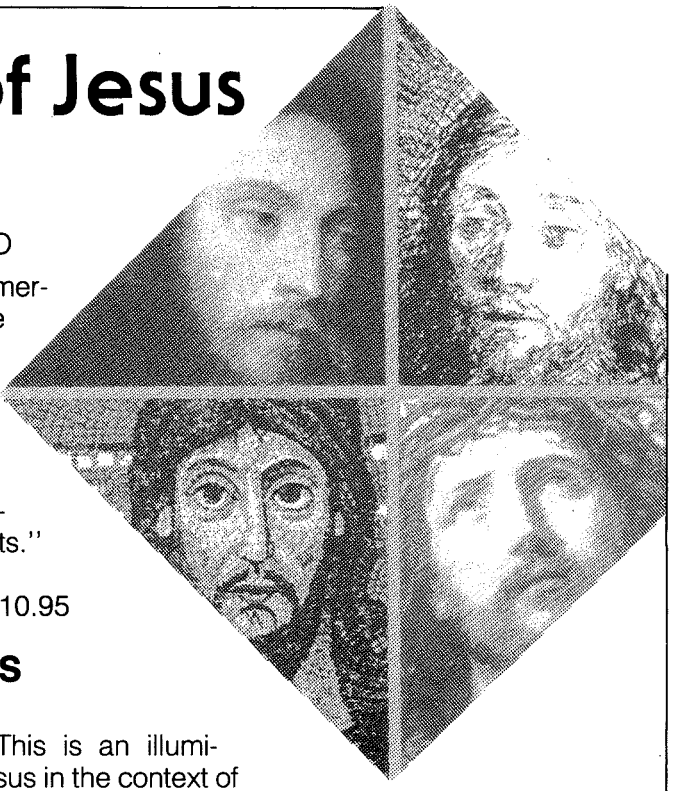
Evangelical Christianity has a vested interest in Truth. It does not, by most accounts, set well as one among many ways of being religious. Relativism, a prime target for evangelical apologists, and the contemporary concern for epistemological warrant, suggest that something is afoot in modern thought which threatens the way evangelicals think of themselves—namely, as possessors of truth about reality. Rorty's important book articulates that something, and has brought upon itself a good bit of philosophical attention in the process. Despite some sweeping generalizations of four centuries of thought, it is an excellent overview by which to attain familiarity with the contemporary discussion of epistemology.

Depending on Quine, Heidegger, Dewey, Sellars, and Wittgenstein, Rorty argues that contemporary analytical philosophy (upon which much current evangelical apologetics depends) has to its detriment adopted a foundationalist epistemology in which reality is "given" to the "knowing subject" without mediation of historical conditioning. Thus, by this account, there would be available to us a permanent, ahistorical, conceptually neutral, commensurating vocabulary which can serve to sift among theories and beliefs for those timelessly true.

If Rorty is right that our desire for such a commensurating vocabulary by which to discuss and weigh depictions of reality may be a historical phenomenon in itself, are we left wallowing in relativism? Rorty rejects the notion that to doubt foundationlist epistemology is to question that at most one of competing theories can be true. He likens the pluralism issue to "choosing the one right thing to do" in a complex social setting. The relativist would claim that no action is inherently more correct than another. Rorty takes the subtly different stance that the list of candidates can be considerably shortened by "plausible conditions" that arise from our human and social setting. (The evangelical prophetic, traditional, and revealed factors would inform this setting.)

Rorty could be considered a critic of the way apologetics has been done since the Church Fathers read the Greeks. Constructing an airtight foundation is one way to do apologetics, but it shares the

The Faces of Jesus



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same epistemological problems as pre-Kuhnian science (for one, being subject to a philosophical stamp of approval). Another way to do apologetics is to see not how we *ought* to warrant our beliefs, but how do we *do* warrant them, in the faith that our instinct for what makes sense is not all wet, and may even appeal to others.

–Steven S. Sittig

Book Comment Contributors

In addition to regular *TSF Bulletin* editors and contributors (listed on the front and back covers), the following reviewers have contributed book comments in this issue: **Bernard Adeney** (Assistant Professor of Social Ethics, Graduate Theological Union), **Jack Balswick** (Professor of Sociology and Family Development, Fuller Theological Seminary), **Paul K. Jewett,** (Professor of Systematic Theology, Fuller Theological Seminary), **Steve Locke,** (M.A. Fuller Theological Seminary), **Stephen F. Noll,** (Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry), **Clark H. Pinnock** (Professor of Theology, McMaster Divinity College), **Gary R. Sattler** (Director of the Office of Christian Community and Instructor of Christian Formation and Discipleship, Fuller Theological Seminary), **Steven S. Sittig** (Ph.D. candidate, Claremont Graduate School), **William H. Willimon.**

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Publishing Schedule

Due to several personnel changes in the TSF office, we are behind schedule with this issue of the *Bulletin*. Please be patient as we attempt to catch up on future issues. Thank you.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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Eunuchs Because of the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 19:12)

by Dale Allison

"For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs because of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to receive this, let him receive it" (Matt. 19:12). This verse is not one of the more celebrated utterances of Jesus, and sermons on the text must be comparatively few and far between. There are at least two reasons for the lack of attention generally paid to the saying. First, the word "eunuch" which conjures up the image of a male being castrated, does not have pleasant connotations. It is not the sort of word one can freely utter in formal or polite company. Second, the suspicion or fear that Jesus' saying about eunuchs was intended to be taken literally has never been fully out of mind. Eusebius, in his history of the early church, reports that the great Origen, while yet a youth and full of religious zeal, performed the act of self-castration, thinking himself thereby to have fulfilled the command of the Lord (*H.E.* VI, 8); and, although Origen later interpreted the saying otherwise (as we know from his commentary on Matthew: 15,1 [PG 13, 1253]), a literal understanding of Matt. 19:12 has in fact cropped up from time to time: the deed of the youthful Alexandrian has had its imitators. Indeed, the situation in the early church was such that the First Council of Nicaea (325 A.D.) found it necessary to address the problem of what to do with Christian ministers who had emasculated themselves; see the first canon.[1] So Christendom has had its reasons for not treasuring Matt. 19:12 as much as, let us say, John 3:16.

Despite this, it is unfortunate that our selected text has suffered the fate of obscurity. The verse is not all that difficult to comprehend; and it well illustrates a principle fundamental for all who would apprehend the true meaning of Christian service.

Eunuchs are rarely encountered in our society today. It was otherwise in the old world. The old world had its harems, and eunuchs were typically given charge over them. Thus it is that we read in the Bible, in 2 Kings 9:30–33, of the retinue that attended queen Jezebel. Eunuchs also frequently held official posts in the royal courts and helped conduct affairs of state. Acts 8:26–40 recounts the familiar story of the treasurer of the queen of the Ethiopians, a eunuch whom Stephen converted. And the Jewish historian Josephus informs us that three of the chamberlains of Herod the Great—his cupbearer, his steward, and his gentleman of the bedchamber—were eunuchs. Josephus writes: "There were certain eunuchs which the king had, and on account of their beauty was very fond of them; and the care of bringing him his drink was entrusted to one of them; of bringing him his supper, to another; and of putting him to bed, to the third, who [—and this is rather intriguing—] also managed the principal affairs of the government . . ." (*Ant.* XVI, 8. 1).

Although the self-gelding of devotees sometimes played a role in the cults of a few hellenistic religions, the thought of castration for any good purpose was foreign to the religious Jews of Jesus' time. Two facts in particular explain this—along with, one presumes, a natural repugnance felt for the mutilation of a healthy human body. To begin with, the Old Testament contains several prohibitions having to do with eunuchs. These are scarcely complimentary. Deut. 23:1, associating eunuchs with bastards, Ammorites, and Moabites, commands, "He whose testicles are crushed or whose male member is cut off shall not enter the assembly of the Lord." And Lev. 21:20 lays down the stricture that no descendant of Aaron with "a defect in his sight or an itching disease or scabs or crushed testicles" could serve before the Lord at the holy altar. Even the castrated animal was deemed unfit for the Lord. Lev. 22:24, which the rabbis later took as a general prohibition of castration (see *b. Šabb.* 110b and *Sipre Lev.* on 22:24), declares, "Any animal which has its testicles bruised or crushed or torn or cut, you shall not offer to the Lord or sacrifice within your land." The impact of such legislation on later generations was given expression by Josephus, who offered the following interpretative paraphrase of the commands in Lev. 21 and 22:

> Let those that have made themselves eunuchs be had in detestation; and do you avoid any conversation with them who have deprived themselves of their manhood, and of that fruit of generation which God has given to men for the increase of their kind; let such be driven away, as if they had killed their children, since they beforehand have lost what should procure them; for it is evident that while their soul is effeminate, they have withal transfused that effeminancy to their body also. In like manner do you treat all that is of a monstrous nature when it is looked on; nor is it lawful to geld men or any other animals (*Ant.* IV, 8. 40; cf. *Ps.-Phoc.* 187).

A second factor which contributed to the abhorrence of castration was that: celibacy was almost universally frowned upon in Judaism. (This, by the way, is in interesting contrast to the two great religions of the East, Hinduism and Buddhism.) The Essenes who, according to Josephus, Philo, and Pliny the Elder, abstained from marriage, seem to have been pretty much alone in their abstinence. In fact, only a single rabbi, a certain Ben Azzai (of the second century A.D.), is known to have been celibate—and he was rebuked in the strongest terms by his fellows. Moreover, to Ben Azzai himself is attributed this saying: "He who does not see to the continuation and propagation of the race, may he be accounted by Scripture as if he diminished the divine image" (*y. Yeb.* 8, 4). Rabbinic Judaism taught that procreation was a duty and that the unmarried state was blameworthy. Had not God commanded Adam and Eve to "be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth" (Gen. 1:28)? It is not difficult to collect rabbinic utterances extolling wives, the married state, and propagation. R. Tanhum is purported to have said in the name of R. Hanilai, "Any man who has not wife lives without joy, without blessing, and without gladness" (*b. Yeb.* 62b). According to a saying assigned to R. Eleazar, "A man who has not wife is no proper man; for it is said, Male and female he created them and called their name Adam" (*b. Yeb.* 63a). The same rabbi also reportedly said, "He who does not engage in the propagation of the race is as though he sheds blood; for it is said, Whoso sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed" (*b. Yeb.* 63b). R. Hama b. Hanina is recorded as saying, "As soon as a man takes a wife his sins are buried; for it is said, Whoso findeth a wife findeth a great good and obtaineth favor of the Lord" (*b. Yeb.* 63b). R. Helbo advised, "Be careful about the honour of your wife, for blessings rest on a man's house only because of his wife" (*b. B. Mes.* 59a). Finally, listen to this from an old rabbinic commentary on Genesis: "R. Jacob said, 'He who has no wife lives without good, or help, or joy, or blessing, or atonement.' R. Joshua of Sikhnin added in the name of R. Levi that he is also without life. R. Hiyya b. Gammada said that he is not really a complete man, and some say that he diminishes the divine likeness" (*Gen. R.* 17, 2).

Given what has been said up to now, and despite the tradition that Daniel was a eunuch (Jos. *Ant.* X, 10. 1; *b. Sanh.* 93b; Origen, *Commentary on Matthew*, on 15:5)[2] and the prophecy of Isa. 56:3–5, which foretells the acceptance of eunuchs into the congregation of Israel at the final redemption (cf. Wisd. 3:14), it was clearly no good thing for a Jew to be a eunuch. Indeed, eunuchs were sometimes the butt of derisive taunts or disparaging jokes. One of the most droll tales in the Talmud occurs in *b. Sanh.* 152a. It tells of a Sadducee, a eunuch, who runs into a bald rabbi. The eunuch, poking fun at the rabbi, asks how far it is to "Baldtown." The rabbi responds in kind: about as far as the distance to "Eunuchtown."

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Then the two trade barbs as to the relative worth of a castrated animal and a bald animal. Next the Sadducee, noting that the bald man is barefoot, composes a little saying. "He who rides on a horse is a king and upon an ass a free man, and he who has shoes on his feet is a human being; but he who has none of these, one who is dead and buried is better off." The bald man retorts, "O eunuch, o eunuch, you have enumerated three things to me; now you will hear three things: the glory of a face is its beard; the rejoicing of one's heart is a wife; and the heritage of the Lord is children; blessed be the Omnipresent, who has denied you all these!" Finally, the two call each other names—"quarrelsome baldhead" and "castrated buck"—and angrily depart company. This tale well illustrates how a eunuch, just like a bald man or any other human being who stands out as unusual or abnormal, could call forth ridicule.

So-called natural "rights" are not infalliable guides for the Christian disciple following Jesus.

In this connection, one more fact is to be noted. As might have been guessed, the word "eunuch," with its connotations of contempt and ridicule, was sometimes disparagingly applied to an unmarried or impotent male (see below, section III). In fact, if the words of R. Simeon b. Eleazar be any index, a single man with a high, feminine voice ran the risk of being labeled a congenital eunuch (*b. Yeb.* 80b). Furthermore—and this reminds one of how our own society sterotypes the homosexual—the Talmud (ibid.) states that, according to the rabbis, a eunuch could be recognized by a lack of beard, smooth skin, and lanky hair. The decidely crude and pejorative force of the word "eunuch" is here in full evidence.

III

Having said a few words about eunuchs in ancient Jewish society, we may now turn our attention toward Matt. 19:12. The first thing to be said about the verse is that it is tripartite. Three different clauses tell us about three different types of eunuchs—those who have been eunuchs from the beginning of life, those who have been made eunuchs by men, and those who have made themselves eunuchs because of the kingdom of heaven. It is essential to realize that the first two kinds of eunuchs—those by birth and those by men—represent a standard categorization. According to the rabbis, there were two sorts of eunuchs, those of man's making and those of nature's making (see, for example, *m. Zab.* 2:1; *m. Yeb.* 8:4; *b. Yeb.* 75a, 79b). The first type was spoken of as being *srîs 'ādām*, literally, "eunuch of man." And the second type was spoken of as being *srîs hammâ*, literally, "eunuch of the sun," that is, a eunuch from the first seeing of the sun, a eunuch by birth (*b. Yeb.* 79b, 80a). The "eunuch of man" was a male who had either been literally castrated or who had, sometime after birth, lost the power to reproduce, whether through a disease, an injury, or some other debilitating factor. The "eunuch of the sun" was one who had been born with defective male organs or one who had otherwise been rendered impotent by the circumstances of his birth.[3]

The importance of the rabbinic terminology for Matt. 19:12 should be evident. The phrase, "eunuchs made eunuchs by men," is the equivalent of the stock expression, *srîs 'ādām*, "eunuch of man"; and the phrase, "eunuchs who have been so from birth," matches the rabbis' *srîs hammâ*, "eunuch of the sun."[4] It follows that the first two lines of Jesus' saying simply set forth a once familiar classification and intend to call to mind recognized characters. Things are otherwise, however, with the third line. The eunuch for the sake of the kingdom of heaven has no parallel in Jewish literature. It is something new. Presumably, then, the point of Matt. 19:12 rests with this third sort of eunuch. This presumption is wholly confirmed by an analysis of the structure of the saying.

IV

According to Prov. 17:3,
The crucible is for silver,
and the furnace is for gold;
and the Lord tries hearts.
The first two lines of this proverb relate concrete facts about the everyday world and serve to introduce or illustrate the third line, which proclaims a truth—much less concrete—from the religious sphere. Now this sequence of two lines about common concrete facts followed by a third line pertaining to the religious or moral arena, occurs often in the book of Proverbs; we evidently have here to do with a pattern typical of the wisdom tradition. Prov. 20:15 reads:

There is gold,
and there is an abundance of costly stones;
but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.

Prov. 27:3 reads:

A stone is heavy,
and sand is weighty;
but a fool's provocation is heavier than both.

Prov. 30:33 reads:

For pressing milk produces curds,
pressing the nose produces blood;
and pressing anger produces strife.

Jesus himself took up for his own purposes the pattern of speech we have just observed in Proverbs. In Matt. 8:20 he declares,

Foxes have holes,
and birds of the air have nests;
but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.

Here, as with the earlier passages, two tangible facts about the known world serve as the background for the declaration of a moral or religious verity. Recall also Matt. 5:14–16, where Jesus speaks first about a city set on a hill, then secondly of a light under a bushel, and then, finally, exhorts his hearers to let their light shine before men. Matt. 12:25–26 is likewise relevant. Jesus observes in the first place that a kingdom divided against itself will be laid waste, and that, in the second place, no city or house divided against itself will stand; and that, in the third place, if Satan casts out Satan, his kingdom is divided against itself, so how will it then stand?

The text we are looking at in this paper, Matt. 19:12, offers yet one more example of the standard proverbial pattern:

There are eunuchs who have been so from birth,
and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men;
and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs
because of the kingdom of heaven.

This proverb or maxim mentions three types of eunuchs. The first two, as seen previously, are taken for granted: they are known entities. They thus serve to illustrate the third type of eunuch, which is novel. In other words, reference to eunuchs of birth and to eunuchs of men functions to introduce a new type of eunuch, that for the kingdom of heaven.

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V

Before proceeding any further with our interpretation of Matt. 19:12, it is necessary, for reasons soon to become evident, to consider the polemical context in which Jesus carried out his ministry.

Jesus was accused of being unlawfully impious, of breaking the Sabbath, of not fasting, and of being ritually unclean (Mark 2:18, 24; 3:2; 7:5). He was further called all sorts of names by his opponents, by those who found his words and actions offensive. He was labeled a blasphemer, a drunkard, and a glutton (Mark 2:7; 3:28; 14:64; John 10:33, 36; Matt. 11:19; Luke 7:34). People contemptuously declared that he was the friend of tax collectors and sinners (Mark 2:16; Matt. 11:19; Luke 7:34). It was even said—and surely this is the unsurpassed insult—that he had a demon and was in league with Beelzebul (Mark 3:22; Matt. 10:25). Clearly the adversaries of Jesus of Nazareth held no verbal punches in their attempt to stigmatize him and his work.

But Jesus seems to have been up for the fight. For in a way that reminds one of Paul,[5] Jesus took up his opponents' accusations and adroitly employed them in his own defense. Having been called a glutton and a drunkard, Jesus responded thiswise: Yes, the Son of Man, whom you reject, did indeed come eating and drinking; but then John the Baptist, whom you also reject, came neither nor drinking, and you say that he had a demon. So then what difference does it make? "We piped to you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn" (Matt. 11:17; Luke 7:32).

There are additional texts which show us that Jesus did not ignore the biting remarks directed against him, that he rather tried to blunt their force by doing something positive with them. For example, Jesus acknowledged that he was, in truth, a friend of tax collectors and sinners. But to this admission he added that he had come to call not the righteous but sinners (Mark 2:17), and also that tax collectors and sinners were going to go into the kingdom of God before the chief priests and scribes (Matt. 21:31). Again, when it was said that his power to cast out evil spirits and to heal the sick derived not from the Spirit of God, that he expelled demons only by the prince of demons, Jesus did not simply let the accusation pass by without comment. Instead he pointedly asked, "If I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out?" (Matt. 12:27; Luke 11:19).

With all this in mind, we may now return to Matt. 19:12. There must have been a very good reason why Jesus, in a seemingly unprecedented, even bizarre manner, used the offensive word "eunuch," in a positive fashion, in association with the kingdom of heaven. Can we guess that reason? I think we can. Given that Jesus was unmarried,[6] given that the unmarried state was widely held by Jews to be dishonorable, given that the word "eunuch" was sometimes abusively directed towards unmarried men, given that Jesus was often viciously maligned by his opponents, and given that Jesus frequently picked up on the names he was called to turn them around for some good end, it seems probable enough that Matt. 19:12 was originally a response to the jeer that Jesus was a "eunuch."[7]

Jesus was a controversial public figure with his fair share of foes, foes who, according to the testimony of our sources, eagerly sought opportunity to hurl abuse. They found, it seems, such opportunity in the fact that Jesus had remained, against the usual Jewish custom, unmarried. And accordingly they smeared him with the derogatory word "eunuch." But just as he made the best of the other slanders his adversaries tossed at him—glutton, drunkard, blasphemer, friend of tax collectors and sinners—so Jesus, when tagged a "eunuch," composed around that crude word a little proverbial saying vindicating his celibacy: "For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs because of the kingdom of heaven."

If we have rightly discerned the genesis of Matt. 19:12, the gist of the verse should now be plain. In the world at large there are two types of eunuchs, those made by men and those made by nature. But, so Jesus proclaims, there is also a third type, a type accounted for only by religion, the eunuch because of the kingdom of heaven. Men of this type are neither literal castrates nor impotent by nature, neither eunuchs by birth nor eunuchs made eunuchs by men. They are, indeed, unmarried, not because they cannot take a wife but rather because they will not—because the duty placed upon them by the kingdom of heaven is such that it is best discharged outside the confines of marriage. For these men, the good and valuable thing that marriage undoubtedly is must necessarily be turned down, surrendered in view of the demand made upon them by something even greater.

It is here worth comparing St. Paul's attitude, as it was voiced in 1 Cor. 7 and 9. The apostle knew that he—like the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas—had the right to be accompanied by a wife (9:5). And yet he had not, he boasted, made use of that right, for in his case it would only have been an obstacle in the way of the gospel (9:12). Paul evidently believed that, at least in his own case, it was expedient not to marry. While he might have enjoyed a wife, and while he certainly had the right to have one, his own particular calling would only have suffered if he had had to bear the anxieties and responsibilities of married life. His goals were such that they compelled full focused attention on the affairs of the Lord (cf. 7:32–35). In a similar fashion, that is, with reference to his particular mission, Jesus also justified his own celibacy. Because of the kingdom and what it so urgently demanded of him, he could not but give himself to it utterly, and that excluded the course of taking a wife. In other words, Jesus was a eunuch because of the kingdom of heaven.

VI

In Mark 10:2–9 we read that Jesus said, "From the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder." From this statement we learn that our Lord held a very high view of marriage, that he taught it to be an institution divinely ordained. It would seem to follow that Matt. 19:12 should not be taken as a denigration of the married state; otherwise, the saying on eunuchs would stand in conflict with the high endorsement of marriage enunciated in Mark 10:2–9. But if Matt. 19:12 does not entail that marriage is some kind of inferior state, what does it entail? Perhaps this question is best answered if we reflect for a bit on the idea of sacrifice. True sacrifice does not mean the giving up of luxuries. It means instead the giving up of good and needful things, things from God himself, things we think of as ours by "right." Sacrifice cancels out the notion that what we have should be dictated in the first place by that to which we think ourselves, as human beings, entitled. So-called natural "rights" are not infallible guides for the Christian disciple following Jesus. Even if traceable to the hand of God himself, such "rights" and reasonable human expectations must sometimes be canceled for those whose lives are given over to the cause of Jesus. For example, marriage is ordained by God as the natural, normal state for the members of our species; and those who marry in the Lord do so with the Lord's blessing. So one could justly claim—as did Paul in 1 Cor. 9:5—that a man has a so-called "right" to take a spouse. Nevertheless, it is also true that there are those—and Jesus and Paul were among them—who should not make use of that right, for what they are compelled to do because of the kingdom of heaven would not be well served by marriage (cf. 1 Cor. 9:12). In other words, the commitments imposed by certain Christian vocations may sometimes disallow the enjoyment of gifts intended by God for human beings in general.

Now most of us, as a matter of fact, have not been called to give up marriage. This fact, however, scarcely sets us free to ignore the principle behind Matt. 19:12. For marriage is not the only good thing that the Christian may be called to sacrifice. There are, in fact, some good things that all of us, at least from time to time, are called to give up. For instance, food is from God and all of us must eat—and yet it is sometimes, as at Lent, expedient to fast. Similarly, we all have the need to acquire various material goods and services, and therefore we all have the need for money; yet sometimes the call of Jesus will mean the sacrifice to wealth, in part or in whole (Mark 10:17–31). Again, sleep is needful, yet sometimes it is better to pray than to shut the eyes and dream. Our religion is a religion of sacrifice. And every one of us—not just those dubbed "eunuchs

because of the kingdom of heaven"—is called, because of the demand of God's kingdom, to suffer the loss of certain goods. What particular goods any particular individual will be called to sacrifice is something that cannot be decided in the abstract; it is something that appears to the individual only as the Christian life is lived out rightly. But it remains true, it is a Christian rule, that all of us will be called to sacrifice things we treasure.

One final point: Jesus was a "eunuch for the kingdom of heaven"; that is, he sacrificed the good of marriage because the kingdom required it of him. But marriage is not the only thing that Jesus sacrificed. At the heart of all Christian faith is this: Jesus sacrificed his very life. Now surely if anything is ours by "right," it is life itself. But this was precisely what Jesus was called to hand over. Life, the gift of God we value most, the gift that makes everything else possible—that is what Jesus gave away. So Jesus must be seen as the one who made the ultimate sacrifice, the sacrifice which symbolizes and sums up all other sacrifices. And he thereby becomes our model. Like him we too are to offer sacrifice: *imitatio Christi*, the imitation of Christ. Not, of course, that any of us are likely to be called to martyrdom—or even to abstain from marriage for that matter. But we are all called to enter into the sacrificial spirit of Jesus, the spirit which could give up not only marriage but even life itself. We must learn to see that our so-called "rights" are not the ultimate reference point. Jesus justified his celibacy with these words: "because of the kingdom of heaven." The thought behind these words also led him to his death. And the same thought must direct the course that our lives take. As we progress along the pilgrim's path, these words, "because of the kingdom of heaven," which demand nothing less than painful but whole-hearted sacrifice, are to be our signpost.[8]

[1] "If any one has been obliged to undergo a surgical operation from disease, or has been castrated by barbarians, let him continue in the clergy. But if any one in good health has so mutilated himself, it is right that, if he be enrolled amongst the clergy, he should cease from his ministrations; and that from henceforth no such person should be promoted. As, however, it is plain that this is said with reference to those who dare to mutilate themselves, therefore, if any persons have been so mutilated by barbarians, or by their own masters, and in other respects are found worthy, the canon allows them to be admitted to the clerical office." Compare with this the *Apostolic Constitutions* VIII, 47. 21–24.

[2] A comparison of Isa. 39:7 and 2 Kgs. 20:18 with Dan. 1:1–3 shows why Daniel and his associates were thought to have been eunuchs. Incidentally, this conclusion did not set well with everybody. How could the great Daniel have been a eunuch? Would Scripture have recounted the shame of the righteous (cf. *b. Sanh.* 93b)? Some rabbis affirmed that the fiery furnace had been an instrument of healing and restoration (*y. Šabb.* 6, 9) or (by a far-fetched exegesis) that the eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon (Isa. 39:7; 2 Kgs. 20:18) were not Daniel and Shadrach and Meshach and Abednego but Babylonian idols; for idol worship became "sterilized" in the days of Daniel (*b. Sanh.* 93b). Note also the first century A.D. *Liv. Pro. Dan.* 2 ('in his manhood he was chaste, so that the Jews thought him a eunuch').

[3] The rabbis were concerned to make the distinction between the eunuch of the sun and the eunuch of man because they believed that certain prohibitions applied to one type but not the other; see, for example, *m. Yeb.* 8:4 and *b. Yeb.* 80b.

[4] So also H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash*, vol. I (München, 1926), 805–807. Against C. Daniel, "Esseniens et eunuques (Mt 19,10–12)," *Revue de Qumran* 6 (1967-69), 353–90, "eunuchs made eunuchs by men" are hardly to be identified with the Qumran Essenes, who otherwise play no role in the gospel tradition.

[5] See esp. 2 Cor. 10:1, 10; 11:6 and 29 and the context of these verses.

[6] A few, of course, have argued that Jesus was married; e.g. W. A. Phipps, *Was Jesus Married?* (New York, 1970). But against this, Paul, in 1 Cor. 9.5, refers to the fact that the rest of the apostles and the Lord's brothers and Cephas have wives; Jesus he does not mention. But he certainly would have done so in this context if he had known that Jesus had been married.

[7] Credit for this insight apparently goes to J. Blinzler, "*Eisin eunouchoi.* Zur Auslegung von Mt. 19,12," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 48 (1957), 254–70. He has been followed by many, including T. Matura, "Le célibat dans le Nouveau Testament d'après l'exégèse récente," *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 107 (1975), 481–500; J. Kodell, "The Celibacy Logion in Matthew 19,12," *Biblical Theological Bulletin* 8 (1978), 19–23; and F. J. Moloney, "Matthew 19,3–12 and Celibacy. A Redactional and Form Critical Study," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 2 (1979), 42–60. Blinzler's interpretation (and ours) presupposes, obviously, that Matt. 19.12 goes back to Jesus. For the claim that it does not, that Matt. 19.12 is instead a redactional formulation of the first evangelist, see R. H. Gundry, Matthew, *A Commentary on his Literary and Theological Art* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1982), 381–83. Gundry's argument, based solely upon word statistics, is unconvincing. Among other things, Justin Martyr (*Apol.* I, 15.4) seems to preserve a version independent of Matthew; see J. Blinzler, "Justinus Apol. I,15,4 und Matthäus 19,11–12," in *Mélanges bibliques en hommage au R. P. Béda Rigaux*, ed. A. Descamps and A. de Halleux (Gembloux, 1970), 44–55.

[8] We have herein been concerned only with Matt. 19.12 as a word of Jesus; its interpretation by Matthew has not been within our purview. Nonetheless, we should perhaps mention that there are two very different ways of approaching Matt. 19.12 within its present context. According to the traditional interpretation, the verse has to do with those who have never been married. That is, it is a general call to consecrated celibacy (cf. 1 Cor. 7:25–39). For this position see the articles of Matura and Kodell cited in note 7. But 19.12 has also been understood as an integral part of 19.1–12: the eunuchs because of the kingdom of heaven are those who have become divorced (cf. 19.1–9), and they are to remain single. So Jacques Dupont, *Marriage et divorce dans l'évangile. Matthieu 19,3–12 et parallèles* (Bruges, 1959), 161–222; Q. Quesnell, "Made Themselves Eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 30 (1966), 335–58; and Gundry, *Matthew*, 382–83.

THEOLOGY

Theological Soul-Searching In The United Church Of Christ

by Gabriel Fackre

Some call the mood one of "ferment" (President of the UCC), others "turbulence" (*Seventh Angel*), still others a challenge to the "theological disarray" in the United Church of Christ (*Christianity Today*).

The theological dynamisms current in the UCC make it a laboratory for learning how a Church can both be open to the mandates of mission and unity and at the same time preserve its theological identity and some doctrinal coherence. The denomination, a conjunction of four somewhat diverse streams of Protestantism—Congregational, Christian, German, Swiss and Hungarian Reformed, and the part-Lutheran and part-Reformed Evangelical Synod of North America—has grown up in the twenty-seven years of its life in the midst of major theological and social upheavals. Reflecting its origins and formative years, the UCC has been deeply involved in social issues, open to cultural questions, an advocate of justice for marginalized groups and active in peace movements. These diversities and directions have brought the charge that the Church in its national expression is essentially a social action group, subject to the influence of one or another current ideology, and that its local congregations are the home of "a pallid but personable faith" (*Time*).

How to hold together the "world-formative" (N. Wolterstorff) character of its Reformed tradition, and the world-drenched nature of its recent history, with its historic rootage in scriptural authority and creedal and covenantal bonding—that is the question. Right now the UCC is in the middle of this kind of serious soul-searching. What follows is a chronicle of that quest from the perspective of one participant-observer.

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Post-60s Searchings

The present self-inquiry has long roots. From the beginning, these heirs of Jonathan Edwards, the Mercersburg theology and the Niebuhr brothers have never been devoid of theological concern, as evidenced by the widely used Statement of Faith of 1959, thoughtful Christian education programs, liturgically rich worship books, and strong ecumenical involvement, all concurrent with a passionate social witness.

However, signs of burnout after the activist 60s, concern about the reduction of mission to only its deed dimension, and worry about the acculturation of its message brought the beginnings of a new theological agenda. The meaning of mission became a natural early focal point. The Board for World Ministries began to explore its understanding of mission with a task force inquiry on evangelism, and the development of a statement of its dual nature as deed *and* word. In a similar vein, the Board for Homeland Ministries, having declined to participate in the nationwide Key 73 evangelism campaign, held a summer conference at Deering, New Hampshire in 1972 to examine its responsibilities in sharing the faith. Participants seized the initiative and produced the Deering Statement of Commitment that fused the social imperatives of the 60s with the faith sharing mandates of the 70s. Influenced by current action-reflection modes of theology, the Statement spoke of word *in* deed, the word of faith linked inextricably with deeds of mercy and justice. This grassroots movement, supported by BHM resources, developed extensive materials and training programs using "story" as its the-

ological metaphor—"getting the story out."

Parallel with these outreach settings for theological recovery were inreach developments in the Office of Church Life and Leadership. Seeing a growing interest in congregations in exploring ultimate questions, OCLL instituted a "faith exploration" program in which small gatherings were encouraged to share their doubts, hopes, and convictions, and move ahead on their spiritual journey. OCLL also gathered a group of pastoral and professional theologians in the mid-70s who issued a call for "Sound Teaching in the United Church of Christ," one that sought to integrate social witness and faith commitments.

Significant impetus was given to theological consciousness-raising in the UCC by two grassroot movements that emerged in the late 70s: BTL and UCPBW. BTL—the Biblical-Theological-Liturgical group, the "BTL Club"—was born at an anniversary celebration of the Evangelical Synod of North America, one of the streams of UCC history, in September, 1977. Organized by a local church pastor, Frederick Trost, the gathering (some in it) concluded that the time had come to work more aggressively on the biblical, theological and liturgical tasks represented by these and other forebears. Developing a membership throughout the Midwest and East, BTL has met yearly to hear papers on Authority in the Church, Baptism, Eucharist, the Augsburg Confession, and the proposed new UCC worship services. An East Petersburg Statement was issued in 1981 criticizing the captivity of churches to bourgeois values and calling the UCC to its biblical and christological standards. Trost, now leader of the Wisconsin Conference of the UCC and convener of BTL, also founded an occasional journal, *No Other Foundation*, bringing theological and homiletical resources together for UCC clergy. The most significant contribution of BTL to date may be its sponsorship of the Craigville Colloquy, an event to be described in connection with the vigorous activities of 1984.

The United Church People for Biblical Witness (UCPBW) was formed in April, 1978 at a convocation of UCC clergy and laity who questioned the influence of contemporary values and ideology on a human sexuality report prepared for the UCC General Synod of 1977. Behind that lay a perceived erosion of biblical authority in the denomination. Similar concerns had been expressed earlier by a small group of conservative evangelicals, organized as the Fellowship of Concerned Churchmen. Led by Barbara Weller in its early years, with pastors Gerald Sanders and Martin Duffy as key associates and Donald Bloesch and Royce Gruenler as important theological resources, the UCPBW sought to make its influence actively felt on UCC policy through committee representation and Synod resolutions on the one hand, and an educational venture within the denomination on the other. The latter has included the production of an alternative resource on sexuality, *Issues in Sexual Ethics*, and a journal, *Living Faith*, with its commentary on denominational issues and theological essays, and a study guide on controverted UCC issues, *Affirming our Faith*. I shall treat its Dubuque Declaration and reorganization in 1984 subsequently.

Responding to the vocal presence of the UCPBW and noting its numerical growth in the UCC (with estimates as high as 50,000), another group of UCC members established a counter organization, Christians for Justice Action, which seeks to press the social issues it believes UCPBW neglects.

1983-84: Years of Ferment

1983 was marked by an acceleration of theological activity that prompted talk of a "movement" or "theological renewal" (Executive Council statement) in the UCC. Aforementioned groups showing continuing signs of vitality and new manifestations were to be seen:

1. BTL scheduled its yearly meeting at New Brunswick Seminary in New Jersey in conjunction with clergy and seminary people from both the UCC and the Reformed Church in the United States to discuss the Mercersburg theology, a sacramental and ecumenical tradition shaped by 19th century theologians Schaff and Nevin. On that occasion a new organization alongside BTL was founded, an ecumenical Mercersburg Society. In the days that followed, many of the New Brunswick attendees journeyed to Washington, D.C. to join the UCC delegation in the mass demonstration marking the twentieth anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s March on Washington for justice and peace, showing the linkages between social and biblical commitments envisaged by this kind of theological renewal.

2. After a determined effort up to and including the 1983 General Synod to air its views on sexuality and inclusive language, with little apparent result in the councils of the Church, the UCPBW constituency reviewed several scenarios for reorganization, looking toward possible broader alliances and more impact on denominational decision-making. At a November board of directors meeting, the Dubuque Declaration was drawn up, asserting biblical authority (in the infallibilist rather than the inerrantist tradition), loyalty to the Nicene Creed and faithfulness to the theological commitments in the Basis of Union and Preamble of the UCC Constitution. The new organization proposed was named the Biblical Witness Fellowship.

3. With some overlap with the BWF in its constituency, a Fellowship of Charismatic Christians founded in the 1970s continued to make its presence known and concern felt in the denomination through its publications and national meetings on renewal.

4. Theologians involved in the development of the "Sound Teaching" document (Fred Herzog, Walter Brueggemann, Douglas Meeks), together with others on the faculties of the seven UCC-related seminaries (Barbara Zikmund, Max Stackhouse, Susan Thistlewaite, etc.), believing the time had come to raise serious questions about the lack of theological clarity in the UCC, circulated a statement among that group, signed in the end by thirty-nine UCC teachers. The statement, "A Most Difficult and Urgent Time," declared that judgment on "worship resources, language practices, life-style and modes of accountability in the Church appeared to be "made. . .on grounds of 'pragmatism,' 'liberalism,' 'conservatism,' 'pluralism' which are inappropriate to the church of Jesus Christ. . .postures (arrived at) happenstance without the discipline and guidance offered to us in our theological tradition." The appeal was sent to the Executive Committee of the UCC with the urging that some serious theological grounding be sought for the policy and direction of the Church.

5. Decisions made by the Church at large or action taken by its agencies with clear theological import evoked wide discussion and controversy within the Church. Among them: a) A new set of services for the worship, sacraments and rites of the Church, long in the making by a task force of OCLL, were published in 1983 and began to be tested throughout the Church. Attention was given in these services to the classical traditions in liturgy, on the one hand, and on the other hand an effort was made to render virtually all the language of liturgy in inclusive terms. b) The Executive Council that acts for the Church between Synods entered the lists by voting approval of an inclusive language version of the UCC Statement of Faith. Debates about inclusive language and its theological import were fueled by the concurrent release of the National Council of Churches lectionary readings that went further than UCC inclusivist proposals. c) Responding to the 1979 General Synod call for direction on Disciples-UCC union talks, the joint steering committee put forward the plan "Shared Life: A New Approach to Church Union" with proposals for common life and work as a matrix for decision-making on merger. The prospect of this union and the way toward it contributed to the growing theological discussion with special reference to the nature and mission of the church. Increasingly vocal opposition was heard from those with more organic views of the Church (especially in former Evangelical and Reformed areas) who felt these would be put in further jeopardy by Disciples polity and practice, and by others who argued that preoccupation with the mechanisms of merger would spend energies that should be devoted to mission.

6. An UCC-EKU (Evangelical Church of the Union in Germany) Working Group, sponsored by the United Church Board for World Ministries, became increasingly active in the publication of materials on the theology of the UCC. In 1983 and 1984, in its UCC-EKU Newsletter, it published essays from representatives of the seven UCC-related seminaries on various theological topics (authority in the Church, the teaching office, the confessional nature of the UCC, the Trinity and inclusive language, etc.) Those papers were in turn critiqued by faculties in other seminaries and then shared with EKU

counterparts.

7. Sensing the ripeness of the moment for more official action on the theological front, the Office of Church Life and Leadership in 1983 launched a church-wide program to facilitate theological dialogue among the membership. The OCLL staff invited thirteen UCC people representing a spectrum of interest and constituencies to spend a year thinking through what such a denomination-wide effort would entail, identifying issues, possible areas of agreement and tasks to be undertaken.

8. The deans of the seven UCC-related seminaries put in motion a proposal to create a theological journal of and for the denomination.

9. Ethnic and minority groups in the UCC organized around advocacy issues joined together to form COREM (Council on Racial and Ethnic Ministries) to give voice to their perspective on both action questions and the widening theological discussion. Similarly, women's caucus groups throughout the UCC focused on rights issues have had to deal with theological questions (ordination, inclusive language, etc.) propelling them increasingly into the explicitly doctrinal arena. The organizing of a Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society in the UCC and annual national women's meetings have provided a forum for these growing concerns.

Winter meetings of one or another segment of UCC leadership hosted by Florida constituents, are becoming a sounding board for denominational policy. In February of 1984 a joint gathering of Conference executives, agency heads and denominational officers aired the question of "a theological centerline" in the UCC with Roger Shinn, drafter of the original UCC Statement of Faith, reflecting on this issue and responses from feminist, Black, and evangelical perspectives. In a separate meeting of the executives of the 39 UCC Conferences, Disciples-UCC proposals for steps toward union—the "shared life" approach—were critically reviewed and a larger shadow cast over the future of these negotiations. An even more negative response to the prospects of this union was given at another winter meeting of UCC pastors from larger congregations with a signed protest from them and others appearing in the denominational information journal, *KYP*, as a "Committee for a New Alternative."

The faltering Disciples-UCC conversations are not a measure of UCC ecumenical commitments, to judge from other theological signs in 1984. The ten denomination project in unity, COCU, continues to enjoy wide tacit support in the UCC, although there is no vigorous campaign right now for it. The BEM document (*Baptism, Eucharist* and *Ministry*) produced by the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches is currently being discussed throughout the Church with agreements regularly expressed on the Baptism and Eucharist sections, but questions posed about its failure to honor adequately the ministry of the laity, and the too-priestly cast given to the pastoral office. 1984 also saw the discussion of the Lutheran-Reformed document of agreements and challenge, *Called to Action,* in which dialogue UCC was represented, and *Called to Witness to the Gospel Today,* an invitation from the World Alliance of Reformed Churches to respond to its theological concerns. A revitalized Council on Ecumenism actively discussed these proposals and made a public plea in *KYP* for support for the ecumenical agenda.

1984 was a year of transition for the United Church People for Biblical Witness-Biblical Witness Fellowship. The reorganizational proposals of its Board were confirmed, and the Dubuque Declaration was endorsed at a meeting in Byfield, Massachusetts attended by 400 members and observers from around the country. Responding to criticism that it represents a potentially schismatic movement in the UCC, the leadership declared that it was in for the long haul, saw positive signs of theological renewal throughout the church, and was more determined than ever to press vigorously for its issues.

Questions of piety and spirituality, regularly intertwined with theological matters, emerged in their own right in the spring of 1984. A "spirituality network" was officially formed with a call for reinvigorated personal piety and public worship with appropriate theological undergirding. And a "Third Order of St. Francis—United Church of Christ" (chartered in 1983) began to gain momentum.

Craigville, 1984

The Craigville Colloquy represents, in the writer's view, the clearest expression of the direction, mode and possibilities of current theological soul-searching in the UCC. With neither budget nor staff, in fall, 1983 BTL and the Mercersburg Society issued a call for a grassroots assembly on UCC theological basics, with the 50th anniversary of the Barmen Declaration as background, prevailing upon the Craigville Conference Center in Massachusetts to house the event. The invitation generated twenty pre-Colloquy discussion groups around the country seeking to identify elements in a statement the Colloquy might make about the UCC theological framework. On May 12, 1984, 160 people from California to Maine to North Carolina arrived, with the largest numbers from New England, Pennsylvania and the Midwest. With its focus on the teaching premises of the UCC, and therefore the responsibilities of the teaching office, participants included pastors, local and regional (the latter being State Conference Ministers), with some seminary faculty and students, laity in leadership, and national executives, including the President of the Church, Avery Post, who was on a "theological sabbatical." Forty women were present in leadership roles and as participants. Many of the partisans in recent theological disputes were on hand, representing a variety of points of view concerned to make their voices heard, running from evangelicals in BWF and sacramentally-oriented Mercersburgers through UCC leadership figures and theological centrists to feminists and political activists.

With a sixty-page notebook of pre-Colloquy reports in hand, the participants met in twelve working groups to further clarify the themes that might appear in a Craigville statement, one determined in a plenary session to be "epistolary" rather than a formal declaration, since a "Letter to our Brothers and Sisters" reflected better the alongsided spirit and form that was sought. Feeding into the process of theological reflection were a series of presentations on the four traditions that formed the UCC—Congregational (Joseph Bassett), Christian (Willis Elliott), Evangelical (Fred Trost), Reformed (John Shetler)—the ecumenical challenge (Diane Kessler), the Third World Context (Orlando Costas), the UCC theological trajectory (the writer), and a report from the President on responses expected of the UCC from various ecumenical entailments. An intense theological discussion about these issues was carried on in the setting of six worship services.

After plenary reports and discussion of the working groups, the material was turned over to a drafting committee formed in the self-select, "theology-from-below" mode at work in UCC theological renewal, with five members chosen by lots from a volunteer pool of thirty, with two "poets" added, Fred Trost the Colloquy convener, and the writer. The committee worked eight hours through the night presenting its results in a plenary session that debated and modified the text, voting it in the end, 141 to 1, with a standing ovation and doxology.

Developed according to the rhythms of worship, the letter moves from praise through confession and assurance to affirmation and thanksgiving. Its goal is the clarification of first principles—the assumptions behind what the UCC is and does. In the section on authority, it lifts up the UCC constitutional commitment to a christological center of the normative prophetic-apostolic testimony of Scripture (showing parallels with the Barmen Declaration), with the creedal and convenantal heritage of UCC faith honored in its relative role, and it declares the task of reinterpreting that faith in ever-fresh historical and cultural settings. In doctrinal content it speaks of the UCC's trinitarian framework of faith, citing the narrative sequence from creation to consummation, with its center point in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ (a framework familiar to UCC members through its Statement of Faith). It speaks of a sacramental life in Baptism and Eucharist, and holds to the importance of both the pastoral office and the ministry of the laity. The letter acknowledges some of the unresolved issues in the denomination from polity to morality, but forcefully affirms the UCC commitment to justice and peace and the covenantal ties that bind the members of the Body. Following Barmen, it ventures some specific rejections, ranging from the issues of "self-liberation" and relativism to racism and sexism, and, again following Barmen, disavows the ideologies of both left and right, and concludes with a doxology.

As important as the agreements reached in the Letter was the Craigville process. From invitation through pre-Colloquy discussion to the exchanges at the Colloquy, accent was placed on self-activated, theologically energetic participation. No official "line" was laid down, and no pattern of representation was demanded (either confined to or dominated by one theological perspective, or determined by proportional representation of advocacy groups). Does the Spirit work best in such an open-ended venture? Can there be a *sensus fidelium* as the matrix of sound theology? The vitality of the exchange among diverse groups and the remarkable consensus that developed are strong arguments for trust in this kind of forum. Those with heavy axes to grind will, of course, be suspicious if the result does not include their conclusions. The Colloquy assumed that the UCC is a Church of Jesus Christ in which the Spirit lives, a Spirit who will let light and truth break out when the ways of the Spirit among the people of God are honored.

The reception and sequel events are a measure of the UCC quest and hope for theological identity and integrity. Recognizing the significance of a theological framing for which the UCC had not often been known, the media gave Craigville wide coverage, with long articles in the *Boston Globe*, a Religious News Service report, *Christianity Today* and *Christian Century* coverage and front-page stories in UCC-related organs *KYP* and *Seventh Angel*. Many UCC members committed to the Church's justice and peace agenda but troubled by its theological unclarity and developing polarization in its ranks, responded enthusiastically to a statement of first principles and an apparent consensus on the biblical and christological basics by the otherwise diverse constituencies present at Craigville. A number of letters and testimonies from leaders in other denominations and in the larger Christian community expressed appreciation for UCC commitment to biblical authority and classical faith, assuring continuing linkage with the ecumenical movement. Evangelicals in the UCC, including BWF leadership were on the whole pleased with the sections in the Letter that declared UCC commitment to biblical authority and the hope it represented for coming together of partisans around matters of basic framework.

Critics soon appeared. A Boston Feminist Dialogue group was formed to assess the Craigville letter and raised questions about the weight given to biblical authority, traditional theological formulations and matters of inclusive language (the Letter was scrupulous in its use of inclusive language but employed the baptismal formula "In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" to affirm ecumenical Christian usage in this binding rite.) On the other hand, one editorialist criticized Craigville for taking up issues in a denominational context that belonged more appropriately to an ecumenical setting. Some evangelicals were unhappy about a view of biblical authority that appeared to be limited to faith and morals and made a place for "ever new light and truth," a position which they judged contrary to the necessary conception of inerrancy. On the other hand, some advocacy groups and activists were concerned that more explicit positions on current ethical issues from a nuclear freeze to the abortion debates were not included.

A long critique by Al Krass in *Seventh Angel* faulted the Letter for its "blandness," failing therein to condemn specifically such evils as "the social and economic policies of Reaganism," and judged that the Colloquy was the product of aging middle class male clergy and seminary professors seeking to reassert their authority in the UCC after a season of contextual theology, much like the restrictiveness of the John Paul II era in Roman Catholicism vis-à-vis Küng and Gutierrez. Some from denominations with more dogmatic definition thought Craigville's theological assertions too minimalist. Others felt that the openness of the UCC was imperiled by any attempt to bring up theological premises, including the elemental one found in the UCC Preamble to the Constitution.

The Craigville event is having its own immediate institutional effects—widespread study of the Letter in congregations and pastors' groups, and the planning of two subsequent events: a May, 1985 BTL-Mercersburg meeting in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, responding to the WCC proposal "Toward Confessing the Apostolic Faith Today," the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and the Lutheran-Reformed dialogue agendas, and a September, 1985 church-wide Craigville II on the critical questions of Scripture/Word in the United Church of Christ (organized by a diversity of theologically active groups, official and unofficial). Even more, it has accelerated the theological soul-searching we have traced here, accenting a special dimension to that process, the work of "theology from below:" pastors and people of the UCC making their views and concerns known, especially as they are concerned with grounding the witness of this Church to justice and peace in the soil of biblical authority and classical faith.

The Craigville Letter

Grace and Peace:

On the 50th anniversary of the Barmen Declaration we have come together at Craigville to listen for God's Word to us, and to speak of the things that make us who we are in Christ.

We praise God for the theological ferment in our Church! When such life comes, and light is sought, we discern the Spirit's work. The struggle to know and do the truth is a gift of God to us. So too are the traditions that have formed us — Congregational, Christian, Evangelical, Reformed, and the diverse communities that have since shaped our life together. We give thanks for the freedom in this family of faith to look for ever-new light and truth from God's eternal Word.

Thankful for the vital signs in our midst, we know too that our weaknesses have been the occasion for God's workings among us. To make confession at Craigville is also to acknowledge our own part in the confusions and captivities of the times. The trumpet has too often given an uncertain sound. As the people of God, clergy and laity, our words have often not been God's Word, and our deeds have often been timid and trivial. Where theological disarray and lackluster witness are our lot, it is "our own fault, our own most grievous fault."

Yet we trust God's promises. Mercy is offered those who confess their sin. Grace does new things in our midst. Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto God!

In our deliberations we have sought to honor the ties that bind us, and to learn from the diversities that enrich us. We gladly speak here of the affirmations we can make together, and the judgments we share.

Authority

Loyal to our founders' faith, we acknowledge Jesus Christ as our "sole Head, Son of God and Saviour." (Preamble, Para. 2, *The Constitution of the United Church of Christ).* With Barmen we confess fidelity to "the one Word of God which we have to hear and which we have to trust and obey in life and death." (Barmen, 8:11). Christ is the Center to whom we turn in the midst of the clamors, uncertainties and temptations of the hour.

We confess Jesus Christ "as he is attested for us in Holy Scripture," (Barmen, 8:11). As our forebears did, we too look "to the Word of God in the Scriptures." (Preamble, Para. 2). Christ speaks to us unfailingly in the prophetic-apostolic testimony. Under his authority, we hold the Bible as the trustworthy rule of faith and practice. We believe that the ecumenical creeds, the evangelical confessions, and the covenants we have made in our churches at various times and places, aid us in understanding the Word addressed to us. We accept the call to relate that Word to the world of peril and hope in which God has placed us, making the ancient faith our own in this generation "in honesty of thought and expression, and in purity of heart before God." (Preamble, Para.2).

Affirmation

According to these norms and guides, we call for sound teaching in our Church, and so confess the trinitarian content of our faith. Affirming our Baptism "in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," (Matthew 28:19) we believe that the triune God is manifest in the drama of creation, reconciliation and sanctification. Following the recital of these mighty acts in our Statement of Faith, we celebrate the creative and redemptive work of God in our beginnings, the covenant with the people of Israel, the incarnation of the Word in Jesus Christ and the saving deed done in his life, death and resurrection, the coming of the Holy Spirit in church and world, and the promise of God to consummate all things according to the purposes of God. In the United Church of Christ we believe that the divine initiatives cannot be separated from God's call to respond with our own liberating and reconciling deeds in this world, and thus to accept the invitation to the cost and joy of discipleship.

Church

Our faith finds its form in the Christian community. We rejoice and give thanks to God for the gift of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, gathered by the Holy Spirit from the whole human race in all times and places. That Church is called to share the life-giving waters of Baptism and feed us with the life-sustaining bread and wine of Eucharist; to proclaim the Gospel to all the world; to reach out in mission by word and deed, healing and hope, justice and peace. Through Baptism the Church is united to Christ and shares Christ's prophetic, priestly and royal ministry in its servant

form. We rejoice that God calls some members for the ministry of Word and Sacrament to build up the Body and equip the saints for ministry in the world. We rejoice that God calls the laity to their threefold ministry, manifesting the Body of Christ in the places of work and play, living and dying.

We confess that although we are part of the Body in this Church, we are not the whole Body. We need always seek Christ's Word and presence in other communities of faith, and be united with all who confess Christ and share in his mission.

Polity

We confess our joy in the rich heritage of the Congregational, Christian, Evangelical, and Reformed traditions and the many diverse peoples who compose the fabric of the United Church of Christ. We are a "coat of many colors" and we give thanks for this diversity. We affirm the value of each voice and tradition that God has brought together and that our unity in Christ informs our faith and practice. In these days together, we have been reminded of the search for unity amidst the marvelous diversity in the United Church of Christ. We acknowledge that our diversity is not only a precious gift of God but that it is sometimes the source of hurt, frustration and anger.

God is gracious. Through God's grace we are able to embrace in forgivenss and to reconcile divisions. In covenant we are continually being called to be present to and for one another. In covenant we are being called to acknowledge that without one another we are incomplete, but together in Christ we are his Body in which each part is honored.

We have not yet reached agreement in our discussions regarding the governance of the Church. We acknowledge a need to develop further our polity; to hold together in mutual accountability all the various parts of our Church. We affirm that the Christian community must conform its life and practice to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and dare not heed the voice of a stranger. We affirm that in the United Church of Christ the Holy Spirit acts in powerful ways as the communities of faith gather for worship and for work, in local churches, in the Associations, in the Conferences, in the General Synod, and in the Instrumentalities and Boards. As a servant people, the prayer on the lips of the Church at such times is always: "Come, Holy Spirit!"

Justice

We have not reached agreement on the meaning of peace with justice. We confess however our own involvement with the injustices present in our society. We acknowledge our need to embody God's eternal concern for the least and most vulnerable of our neighbors. This shall require a renewed commitment to the study of the biblical teachings on justice and a fresh determination to do the things that make for peace.

We invite you to join us in reconsidering the meaning of Jesus' call and the summons to the Church to preach good news to the poor, proclaim release to the captives, enable recovery of sight to the blind, set at liberty those who are oppressed, and proclaim the acceptable year of our Lord.

Where justice is compromised and the rights of the weak sacrificed to the demands of the strong, the Church is called to resist. Christ stands alongside those deprived of their just claims. We pray for ears to hear God's voice resounding in the cries of those who are victimized by the cruel misuse of power. God's tears are shed also amidst the indifferent. We share with each of you the ministry of reconciliation. We ask you to consider thoughtfully the meaning and implications of this high calling in the world God loves and to which Jesus Christ comes as the embodiment of hope, the messenger of love, and the guarantor of the divine intention that the bound be set free from the unjust yoke.

In response to the witness of the Holy Scriptures and the example of Jesus Christ, we beseech our government at every level, to be steadfast and persistent in the pursuit of political, economic and social justice with mercy and compassion. We are of a common mind, inviting you to join us in the urgent pursuit of those longings which compel a just peace in the nuclear age. Where justice is withheld among us, God is denied. Where peace is forsaken among us, we forsake Christ, the life of the Church is compromised, and the message of reconciliation is gravely wounded. Let us bear witness to the truth in this.

Ambiguities

We acknowledge with joy that new light is yet to break forth from God's Word. This bright light is a gift for the nurturing of our lives as Christians. At the same time, it is our experience that this vision of the Church is often blurred and incomplete. "For now we see through a glass, dimly" (I Corinthians 13:12). Where our vision is unclear and the voice of the Church uncertain, we are urged not to indifference or compromise, but to our knees; to repentance, to prayer, and an earnest quest, seeking together the way of Christ for us.

We acknowledge with gratitude that in Christ every dividing wall of enmity or hostility is broken down. How do we celebrate this when we are tempted to ignore, avoid or resist some members of the community? Is not such resistance a contradiction of love of neighbor? As brothers and sisters in Christ we are summoned to address one another with humility knowing that our words and actions are subject to the judgment of God. Are we not to trust God to reconcile divisions among us, and when there has been separation or hurt to lead us back to one another as a shepherd searches for the flock? Can we afford to be any longer apart from the promise of the Gospel? Are we not to live this promise in the brilliant light of God's redeeming ways with us? God is faithful and just. Trusting in that faithfulness and the enormity of divine grace, surely we may bear the tension of the paradoxes of salvation not yet fully realized.

Rejections

Ours is an age of a multitude of gods and we are tempted on every side to cling to a false message and a false hope. This is a dangerous path and it is no stranger to any of our congregations. Idolatry can tempt us and lull us to sleep; it offers us false comfort and false security. We ask you to consider with us the idolatries of our time and to reject all that denies the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

We reject "the illusions of self-liberation." (WARC, II, 2, p. 12). With the framers of the Barmen Declaration, we reject the false teaching that there may be "areas of our life in which we would not belong to Jesus Christ, but other lords; areas in which we would not need justification and sanctification through him." (Barmen, 8:15).

We reject the racism and sexism that demean our lives as those created precious in the sight of God.

We reject materialism and consumerism that put things in place of God and value possessions more than people.

We reject secularism that reduces life to its parts and pieces, and relativism that abandons the search for truth.

We reject militarism that promises "security" by means of a nuclear balance of terror, threatening God's creation with destructive "gods of metal."

We reject identification with any ideology of the right or the left "as though the Church were permitted to abandon the form of its message and order to its own pleasure or to changes in prevailing ideological and political convictions." (Barmen, 8:18).

We reject cultural captivity and accommodationism as well as the notion that we can turn aside from the world in indifference, for we remember that "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof . . ."(Psalm 24:1)

We urge the Church in each of its parts to prayerfully consider the meaning for our times of Paul's admonition in Romans 12:2 " . . .Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." Pray that God will help the United Church of Christ discern the things we must reject as well as the things we must affirm, that to which we say "no" and that to which we give our glad assent.

Life Together

For the health of the Church and the integrity of our witness and service, we urge clergy and laity to gather in timely fashion for prayer, study, and mutual care. We encourage the mutual support of clergy for one another in their ministry, and ask the theological faculties to maintain communion with students beyond the years of their formal study. We ask Church and Ministry Committees to nurture Christian love and concern for seminarians during the course of their preparation for ordained tasks in the Church. We hope that retreats and periods of rest, reflection and spiritual renewal will become part of our life together in each Conference, and that the teaching ministry might be affirmed by laity and clergy to the end that our congregational life and our mission be anchored deeply in Scripture and informed generously by the urgent realities of our time.

Doxology

To the truth of the Gospel that has sustained and emboldened the Church in each generation, we too say "yes." With grateful hearts, we affirm the gift of faith present in the United Church of Christ — evangelical, catholic, and reformed — which we are being called to live out in these fragile and bewildering times.

While the way ahead is not always clear to us, we dare to hope and rejoice, believing that we belong to our faithful Saviour, Jesus Christ, our "only comfort in life and death." (Heidelberg Catechism, Ques. 1). We seek to hold together worship, discipleship, proclamation and service, Word and world.

As our forebearers have done, we too declare that we shall tread this path with all who are "kindred in Christ" and "share in this confession." (Preamble, Para. 2). We invite you to walk with us in this way.

In Christ

The Participants in the Craigville Colloquy, Craigville, Massachusetts, May 16, 1984

(This document, in substance, was voted as "an epistle to the churches" by colloquy participants present at the final session, May 16 (approximately 140 in attendance), with one dissenting vote. Those taking part in the Colloquy, convened at Craigville Conference Center, May 14–16, 1984.

The letter took form from materials developed in 12 Colloquy Working Groups meeting three times on May 14, and 15, and reporting their conclusions in plenary session. A Drafting Committee of seven-five chosen from the Colloquy by the drawing of lots from a pool of 30 volunteers, and two appointed by the Colloquy's Organizing Committee—spent eight hours sifting the Working Group's proposals, writing sections of the letter, and editing the overall document. Drafters names appear with asterisks. The draft letter was reviewed, amended, and editorially refined in a two hour plenary session, and approved in substance, with the Drafting Committee charged to incorporate editorial clarifications.)

The Dubuque Declaration

We declare our continuing commitment to the truths set forth in the Basis of Union and the Constitution of the United Church of Christ.

We perceive an erosion and denial of these truths in our church. Because of our concern for the people of our churches and the well-being of our denomination as a member of the body of Christ, we are called by God to make this confession:

1. We confess our faith in the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

2. We confess that Jesus Christ is truly God and truly man. Because of our sin and estrangement from God, at the Father's bidding the Son of God took on flesh. Conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, He became like us in all things apart from sin. He died on the cross to atone for our sin and reconcile us to God and on the third day rose bodily from the dead. He is the sole head of the church, the Lord and Savior of us all, and will one day return to glory, power, and judgment to usher in the kingdom of God in its fullness.

3. We hold that the Bible is the written Word of God, the infallible rule of faith and practice for the church of Jesus Christ. The Scriptures have binding authority on all people. All other sources of knowing stand under the judgment of the Word of God.

4. We affirm that the central content of the Scriptures is the gospel of reconciliation and redemption through the atoning sacrifice of Christ and His glorious resurrection from the grave. The good news is that we are saved by the grace of God alone, the grace revealed and fulfilled in the life and death of Jesus Christ, which is received only by faith. Yet this faith does not remain alone but gives rise to works of piety, mercy, and justice. The Holy Spirit, who spoke through the prophets and apostles, calls us today, as in the past, to seek justice and peace for all races, tongues and nations.

5. We confess as our own the faith embodied in the great ecumenical and Reformation creeds and confessions, finding them in basic conformity with the teaching of the Holy Scriptures.

6. We confess that the mission of the church is to bear witness to God's law and gospel in our words and deeds. We are sent into the world as disciples of Christ to glorify God in every area of life and to bring all peoples into submission to the Lordship of Christ, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. We seek to obey this commission in the full assurance that our Lord and Savior is with us always, even to the end of the age.

—Adopted by the Board of Directors of United Church People for Biblical Witness, Dubuque, Iowa, November 17, 1983

THEOLOGY

Evangelical Theology: Where Do We Begin?

by Thomas Finger

I) The Present Situation

In recent decades systematic theology has fallen on hard times. This is due, in part, to our general cultural situation. Not only has knowledge in fields relevant to the discipline exploded beyond the capabilities of almost any individual, but the felt religious needs of most people are for something quite different from a complex, tightly interwoven, cognitive "system". In a world increasingly shaped by massive, impersonal and intellectually sophisticated technology, most people turn to religion for something intimate, personal and emotionally satisfying. Even those whose focus is "outward", toward challenging modern structures, want guidelines for concrete action, not carefully refined dogmas.

Systematically inclined thinkers can legitimately challenge this craving for experience or action at the expense of truth. But despite the extreme forms in which they are often phrased, might such concerns contain a kernel of truth? Is not systematic theology's ultimate purpose, after all, to guide the life and mission of the Church? And, might not one plausibly urge that its concepts and structure make closer contact with the outlook of the age and of ordinary Christians than often is the case?

Traditional theological systems usually begin with complex issues of epistemology: of revelation, reason and their interrelation. Then follow God's attributes and the Trinity—surely among the most intricate intellectual issues ever discussed. Systematic Theologies then descend to Creation, where sophisticated scientific issues come to the fore. To be sure, Systematic Theology must at some point deal with these important matters. But *beginning* one's system with them carries two liabilities.

First, discussion commences at an intellectual level so lofty that all but the highly educated or intelligent are left groping at the start. Second, the concepts employed are often deeply indebted to philosophy and science. The terms and style of argumentation are often set before the data relevant to worship, fellowship, experience, ethics and mission are thoroughly explored. Such data, accordingly, may be neglected, distorted, or presented in a form undesirably disconnected from actual Christian living.[1]

Beginning, then, from the purpose of evangelical Systematic Theology itself— to guide the Church's life and mission— and not primarily from the experience and action-oriented mood of the present, we may ask whether the discipline might helpfully adopt a different style and structure. We will do so by pondering, first, the meaning of "evangelical", and second, the meaning of "systematic".

II) What is "Evangelical"?

The voluminous literature on this topic suggests three main routes to definition: theological, historical and Biblical.[2]

A) Theological Definitions of "Evangelical"

According to Kenneth Kantzer, evangelicals affirm the authority of scripture and justification by faith.[3] Evangelical theology, that is, is primarily reformation theology. Others, such as Bernard Ramm, identify it more with the specific Reformed tradition.[4]

Donald Bloesch's list of evangelical "hallmarks" contains a number of Reformed emphases such as: the sovereignty of God, total depravity, the substitutionary atonement, and the primacy of proclamation.[5] Bloesch, however, recognizes that some groups stressing these "hallmarks" have neglected other important themes and practices. Some of these have been emphasized in Catholicism.[6] Others, such as personal piety, sanctified living and social involvement, have been stressed by other Protestant groups, sometimes at times when Reformed Christians seemed to have lost them.[7]

We thoroughly agree with Bloesch and others that the authority of Scripture and God's initiating activity must characterize all theologies called "evangelical". However, by looking beyond the Reformed tradition, Bloesch points the way towards an historical definition of "evangelical", and one closer to common usage of the term.

B) Historical Definitions of "Evangelical"

Evangelicals, on this view, not only believe something, but are

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eager to communicate it and to live it out. Evangelicalism, for this approach, is marked, first, by an urgent sense of mission. Second, this mission aims at personal response to Christ. Third, this response issues in wholly transformed living. Finally, this transformed living carries a social impact.

When we contrast this historical definition with the theological, we see that the referents of each do not always coincide. Some groups holding a theology designated as "evangelical" (whether Reformed or otherwise) have exhibited few or none of the four above characteristics. Yet other groups clearly exhibiting these characteristics have had conflicting theologies, or little explicit theology at all. This is precisely the weakness of defining "evangelical" by strictly theological criteria: it risks overlooking, marginalizing or neglecting groups that have done much of the evangelizing. Yet this weakness parallels one we recently discerned in systematic theology in general: its tendency to develop its concepts and structure apart from the Church's life and mission.

To be sure, evangelical theologizing can never simply derive its doctrines from Church activity, as if doctrines were mere descriptions of what Christians feel and do. Evangelical theologizing, which views all things in light of God's initiative, must provide criteria for measuring experience and action. Yet if those criteria are conceptually disconnected from these actualities, theology will not fulfill its major task.

Serious thought about the structure of evangelical theologizing, then, must consider movements which theologians have often neglected. One is the so-called "Believers' Church" tradition, bypassed because it contains little explicit theologizing.[8] Yet historians generally agree that in Reformation times it was a "Believers' Church", the Anabaptists, who possessed the strongest sense of evangelistic mission, the strongest emphasis on discipleship, who insisted on personal conversion, and who unleashed far-reaching currents of social transformation.[9] Not much later, as Lutheran and Reformed orthodoxy slipped towards social and theological rigidity, Pietism rediscovered faith's experiential side, discipled believers in small fellowships, and sent missionaries around the globe while attacking social problems at home.[10]

While Pietists seldom broke with their State Churches, and thus were not technically "Believers' Churches", they formatively influenced movements like the Moravians and Methodists who were. Methodism became a mass movement distinguished by the four characteristics above. Yet in their polemics, Methodists were often at odds with Reformed doctrines which, they felt, sometimes inhibited the evangelistic enterprise itself.[11]

To be sure, in America, Methodist Evangelicalism intermingled with older streams from Reformed sources.[12] Yet the origins of America's Puritans and their longings for a pure Church can hardly be dissociated from the Believers' Church movement. Moreover, their early years reveal frequent tension between "Believers' Church" emphases, which moved in evangelical directions, and those conforming to the religious and social *status quo*.[13] Their history and that of later Presbyterianism [14] shows that Reformed doctrines can be understood by some to support evangelical emphases, and by others to oppose them. Meanwhile, during the 18th and 19th centuries, much of the evangelizing was carried out by Methodists, Baptists and newly emerging "Believers' Churches."[15]

But what of the relation of systematic theology to Evangelicalism before about 1900? Three points stand out:

1) Some systematic reflection, such as that of Jonathan Edwards, was both distinctly Reformed and integrally related to evangelical activities. Later, however, evangelical groups borrowed heavily from Reformed theologies formulated in other intellectual and social worlds. Especially influential was the "Princeton Theology", rooted more in an ecclesiastically and socially conservative European orthodoxy than in American Evangelicalism.[16] Moreover, Princeton's most noted system, that of Charles Hodge, was shaped in part by reigning philosophical and scientific notions. Hence one can ask how well his system and its many successors can articulate evangelical reality. One can also ask— as one must of any philosophically-influenced system— to what extent its concepts facilitate or distort expression of theology's Biblical substance.[17]

2) Many strongly evangelistic groups had little interest in theology. What theologizing they did was highly "apologetic" in character: it was motivated less by a desire to articulate their own distinctive ethos than to interact with more established theologies, and with scientific and cultural challenges. In other words, the style and structure of their systems did not derive entirely from their own agendas. One can at least ask whether the impulses foundational to Methodist, Baptist and other movements might appropriately have taken on— and even today might take on— different conceptual forms.

3) One may ponder the suitability of the conceptuality derived from the Reformation, especially as accentuated in Reformed Orthodoxy, to articulate two primary features of evangelical reality. First, it generally defined justification (something imputed, external, etc.) in sharp contrast to sanctification (imparted, internal, etc.). Yet in evangelical reality, conversion flowed directly into discipleship. Second, these theologies discussed justification and sanctification largely in individualistic terms. Yet evangelical experience normally carries a social impact. Reformation theology and its orthodox heirs, no doubt, rightly intended to emphasize the divine initiative and the necessary personal response. But might evangelical reality suggest other angles from which to approach these issues?

To summarize: our historical approach has shown that "evangelical" movements stress both content and action. Evangelicals have something definite to believe, yet also to communicate and to live out. A contemporary theology for articulating, critiquing and guiding evangelical impulses, then, could usefully work on the connecting links between belief and action, and among the different dimensions of that action. More specifically, a theology appropriate to historial evangelical reality could articulate:

1) that ultimate horizon within which not only beliefs, but the communication and living out of beliefs is urgent.

2) the intrinsic connection between justification and sanctification.

3) the intrinsic connection between personal sanctification and social involvement

C) A Biblical Definition of "Evangelical".

Since "evangelical" theology, whatever its style or structure, emphasizes the normativity of Scripture, we may most appropriately ask whether the Bible contains a term(s) or a theme(s) by which to define "evangelical".

Investigation reveals that the word *euaggelion* meets this need in several ways.[18] First, it often denotes the core of the early Christian message. This core does not include every topic important for systematic theology. But it contains the unique, foundational claims of Christian faith. It thereby provides a point of orientation from which to view later developments and to articulate their significance.

Second, though *euaggelion* involves a definite theological content, it is also a dynamic, life-changing power. "The gospel" is a group of affirmations . . . and also their transforming actuality. And this two-sidedness corresponds to that of historical Evangelicalism. We may distinguish three phases in the use of *euaggelion*: in Synoptic gospels, by the earliest Christians, and by Paul.[19]

1) In the Synoptics, the inbreaking of God's Kingdom forms the primary content of *euaggelion*. The Kingdom, of course, is not just a verbal message, but the advent of new Life. The "gospel" of the Kingdom is regularily accompanied by healing, exorcism, and new possibilities for "the poor".[20] As the advent of new Life and power, *to euaggelion* calls for repentance (Mk 1:15).

In the Synoptics, "the gospel" is also the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel. The coming of God's Kingdom is therefore an eschatological occurrence. Moreover, the Kingdom's advent is intrinsically connected with that of Jesus. Thus the Synoptics occasionally indicate that Jesus— and even his death— are intrinsic to

"The gospel" is a group of affirmations . . . and also their transforming actuality.

to euaggelion.[21] However, the dawn of a whole new reality, the Kingdom of God, forms the center of the Synoptic "gospel."

2) Jesus is at the center of *to euaggelion* in the early Christian proclamation. Yet this does not mean that a transcendent object wholly replaces the eschatological irruption of new Life into history. Fulfillment of God's historical promises is as pronounced as ever. Some of "the gospel's" earliest expressions outline Jesus' ministry, crucifixion and resurrection.[22]

Among these events, his resurrection has most profoundly shaped history.[23] On one hand, it has unleashed powerful "subjective" forces. For Jesus' resurrection corresponds with the outpouring of the Spirit, who draws believers into communities of worship, fellowship, mission and economic sharing. (Note that while personal decision is foundational for it, the "subjective" dimension of early Christianity is communal, not individualistic, in character).

Yet these "subjective" effects of Jesus' resurrection are grounded in its "objective" significance. Jesus' resurrection is his appointment to Lordship over the cosmos. This includes his dominion over all principalities and powers.[24] It also involves his appointment as the coming Judge (Ro 2:16). Yet Jesus' resurrection, along with his death, has also already passed eschatological judgment on the world. This judgment, however, is a strange one. For though the death and resurrection of God's Messiah have condemned the world, to those who repent and believe they bring forgiveness of sins.

As often noticed, the *euaggelion* of the earliest Church announces and actualizes an intertwining of the "already" and the "not yet". The resurrection has already occurred, the Spirit has already been poured out, new Life and new community are already present. Yet the risen Lord is also the imminently returning Judge, and believers have been born anew to a living hope— yet a hope which places life in the "already" in an entirely different perspective.[25]

3) Finally, Paul the apostle brings out further implications of *to euaggelion.* The emphasis on promise and fulfillment finds expression as a comprehensive historical *musterion.* For Paul, what is revealed and fulfilled is God's plan, hidden for ages, to actualize obedience among all nations (Ro 16:25–26); or, more profoundly, to unite all dimensions of creation.[26] In this way Paul further explicates the historical and social reality of "the gospel", and also the imperative of preaching it to all Creation, even the heavenly Powers.[27]

Second, "the cross" takes on new dimensions. Jesus' death becomes the critique of the worldly striving for wisdom and power.[28] As "the word of the cross" , the gospel will bring persecution to those who communicate it and those who receive it.[29] The "already" of the *eschaton* co-exists paradoxically with struggle against "the world." The mission it imples will be marked by suffering.

Finally, Paul enlarges on "justification by faith". When Peter's party separated itself from Gentile Christians at Antioch, "the truth of the gospel" was threatened (Gl 2:14). As the following verses show, "justification" language was already familiar to Jewish Christians. It was therefore consistent with, the earliest Church's "gospel". However, Paul's elaborations of the conflict between "the works of the Law" and "the Promise" are better understood as his own explications— accurate explications, of course— of this aspect of "the gospel."[30]

If Paul's justification teachings are viewed from the vantage-point of *to euaggelion,* two important implications for evangelical theologizing emerge. First, justification's "legal" terminology refers primarily to God's victorious eschatological judgment and liberation of the whole creation. Its primary reference is not the individual sinner. Second, as the starting-point of his discussion in Galatians shows, living *kata erga nomou* separates not only humans from God, but humans from each other. Justification, like all aspects of "the gospel", has important social dimensions.

III) What is "Systematic"?

The content and dynamic of *to euaggelion* correspond remarkably with evangelical reality, historically ascertained. Both are grounded in a definite content which can and must be verbally articulated. Yet this content presses towards communication with an urgency and a dynamism which brings conversion, transforms lives, and impacts the whole created order.

If we now wish to articulate this "gospel" and its implications in some "systematic" order, which might be most appropriate? What conceptual structure might best inform, critique and guide the Church as it seeks (among other things) to grasp the "horizon" within which the "gospel" works, and to intertwine conversion with discipleship, and the personal with the social?

Since all systematic *loci* are interrelated with all others, nothing forbids beginning as traditional systems have: with epistemology and/or the doctrine of God. Nevertheless, commencing with issues so conceptually intricate may obscure, if not distort, the specific, concrete shape of evangelical realities. As an alternative, evangelical theologians might usefully reconsider the "Biblical Theology" movement of the 1940s and 50s. Its practitioners often insisted that Biblical writers communicated in unique categories, and that theology's business was largely to recover and restate them.[31]

But among the widely diverse Biblical writings, can any suggestions of "systematic" order be found?[32] Over 30 years ago, G. E. Wright underlined the notion of "recital". Recitals recount God's past saving acts in a way that gives meaning for the present and future. As newer acts are experienced, these are added to the recital, reshaping its significance. As time passes, more and more of the Biblical community's experience finds meaning within an overarching history of promise and fulfillment.[33]

We have seen how the Biblical *euaggelion* interprets Christ's saving acts within just such a framework. Perhaps evangelical theologizing could articulate the unique character and urgency of that "gospel", yet express its contents and their implications in an orderly way, if it were structured somewhat as a "recital". Several starting-points suggest themselves. Systematic theology might begin with Christ, and from there stretch backwards through the history that promised him and forwards to the consummation he will bring. Or theology might systematize all aspects of God's work from the central theme of the Kingdom.[34]

My own suggestion is that Systematic Theology begin with eschatology.[35] By eschatology I mean not only those events still to occur (*parousia,* final judgment, etc), but that joyous reality proclaimed in "the gospel": that the *eschaton* has "already" broken in, although it has "not yet" been consummated. In eschatology of this sort, "objective" and "subjective" dimensions are most closely intertwined. For the *eschaton* is grounded in Jesus' historical life, death, resurrection, reign and return. Yet is unleashes intense repentance, rejuvinated living and glorious hope. Phrased otherwise, with an eschatological starting-point, systematic theology can stress both the initiative of the transcendent God and experiential character of Christian existence: and both the cosmic and personal dimensions of Christian reality.

Eschatology, in other words, provides the horizon within which the urgency and dynamism of *to euaggelion* can be understood. "The gospel" is urgent because the New Age is "already" here . . . because a new way of living is now possible . . . because all creation is being renewed. However, its "not yet" character also clarifies the necessity of struggle and suffering, as expressed in Paul's "theology of the cross".

An eschatological starting-point might also help overcome dichotomies between conversion and discipleship. From this perspective, conversion must lead to discipleship because conversion is conversion to the dawning reality of a New Age. Similarily, the polarity of personal and social can be bridged. For personal decision joins one to a new community and a new creation.

If evangelical theologizing were to begin from this point, or from any point inherent to the Biblical recital, the doctrine of God might come later in the system. Of course, God would remain ontologically prior, as in all Evangelical theology. However, if God is known primarily through divine acts, theology might wish to postpone lofty intellectual discussions about divine attributes and the Trinity until the maximum data concerning these acts had been examined.

Some, of course, might shy away from Biblical Theology due to reports that it has long been "in crisis". Examination of this "crisis", however, shows that it arose largely from Biblical scholars' failure to do adequate Biblical theology, and from theologians' failure to interact with and appropriate their findings.[36] Today evangelicals are blessed with increasingly competent Biblical scholars and with theologians who know Scripture better than most others. The time is ripe for them together to pick up and reconsider the still chal-

lenging issues left unsettled by this movement.

One such issue, however, calls for specific comment. Biblical Theology frequently puzzled over how the distinctive categories it emphasized could make contact with today's personal and social issues. To speak to contemporary problems, isn't it better to appeal to apparently universal notions: say, "to conscience, human dignity, and the natural rights of self-expression . . ."?[37]

Today a movement with significant affinities to Biblical Theology, known as Narrative Theology, suggests some points of connection. Narrative theologians insist that for Christianity, reality is intrinsically structured by the narrative histories it tells. There is no way of knowing, expressing or accepting Christian claims without understanding how reality has been shaped by these stories.

Numerous features of Christian existence, then, can be understood as interactions among narratives. Each individual, for instance, has a history. We move toward personal identity through understanding and creatively appropriating our own pasts. Conversion, then, can be said to occur when one's personal narrative "collides" with the Christian narrative: when one allows one's personal story to be illuminated and judged by the Biblical one, and find its meaning-context in the latter.[38]

Consequently, as in evangelical reality, conversion leads intrinsically to discipleship. For conversion is insertion into a new universe of meaning; and discipleship involves continuing re-interpretation of one's own story in light of it. Moreover, that new context, by definition, cannot be individualistic in character. For it is the story of God's dealings with the world. Personal conversion and discipleship, then, have social dimensions.[39]

Narrative theologians, of course, sometimes have problems. For some, the Biblical "story" is ambiguously related to history.[40] But if "story" is merely a structure of subjective human development, then "the gospel" looses its rooting in the Divine initiative, contrary to all Evangelical Theology.

Yet many Narrative theologians do root the Biblical story in history. Narrative Theology, therefore, can suggest links, first, between Scripture and pastoral psychology. For growth towards personal wholeness involves re-shaping by the Biblical story. Second, Narrative Theology suggests links between the Bible and contemporary ethics. For, as Stanley Hauerwas insists, ethics has to do not merely with general rules, but with the formation of character. And character-formation is guided by the narratives of a normative tradition.[41]

Finally, Narrative Theology suggests ways of relating Scripture to modern social problems. For conflicts among social groups often arise from the dissimilarities among their collective stories. And oppressed peoples often have no real story, or only a brutalizing one. In a pluralistic world, conflicts among cultures often may not be best approached by appeals to notions and values which supposedly are held in common. Rather, it might be best to let each group discover and tell its own story. Then the Biblical story might be told; for it can illuminate, critque and create points of contact among those stories.

IV) CONCLUSION

Narrative Theology suggests one way in which the Biblical message, the norm of theology in evangelical perspective, can concretely inform, critique and guide the Church today. Like the notion of "recital" in Biblical theology, it envisions the Scriptures and modern life as caught up in God's overarching history with humanity. Evangelical theologians can usefully consider these movements, for Evangelicalism is essentially dynamic and historical in character. Its "gospel" is largely a proclamation of past events whose power surges towards actualization. It creates mission, converts individuals, transforms them in Christian community and impacts the whole of theological society. If theological doctrines are to facilitate this process, they must be stated and systematized in a way that can be clearly interconnected with it.

[1] This concern is not merely a modern one, but was classically expressed in the Reformation's first attempt at Systematic Theology:

> We do better to adore the mysteries of the Deity than to investigate them. . . . The Lord God Almighty clothes his Son with flesh that he might draw us from contemplating his own majesty to a consideration of the flesh, and especially our own weaknesses. . . . Therefore, there is no reason why we should labor so much on those exalted topics such as 'God', 'the Unity and Trinity of God', 'The Mystery of Creation', and 'The Manner of the Incarnation.' What, I ask you, did the Scholastics accomplish during the many ages they were examining only these points? . . . But as for one who is ignorant of the other fundamentals, namely, 'The Power of Sin', 'The Law', and 'Grace', I do not see how I can call him a Christian. For from these things Christ is known, since to know Christ means to know his benefits, and not as *they* teach, to reflect upon his natures and the modes of his incarnation (Philip Melanchthon, *Loci Communes* in Wilhelm Pauck, *ed., Melanchthon and Bucer* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969], pp. 21–22.)

[2] Our purpose is not to present "Evangelical theology" as a normative ideal type. Our aim is to determine (very roughly) to what historical movements the name "evangelical" might most usefully apply, and what sort of Biblical starting-points might best suit theologizing in these traditions. "Evangelical theology/ies", then, would be a descriptive term for theologies done in these traditions. Since, as we shall see, such theologies point beyond their own traditions to Scripture as their critical norm, they should resist elevating themselves to the status of ideal types. The ideal towards which such theology should aim would not be an "Evangelical theology", but "theology in evangelical perspective" (that is, theologizing from the vantage-point of a tradition, but always clarifying and critiqueing that tradition by Scripture). On the dangers of using "Evangelical" as an ideal type, see Vernard Eller's criticism of Donald Bloesch ("'Evangelical': Integral to Christian Identity?" *TSF Bulletin*, Vol. 7, No. 2 [Nov–Dec, 1983], pp. 5–10).

[3] "Unity and Diversity in Evangelical Faith" in Wells and Woodbridge *eds., The Evangelicals* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1975), pp. 38–67.

[4] This is particularly prominent in *The Evangelical Heritage*, (Waco, Tx: Word), 1973. Probably the most extreme example of this is John Gerstner, who can call evangelist Charles Finney "the greatest of nineteenth century foes of evangelicalism" (in Wells and Woodbridge, *op. cit.*, p. 27).

[5] Donald Bloesch, *The Evangelical Renaissance* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973) pp. 48–79. Bloesch also lists the Divine authority of Scripture, salvation by grace, faith alone, Scriptural holiness, the Church's spiritual mission, and the personal return of Christ. For a similar list, see *Essentials of Evangelical Theology*, Vol. II [New York: Harper, 1978], pp. 235–259).

[6] *Essentials of Evangelical Theology*, Vol II, pp. 278–290.

[7] For Bloesch's greater appreciation of Pietism and related movements, which Ramm seldom mentions, and for his frequent critiques of Protestant Orthodoxy, which Ramm evaluates highly, see *The Evangelical Renaissance*, pp. 101–157, and *The Future of Evangelical Christianity* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983), pp. 14–22. For Ramm, see *The Evangelical Heritage*, pp. 49–70.

[8] We are not identifying "evangelical" with "Believers' Church", but proposing that they are similar and frequently overlapping historical types. See James Garrett, *ed., The Concept of the Believers' Church* (Scottdale, Pa: Herald, 1969). Against criticisms that Believers' Churches are based on human choice rather than on divine initiative, this volume insists in numerous ways that "the Word of God creates, judges and restores the church" (p. 319; cf. pp. 27–28, 60, 201, 218, 225, 258, 316). On this issue, see also Donald Durnbaugh, *The Believers' Church* (New York: Macmillan, 1968), pp. 6, 31–33.

[9] See Robert Friedmann, *Theology of Anabaptism* (Scottdale, Pa: Herald, 1973) and Walter Klaassen, *ed., Anabaptism in Outline* (Kitchener, Ont: 1981). More than some other Believers' Churches, Anabaptists place more emphasis on Jesus' normativity for ethics and on the Church community (e.g., John H. Yoder in Garrett, *op. cit.*, p. 258: "The work of God is the calling of a people. . . . The church then is not simply the *bearer* of the message of reconciliation. . . . Nor is the church simply the *result* of a message. . . . That men are called together to a new social wholeness is itself the work of God. . . ."). Regarding "Evangelicalism" largely as a twentieth century North American phenomenon, Norman Kraus insists that it is often at odds with Anabaptism (see Norman Kraus, *ed., Evangelicalism and Anabaptism* [Scottdale, Pa: Herald, 1979], pp. 1–22, 169–182). Ronald Sider, on the other hand, finds authentic Evangelicalism similar to Anabaptism (pp. 149–168).

[10] Dale Brown, *Understanding Pietism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978).

[11] E.g., Wesley's criticism of predestination (see Thomas Langford, *Practical Divinity* [Nashville: Abingdon, 1983], pp. 34–35.) Much of Wesley's theology, like many of his successors, focused on maintaining the Reformation emphasis on Justification while supplementing and intertwining it with a greater emphasis on Sanctification (pp. 20–48).

[12] For a view which traces Evangelicalism largely from Puritainism and regards "the rise of Wesleyan Arminianism. . . as an almost immanent development," see Sydney Ahlstrom in Wells and Woodbridge *op. cit.*, pp. 269–289.

[13] Between missionary impulses and concentration on those already within the covenant; between intensive and relatively minimal personal preparation for saving grace; between efforts towards regenerate Church membership and the "half-way covenant"; and between efforts to make the Church independent of the State and efforts to subordinate her to it. (see Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, Vol. I [Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975], pp. 200–236)

[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 329–345, 551–570.

[15] *Ibid.*, pp. 388–402, 504–550

[16] Ahlstrom shows briefly how this school was allied with forces cautious towards (though not entirely opposed to) revivalism. See also Mark Noll, *ed., The Princeton Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983), esp. pp. 13–40, 114–116.

[17] Hodge insisted that his theology followed an inductive method, which he regarded as standard in the sciences. (*Systematic Theology*, Vol. I [London: James Clarke, 1871] pp. 1–17). At the same time, such a method relied heavily on *a priori* rational principles, as taught by Scottish common-sense philosophy (cf. Noll, pp. 61–70). In fact, Hodge often argues deductively from these principles. Some important doctrines can be deduced largely from them with little help from the accompanying Scriptural passages. (e.g., consider the logical structure of the arguments on pp. 195–199, 233–240, 367–368, 413–424, 535–543).

[18] Attempts to define "Evangelicalism" almost always mention *euaggelion*, but very seldom investigate it in any depth (e.g. Bloesch, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology*, Vol I., p. 7: *The Future of Evangelical Christianity*, pp. 15–16).

[19] Our investigations below take both *euaggelion* and the related verb *euaggelizomai* into account. A thorough study (which would substantially confirm our results) would fully investigate other forms of *aggello/aggelia*, and also *kerussein/kerugma, akoe, hrema, matureo/marturia*, and *logos* (cf Peter Stuhlmacher, in the volume *Das Evangelium und die Evangelien* [Tuebingen: Mohr, 1983], pp. 24–25).

Evangelical theologizing . . . must provide criteria for measuring experience and action.

[20] Mk 1:15: Mt 4:23. 9:35. Luke uses the verb rather than the noun to indicate the same message (4:18, 43, 7:22; 8:1; 9:6; 16:16; 20:1). Robert Guelich concludes that the literary genre "gospel", materially speaking, "consists of the message that God was at work in Jesus' life, death and resurrection, effecting his promises found in Scripture." This work of God is "the establishment of *shalom*, wholeness, the reestablishment of broken relationships between himself and his own, the defeat of evil, the forgiveness of sins and the vindication of the poor" (in Stuhlmacher,*op. cit.*, p. 217).

[21] Mk 8:33 and 10:29 parallel *to euaggelion* and Jesus. Mk 14:9 (par Mt 26:13) connects the gospel with his death.

[22] Acts 10:36–43 with 15:7, 13:26–31. According to C.H. Dodd, the earliest "kerygma" began, much like Jesus' proclamation, by asserting that God's promises were now fulfilled. It ended, again like Jesus' message, with a call to repentance and faith. In between, the "kerygma" briefly recited Jesus' life, death, resurrection, present lordship and return— all which occurred according to God's plan, foretold in the Old Testament. In Dodd's view, these events correspond to the central element in Jesus' proclamation: the coming of God's Kingdom.
Although our present, brief reconstruction of the early Church's "gospel" focuses on passages where *euaggelion* or *euaggelizomai* occur, Dodd's "kerygma" corresponds closely to it. In a thorough study (cf note [19] above), the findings of each would interpenetrate and confirm each other. Passages central both to Dodd and to our present study are Ac 10:36–43, 13:17–41; I Co 15:1–7; Ro 1:1–3, 2:16. Other passages central for Dodd are Acts 2:14–39, 3:13–26, 4:10–12, 5:30–32; I Th 1:10; Gl 1:3–4, 3:1; Ro 8:34, 10:8–9. (*The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments* [New York: Harper, 1964], pp. 7–35 and appended chart).

[23] Esp. Ro 1:4, I Pt 1:3, Ac 13:34–37, II Ti 1:8; though Jesus' death and resurrection are given equal weight in I Co 15:3–4, the rest of the chapter focuses on the resurrection. Because *euaggelion* involves not only content but power, we also stress its "subjective" effects as indicated from accounts of the early Christian communities' activities (Ac 2:43–47, 4:32–37, I Th 1:2–10, etc.).

[24] Though Dodd acknowledges this (p. 15), Oscar Cullmann emphasizes it much more fully in *The Earliest Christian Confessions* (London: Lutterworth, 1949). These confessions provide another means of penetrating to the emphases of the earliest Christian "gospel".

[25] I Th 2:14; Cl 1:5, 23; Ep 1:13–14;; I Pt 1:3–8, 12.

[26] Ep 1:9–10, 3:3–11, 6:19; Cl 1:25–27.

[27] Ep 3:7–10. Thus when Paul speaks of the "gospel", he is frequently discussing his missionary commission (I Co 9:12–18; II Co 10:13–16, 11:7–9; Gl 1:6–2:10; Ro 15:15–21; Ph 1:5–7, etc.).

[28] I Co 1:17–2:6; Gl 3:1, 4:13.

[29] I Th 1:5–7; 2:2, 14–15; Ep 6:15; and throughout II Corinthians. This was already evident in the earliest evangelizing (Ac 5:42) and in Jesus' synoptic sayings (Mk 13:10, Lk 16:16).

[30] My view may differ slightly from Stuhlmacher's, who asserts that "Paul's gospel of Christ is essentially the gospel of Justification!" (*op. cit.*, p. 24). However, Stuhlmacher finds the origin of Paul's gospel in his encounter with the risen Jesus. Since this Jesus was the same one who died accursed by the Law, the encounter convinced Paul that it was not Jesus who was really discredited, but the Law as a way of salvation. Thus from the beginning Paul's gospel involved a critique of justification by works of the Law (pp. 164–167). Even for Stuhlmacher, however, the foundation Paul's gospel is not a general message about justification, but the risen, enthroned Jesus. Justification is an *implication* of his resurrection. Even here the resurrection as God's cosmic act of condemnation and liberation is the foundation of justification.

[31] Brevard Childs, *Biblical Theology in Crisis* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970), esp pp. 44–50. By "unique" we do not mean that Biblical themes have nothing in common with those of other religions and philosophies; but that even a consideration of common elements often serves to highlight the distinctiveness of the former.

[32] By "systematic" we mean simply an orderly, comprehensive, coherent account, employing a consistent methodology and terminology throughout.

[33] G.E. Wright *God Who Acts*, (London: SCM, 1952), pp. 33–58.

[34] Evangelicals have shied away from the Kingdom because of its centrality in Liberal Theology. But the Liberal kingdom was an immanent one. The Biblical notion intertwines immanent and transcendent dimensions.

[35] See Thomas Finger, *Systematic Theology: an Eschatological Approach*, 2 vols. (to be published by Thomas H. Nelson, 1985). Moltmann points in this direction when he says "The eschatological is not one element *of* Christianity, but it is the medium of Christian faith as such, the key in which everything is set, the glow that suffuses everything here in the dawn of an expected new day." (*Theology of Hope* [New York: Harper, 1967], p. 16.) Vernard Eller makes similar suggestions in *Towering Babble* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press), pp. 65–76 and in the dialogue with Donald Bloesch *op. cit.* (note [2] above).

[36] See Childs, pp. 51–87. A major issue, for example, was that of revelation. What was revealed: historical events? Biblical interpretations of these events? Some combination of the two? (p. 52). This and other issues are still being refined and discussed by evangelical scholars. For another claim that Biblical Theology is not dead, see James Smart, *The Past, Present and Future of Biblical Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1979).

[37] Childs, p. 85.

[38] George Stroup, *The Promise of Narrative Theology* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1981), pp. 170–175.

[39] Ibid., pp. 228–233. Appropriation of the Biblical narratives as the context for one's own narrative cannot be a passive or merely intellectual act (though receptivity and intellectual appropriation are necessary elements). It means to live— to continue one's narrative history— in a certain way. Conversion (or confession) is real only when it is the first step of a new way of living (pp. 186–212).

[40] For a discussion of the issues, see Stroup, pp. 89–95: and Michael Goldberg, *Theology and Narrative* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1981), esp pp. 194–240.

[41] See esp. *Character and the Christian Life* (San Antonio: Trinity, 1975) and *Truthfulness and Tragedy* (Notre Dame, In: Notre Dame, 1977).

Is *Sojourners* Marxist? An Analysis of Recent Charges

by Boyd Reese

In the past couple of years, figures from both the Evangelical Establishment and the secular New Right have charged that Marxism characterizes the *Sojourners* outlook. This article will analyze and rebut those charges; more broadly, it will propose other contexts for understanding *Sojourners*. I start with introductory comments, examine evangelical criticisms, discuss the intellectual background and political perspective of *Sojourners*, and finally deal with criticisms from the secular New Right.

Some preliminary comments about the perspective from which this article is written are in order. This analysis will form part of a doctoral dissertation focusing on *Sojourners* written for the Department of Religion at Temple University. I was one of the students at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School who was involved in events leading up to the founding of *Sojourners'* predecessors, *The Post-American*, and served as associate editor of the magazine from 1971 through 1974. I thus claim an insider's knowledge of the development of the political and theological perspective of the magazine in its early days. Almost all of this analysis, however, will rely on material that is available for public scrutiny in the pages of the magazine and in the secondary literature. While I continue in basic sympathy with *Sojourners'* stance, I do not presume to speak for the magazine; the editors may disagree with elements of my analysis.

Charges from the Evangelical Establishment[1]

Both Harold Lindsell and Ronald Nash have charged in recent books on evangelicals, economics, and ethics that *Sojourners* is characterized by a Marxist analysis and prescription for society. In his *Social Justice and the Christian Church* (Milford, MI: Mott Media, 1983), Nash cites a statement of Jim Wallis as evidence that he is "one evangelical who can hardly restrain his enthusiasm for Marxism" (p. 158). There is a great deal of irony when one recognizes that the major thrust of the article Nash refers to is a warning to Christians against marrying themselves to any ideological system, and particularly a plea to Latin American liberation theologians to learn from the alliance of North American evangelicalism with capitalism and not tie themselves to Marxism. When Wallis says that it is predictable that some Young Evangelicals will "come to view the world through Marxist eyes," Nash understands this to be desirable from Wallis' point of view, when in fact Wallis attributes this to lack of sophistication on the part of those evangelicals who turn to Marxism! (cf. "Liberation and Conformity," *Sojourners* September 1976, p. 4).

Sojourners has made use of elements of analysis from some Marxist thinkers in its socio-political analysis, but it is not accurate to say its analysis is Marxist, or even heavily influenced by Marxism. Ironically, *Sojourners'* use of Marxism exactly parallels Nash's. In his discussion of Herbert Marcuse, Nash says, "No evangelical has to reject every aspect of Marcuse's diagnosis. Portions of it are easily serviceable in a Christian diagnosis of the spiritual ills of a materialistic society whose every conscious moment is spent in the pursuit and the consumption of things" (p. 99). Nash also discusses Marx's four forms of alienation and says, "The evidence does suggest that all the forms of alienation noted by Marx exist under capitalism"— and immediately adds that they are found in socialist societies as well. He goes on to say that Marx ignored a fifth form of alienation, that from God caused by sin (pp. 135–137). Where *Sojourners* has appropriated elements of analysis from Marxist thinkers (and from other social scientists as well), they have proceeded as Nash does, selectively and with modifications from their reading of the Scriptures.

In *Free Enterprise: A Judeo-Christian Defense* (Tyndale House, 1982), Harold Lindsell charges that *Sojourners* has a thin veneer of Christian rhetoric overlying a basic commitment to Marxism (pp. 30–31). Lindsell quotes from a June 1980 editorial of Jim Wallis that speaks of the present as a period of major social disintegration. Lindsell's quote ends with Wallis' statement, ". . .a system has power only to the extent that people believe in it. When people no longer believe the system is ultimate and permanent, the hope of change

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emerges. Undermining the belief in the system is therefore the first step toward defeating it" (p. 31). Lindsell comments, "Undermining America's belief in the free enterprise system is precisely what *Sojourners* is all about" (p. 31). Lindsell takes "the system" to mean capitalism, pure and simple. I would argue, however, that "the system" in *Sojourners'* analysis is a broader concept, analogous to the New Testament motifs of "the world" in Johannine thought and "this age" in Pauline thought—that present order of things that is criticized and relativized in light of the coming kingdom of God. All systems, capitalist and noncapitalist alike, fall under the gospel's fundamental critique.

Whether Richard Quebedeaux qualifies as a member of the Evangelical Establishment is questionable, but he is a third influential evangelical who makes a connection between *Sojourners* and Marxism. In *The Worldly Evangelicals* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), he stated that of the periodicals of the evangelical left, *Sojourners* was the most open to using New Left and Marxist categories (p. 150). He did not elaborate on this statement, other than to say that this influence included arguments raised by liberation theology.[2] This comment of Quebedeaux's can serve as a lead-in to the next section.

The Intellectual Background of *Sojourners*

Quebedeaux's assertion about *Sojourners* and the New Left is basically accurate, but needs explication. *Sojourners* is to the New Left as the Jesus Freaks were to the hippies. Hippies were generally characterized by their use of drugs and permissive attitude toward sex. While the Jesus Freaks often came from the ranks of the hippies and looked like them, their commitments and morality were decisively different. Likewise, while a number of the leaders of the early *Sojourners* community came from the ranks of the anti-war movement and exposure to New Left thought, conversion to Christian faith led to a perspective that was significantly different from that of the New Left, a perspective that has become increasingly divergent as time has passed.

It is important to understand that the New Left was not a monolithic entity, and that its history can be divided into two distinct phases. This latter insight is of crucial importance, because it was only after 1968 that the New Left came to be dominated by Marxist analyses. The early New Left was an indigenous American radicalism that took its ideals (it was not an ideological movement in its early days) from the American vision ("We hold these truths to be self evident," etc.), and its criticism from the failure of America to live up to that vision, especially in its treatment of racial minorities at home and abroad (e.g., in Vietnam). One of the characteristic commitments of the early New Left was to participatory democracy and making the American democratic vision work for all citizens.[3] As a native American radicalism, the early New Left was more like the populist movement of the late nineteenth century than the varieties of American socialism in the early twentieth century that drew their inspiration from Marx and European experience.[4]

It may be objected that this is a particular reading of the New Left, but the important thing to realize is that it is the understanding of the New Left that fed the founders of *Sojourners*. In particular, it is the vision that Jack Newfield presents in his *A Prophetic Minority* (New York: Signet, 1970 edition with a new introduction by the author), a book that discusses the early days of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and Students for a Democratic Society.[5] This is the book Jim Wallis gave me to read when I was skeptical about a radical analysis of American society when we first met in 1970; Newfield's picture of the New Left provided the understanding of the movement for the founders of *Sojourners*.

These comments about intellectual history lead to another characteristic of the New Left. While most of the media attention was focused on the activities of the campus radicals, there was at the same time a significant intellectual effort going on (mostly in graduate departments of a number of state universities) in the production of radical analyses of American society. Some of these New Left analysts were Marxists, others were not.

Those Marxists who produced significant works were what C. Wright Mills called "plain Marxists," those who appropriated elements of Marx's social analysis without capitulating to dogma.[6] These plain Marxists are to be contrasted to dogmatic Marxists, who adhere to a particular party line, e.g. Stalinist, Maoist or Trotskyite.

The diplomatic historian William Appleman Williams is the most influential self-avowed Marxist in the development of *Sojourners'* political analysis. Mills, with his work on the power structure, would be the other figure who would identify himself as a plain Marxist, though Mills' hypotheses in *The Power Elite*, with their denial of a ruling class, and his comments elsewhere about hopes of working class revolution as "labor metaphysic," put his work in direct contradiction to Marxist and other ruling class hypotheses concerning the structure of power in American society. Mills and Williams are the only two figures whose work has had significant influence on *Sojourners'* political analysis who could be considered Marxists, even given this broad understanding of Marxism. Others, like Joyce and Gabriel Kolko with their work on wealth and power and the shaping of the post-war diplomatic world, G. William Domhoff with his work on the structure of power in America, and Richard J. Barnet with his work on a variety of topics dealing with the projection of power of the United States and the Soviet Union in the post-war world, would not be considered Marxists—at least by those who have any real understanding of Marxist thought.

Sojourners' Political Analysis

"Radical" is the proper designation of *Sojourners'* political analysis.[7] This term also can be misleading, because it tends to bring to mind pictures of anarchism and totalitarianism. The content of "radical" as it applies to *Sojourners* can be specified in terms of political analysis and political practice. Components of *Sojourners'* radicalism include perspectives on the domestic structure of power (drawing on the work of C. Wright Mills, G. William Domhoff, and Gabriel Kolko); the military (the central position in the political economy of the military-industrial complex, with the work of Richard J. Barnet and Sidney Lens especially influential); foreign relations (interventionist government policy plus dominant position of the multinationals in the world economy results in a neo-imperialism, with Barnet, Gabriel and Joyce Kolko, and William Appleman Williams influential); racism (as a cancer that eats away at the heart of American society, with Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr., as seminal figures); and approach to social change (grassroots change from the bottom up, using strategies that can include but usually move beyond electoral-legislative politics into such strategies as community organizing, nonviolent direct action, and civil disobedience). It is perhaps indicative of the commitment of the magazine that the real hope for social change in America is seen as coming from renewal in the churches; this renewal is the locus of building opposition to present government policies and articulating constructive alternatives in issues like the arms race and interventionism in Central America.

A good example of the way theology affects political analysis can be seen in the use of the principalities and powers motif in the understanding of political power.[8] Using the work of figures like C. Wright Mills and G. William Domhoff (without committing themselves to either hypothesis), *Sojourners* stands firmly on the side of those who see power in American society concentrated in the hands of a wealthy elite in contrast to the prevailing pluralist viewpoint that sees power diffused throughout competing interest groups, none of which are able to maintain hegemony. *Sojourners'* understanding of the structure of power in American society comes from a dialectical interplay of these elite theories from political science and a biblical picture of the principalities and powers. In *Sojourners'* understanding, structures and institutions of society are subject to the principalities and powers. These supernatural beings were created for human good (in fact, we can't function without them), but revolted and fell, with the consequence that they have an ever-present tendency to usurp God's intended purpose for them and hold humans in bondage to their pretentions to universal sovereignty. The way wealth and power concentrated in the hands of a few work to oppress the many is a particularly vivid example of the oppressive functioning of the powers, especially in the Central American societies that have been the focus of *Sojourners'* attention over the last several years.

The theological dimensions of this analysis give a theoretical depth to the understanding of the problems of justice in relation to power not available in secular analyses. Because the problems are of supra-human dimensions, the situation confronting those who wish to work for peace and justice is on one level even more hopeless than even the most pessimistic secular analysts would have us believe. In understanding the principalities and powers as defeated on the cross of Christ, there is an element of hope for the future "coming out right" not possible in the most optimistic of secular messianisms. It also leads to the understanding that political solutions can never be anything but approximations of justice that are ever in need of improvement because of the tendency of the powers to rebellion. It sees spiritual as well as a political dimensions to the struggle for justice, with praying together one of the most radical political actions people can take.

Secular New Right Charges of Marxism in *Sojourners*

The criticism found in secular conservative sources varies considerably in character. Lloyd Billingsley's "First Church of Christ Socialist" (*National Review* [October 18, 1983: 1339]) portrays *Sojourners* and *The Other Side* as applying double standards in their assertion that "God is on the side of the poor" and in their pacifism, overlooking militarism and abuses of the poor by Marxist regimes. While the tenor of his article can be seen in his use of a parting shot from Malcolm Muggeridge, "People believe lies not because they are plausible, but because they want to believe in them," the article's polemics are based on clear ideological differences and not blatant distortion of the positions of the two magazines.

This cannot be said about a full scale attack on *Sojourners* by Accuracy in Media (AIM), a right-wing media watchdog, and a piece in *Conservative Digest* that twists AIM's already twisted report of the position of *Sojourners*.[9] *Reformed Journal* characterized the AIM study as "too crude to warrant serious consideration" (August, 1983, p. 11). I concur in this evaluation, but the report is circulating within the New Right and readers of *TSF Bulletin* should be aware of the distortions of the AIM report. Joan M. Harris' *The Sojourners File* (Washington: New Century Foundation Press, 1983) was originally published by AIM as *Sojourners on the Road to ...* (Washington, AIM, 1983).[10] Harris' study is a work of pseudo-scholarship. At first glance, it appears to be thoroughly researched and documented. Upon cursory examination, this veneer of scholarship dissolves into a mishmash of innuendo and distortion.

This examination of AIM's charges will first deal with the methodology of the study, and then look at AIM's substantive complaints. Harris' report is characterized by use of ideologically biased sources. Most of her criticisms come from books published by conservative and right-wing publishers, right-wing newsletters, and reprints of articles (Harris doesn't even bother to cite the originals). Of eleven newsletters cited, the only one not identifiable with a right-wing group is castigated as a communist front. Harris' use of Ethics and Public Policy Center reprints and right-wing newsletters represents an attempt to bolster her ideological position by using *bona fide* conservative sources and shows a lack of balanced research.

The main charge in *The Sojourners File* is that the magazine follows the "Soviet party line" on fifty-three topics ranging from revolution, liberation theology, and the PLO to Senator Hatfield, the Super Bowl, and the disabled. In the vast majority of instances, there are no sources for what is claimed to constitute the Soviet party line.[11]

Her use of material from *Sojourners* is equally flawed. The study purports to examine *Sojourners* in depth over six years, but relies on half a dozen issues from 1977 and a baker's dozen from 1981 and 1982. She is prone to quoting out of context and quoting with significant omissions, with the result that reviews and articles with criticisms of Marxism are portrayed as supporting Marxist positions.[12]

These methodological flaws are enough to render *The Sojourners File* unworthy of serious consideration. There are a number of substantive issues raised, however, and these should receive some comment. There seem to be three chief complaints: *Sojourners* has consistently favored the PLO against Israel; it has refused to criticize Marxist regimes; and it is part of an evil network emanating from the Institute of Policy Studies. On the first point, *Sojourners* has consistently championed the rights of the Palestinian people to their own homeland. This is not the same thing as a blanket endorsement of the activities of the PLO (though I would agree that *Sojourners* has not condemned the terrorism of the PLO with the vigor that it has criticized Israeli policies). On the second point, perhaps it is sufficient to say that the *Family Protection Report*, a conservative newsletter, reported that Thomas R. Getman, Senator Hatfield's chief legislative assistant, provided them with a list of seventeen articles published in *Sojourners* since 1977 (the period that Harris examines) that were critical of human rights violations in communist nations.

It is clear from *The Sojourners File* that AIM is particularly upset about *Sojourners'* connection with the Institute for Policy Studies—an appendix is devoted to discussion of IPS.[13] Richard J. Barnet, cofounder and director of IPS, has been a *Sojourners* contributing editor since 1978. Perhaps the easiest way to show that the charge that he and *Sojourners* follow the Soviet party line without deviation is absurd is to look at an editorial he wrote for the February 1980 issue of the magazine, "Two Bumbling Giants" (pp. 3–6), that begins, "The 1980s have begun with the brutal Soviet invasion of Afganistan, ..." Both superpowers are portrayed as out of touch with the yearnings of billions of people for liberation and dignity—yearnings that both capitalism and socialism have failed to answer. Neither realizes that the projection of military power has become counterproductive in achieving its goals. In short, both are portrayed as having fatally flawed, outdated pictures of the world (his *The Giants* [New York: Simon & Schuster, 1977] is a book-length study of this theme). AIM has made no honest attempt to air legitimate differences of opinion and perspective. These tactics of misrepresentation, unsubstantiated allegations and innuendo cut off possibility of fruitful debate.

Conservative Digest (October, 1983, p. 6), reporting on *The Sojourners File*, claimed that Sojourners staff had visited North Vietnam, called for the "right" of North Korea to control South Korea, and supported abortion on demand—none of which are true (apparently support for the Equal Rights Amendment is equated with support for abortion on demand). The report climaxes with an attack on Senator Hatfield.

Why should *Sojourners* be the target of attempted smears by groups like AIM and *Conservative Digest*? Beyond speculation, there are two pieces of evidence. One is to use attacks on the magazine to attack Senator Hatfield. The press release from the National Christian Action Coalition that accompanied the release of *The Sojourners File* in paperback form was intended to discredit the Senator at the beginning of his re-election campaign. A second piece of evidence is the timing of the release and distribution of the earlier spiral-bound version of the book. This coincided with the conference in Pasadena in May 1983, "The Church and Peacemaking in the Nuclear Age," where an attempt was made to distribute the book from the Institute for Religion and Democracy table (IRD refused to allow distribution of the book). Both *Sojourners* and Senator Hatfield are significantly involved in efforts to reverse the arms race. If the right wing can successfully paint them with the red paint brush, then evangelicals will be unlikely to take their biblical arguments seriously.

Conclusion

Sojourners is increasingly recognized as articulating a significant minority position within American evangelicalism. The magazine integrates a sophisticated theological position with a carefully articulated non-Marxist political radicalism. Future critics may be successful in attacking elements of *Sojourners'* vision, but if they are, their work will have to be more careful and more penetrating than the studies explored in this article. These studies, secular and evangelical alike, suffer from a common assumption: criticism of capitalism and opposition to certain U. S. policies are seen as supportive of Marxism and the Soviets. Criticism of the one does not logically entail support for the other.

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[1] Part of this section was presented in my paper, "The Evangelical Left and Justice," presented at the annual meeting of the Religious Research Association in November 1983, and in a review of Lindsell's and Nash's book in the May 1984 *Sojourners*.

[2] While liberation theology is an accurate designation of *Sojourners'* position (see Jim Wallis' comments on page 3 of the September 1981 issue of *Sojourners*), it is an indigenous North American theology of liberation whose basic stance was worked out *before* the appearance in English of Gustavo Guiterrez's seminal work, *A Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1973). Liberation theology did not make much of an impact on the American scene until Guiterrez's book appeared; the Latin American theology did not influence the editors of *Sojourners* in the first few years of the magazine. As noted above, Wallis has written urging the Latin Americans not to make the mistake of tying themselves to Marxism.

[3] Kirkpatrick Sale's *SDS* (New York: Random House, 1973) is the best study of the SDS; see also Alan Adelson, *SDS: A Profile* (New York: Scribner's, 1972). For more succinct studies of the period that put the New Left in a broader context of twentieth century American radicalism, see James Weinstein, *Ambiguous Legacy: The Left in American Politics.* (New York: New Viewpoints, 1975) and Milton Cantor, *The Divided Left: American Radicalism 1900-1975* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978).

[4] Christopher Lasch's comments in *The Agony of the American Left* (New York: Knopf, 1969) pp. 5–6 are relevant here:

> Populist and Marxist rhetoric sometimes coincided. The Populist platform of 1892 contained the ringing declaration: "The fruits of the toil of millions are boldly stolen to build up colossal fortunes for a few, unprecedented in the history of mankind; and the possessors of these, in turn, despise the republic and endanger liberty. From the same prolific womb of governmental injustice we breed the two great classes—tramps and millionaires." Some historians have concluded from this rhetorical coincidence that the Populist critique of capitalism, though arrived at independently, was essentially the same as the Socialist critique. (Norman Pollack: *The Populist Response to Industrial America* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962.]) This conclusion, as I have argued in the *Pacific Historical Review* (February 1964, pp. 69–73), rests almost entirely on verbal correspondences; it is arrived at by piecing together a series of quotations abstracted from their contexts and treated with equal weight, without regard for speaker or occasion, so as to form a wholly synthetic system which is then attributed to the Populists themselves.
>
> This comment of Lasch's about Pollack's work is a good description of the methods Joan Harris uses in her indictment of *Sojourners* discussed below. There are also parallels between the position of figures like Nash and Lindsell and late nineteenth century movements. Leslie K. Tarr suggested in his *Christianity Today* article "Are Some Electronic Preachers Social Darwinists?" (Oct. 21, 1983 p. 50) that some electronic preachers have mistaken Herbert Spencer's social Darwinism for biblical perspectives. If one takes the capsule summary of the tenets of social Darwinism on page 6 of Richard Hofstadter's *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (Boston: Beacon, 1955), and substitutes "the market" for "nature," then one has an accurate description of Nash's position.

[5] Newfield's perspective is similar to that of Art Gish in *The New Left and Christian Radicalism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdman's, 1970). Gish compares the New Left to the Anabaptist movement of the sixteenth century and finds useful elements in both experiences for Christian radicals to appropriate. This book circulated among those who would become the editorial staff of *The Post-American* fairly soon after they met; I used it as a textbook for a course on Christian social involvement at Trinity College during the second semester of the school year in which we met.

[6] See Mill's comments in his chapter, "Rules for Critics," *The Marxists* (New York: Dell, 1962):

> "Plain Marxists (whether in agreement or in disagreement) work in Marx's own tradition. They understand Marx, and many later marxists as well, to be firmly a part of the classic tradition of sociological thinking. . . . They are generally agreed . . . that his general model and his ways of thinking are central to their own intellectual history and remain relevant to their attempts to grasp present-day social worlds. . . . It is, of course, the point of view taken in the present essay" (p. 98). Mills contrasted his plain Marxists to rigid or institutionalized marxism, which characterizes Marxists "who have won power, or come close to it" (p. 99).

[7] While numerous analysts have characterized *Sojourners* as radical, Augustus Cerillo, Jr., is the only commentator who specified the analytical content of "radical" and authors upon whom *Sojourners* draws (see his "A Survey of Recent Evangelical Social Thought," *Christian Scholars' Review* 5 [1976] 272–280, a condensed version of his American Academy of Religion regional paper of 1974, "On Being Salt and Light in the World: An Appraisal of Evangelical Social Concern").

The most extensive discussion of analysts upon which *Sojourners* draws appears in two review essays by the present author, "The Structure of Power," *Post-American*, January, 1974, pp. 8–9 and "America's Empire," *Post-American*, November/December, 1973, pp. 10–11, 14. See also my "Political Analysis in the Evangelical Left," AAR Mid-Atlantic Regional Meeting, 1982.

[8] See my comments on misunderstandings of the use of this motif in "The New Class and the Young Evangelicals: Second Thoughts" (*Review of Religious Research* 24/4 [March, 1983] 262 and 265n5).

[9] For a discussion of differences between "responsible conservatism" and the Radical Right, see chapter 2 of Richard V. Pierard, *The Unequal Yoke* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1970). The tactics of AIM and *Conservative Digest* put them in the Radical Right camp.

[10]. Two investigative journalistic pieces deal with AIM's work, methods, and finances: John Friedman and Eric Nadler, "Who's Taking AIM?" (*The Soho News*, NY, July 15, 1981, p. 10) and Louis Wolf, "Inaccuracy in Media: Accuracy in Media Rewrites the News and History," *CovertAction* 21 (Spring, 1984) 24–38. I realize some would consider the latter article a "tainted source," but I would invite interested readers to compare the AIM study of *Sojourners* with the CovertAction piece side by side and decide for themselves which comes closer to being accurate journalistic reporting.

[11]. There is one Soviet piece on the church from 1982; the next most recent source is a quotation from *World Marxist Review* from 1977. There is one Soviet source from 1965, two from 1935, and two from Lenin. Needless to say, this is not a valid picture of the current "Soviet party line."

[12] For examples of this distortion, see her comments on pages 4 and 42–43 of *File*; for the originals she distorts through selective quotation and omissions, see Wes Granberg-Michaelson, "At the Dawn of the New Creation," *Sojourners*, November, 1981, p. 14 and Merold Westphal's review of Fernando Belo's *A Materialist Reading of the Gospel of Mark*, February, 1982, pp. 37–38.

[13] IPS is a think tank located in Washington. In the twenty-five years since its founding, it has provided analyses of domestic and international problems from a perspective to the left of mainstream liberalism in America. It is perhaps an indication of the quality of IPS' work that it has been the target of a number of attempts from the New Right to discredit its work as Marxist. These attempts have been ably discussed by Aryeh Neier in "The I.P.S. and Its Enemies" (*The Nation* [December 6, 1980] 605–608); another discussion of the IPS appeared in the *New York Times* Sunday magazine: Joshua Muravchik, "Think Tank of the Left" (May 3, 1981).

The Church and Domestic Violence

by Marie M. Fortune

"My heart is in anguish within me, the terrors of death have fallen upon me. Fear and trembling come upon me, and horror overwhelms me. And I say, 'O that I had wings live a dove! I would fly away and be at rest; yea, I would wander afar, I would lodge in the wilderness, I would haste to find me a shelter from the raging wind and tempest." "It is not an enemy who taunts me—then I could bear it; it is not an adversary who deals insolently with me — then I could hide from him. But it is you, my equal, my companion, my familiar friend. We used to hold sweet converse together; within God's house we walked in fellowship. "My companion stretched out his hand against his friends, he violated his convenant. His speech was smoother than butter, yet war was in his heart; his words were softer than oil, yet they were drawn swords.' Psalm 55 (RSV)

The Saturday before Easter I received a call from a colleague who serves a parish in this city. "I have a woman here who has just walked in off the street," he said. "Her husband beat her up. Please talk to her." Clearly, the woman was in crisis and did not know what to do next. I provided her with reassurance and information and suggested that she contact the local shelter for abused women where she could find protection, comfort and time to sort out her options. She took the information and then left with the police to retrieve her son whom she had left behind in her house with the husband she had fled.

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This recent experience gives evidence of aspects of family violence that the church must understand: the church is a sanctuary and an appropriate refuge for members and non-members who need assistance with family violence. For the most part, however, the church is unprepared to help.

Where is the Church?

Until recently, the church has been the priest and Levite in passing by victims of family violence who have fallen by the wayside. The secular community, in many instances, has been the Good Samaritan, and since 1970, has helped respond to the crisis of family violence with shelters and telephone "crisis lines." Often, the church's "passing by" has been unintentional, especially on the part of the clergy. They simply do not "see" the victim standing before them. Most commonly, when asked about family violence, they comment, "No one ever comes to see me with this problem . . ."[1] The seemingly logical conclusion of their limited perception is " . . .so you see, I don't need information about family violence."

Many victims or abusers hesitate to go to their clergy for fear of the response; they fear talking to yet another person who either does not know how to help or whose help may in fact be detrimental.[2] Often hidden from public view, family violence has nevertheless reached epidemic proportions in the U.S.[3] Even good, church-going Christians are not exempt from the statistics of victims and abusers. The United Methodist Church, surveying a portion of its membership, found that 68 percent of those questioned had personally experienced family violence.[4]

Ironically, the church has failed to hear the suffering of violent families because, in general, it has failed to speak out.

During the final session of a several-week seminar for clergy, one local pastor commented with some distress that in the past few weeks he had encountered two incest cases and a rape in his small congregation. In exploring this further, it was discovered that he had announced from the pulpit that he was taking a seminar on sexual and domestic violence and that he thought it was a valuable course. This brief announcement apparently gave the congregation "permission" to approach him with these problems and the confidence that he would be able to help them. As a result, people in the church who had been struggling for some time with incestuous abuse and the rape experience came to him for help.

The stigma surounding family violence remains great, especially in the church. Victims and abusers are the "new lepers" among us. In our silence, we pretend to not see the suffering. We are disbelieving when a friend or parishioner pours forth a story of abuse, especially if the abuser is a respected and well known member of the congregation. We make clear that we do not want to know about the pain and its source. Of if we do recognize the violence, we recommend more prayers and Bible study and send the person back into a frightening and confusing situation. It is no wonder that people hesitate to come to the church for help. Yet, at all times the church can and must represent the Good Samaritan for people who are afraid, confused and in pain.

The Gospel Message

Two gospel stories can help us shape the church's response to family violence. The Good Samaritan story in Luke 10:29–37 provides a model of compassionate response to a bruised and battered victim of violence. In it, we are called to see the victim before us and respond with our material resources to provide immediate protection and support. Pressing us to another dimension of response, the story in Luke 18:1–8 describes a widow who persists in seeking vindication from the judge who did not fear God nor care about the people. Finally the judge tires of her persistence and grants her request for vindication against her adversary. Then, Jesus says, even so God hears and will vindicate those who cry out. In many cases the church, as the widow, is called to persist in advocating for the powerless and vulnerable—the victims of family violence. This persistence may involve advocating for individuals who need legal, medical or social aid, or it may involve advocating on a larger scale to change unjust laws and practices which exacerbate the suffering of victims of family violence and deny help for the abusers, leaving them to repeat their past sins. The gospel mandate is clear: We as the church are called to bind up the wounds of the victims and to confront the destructive actions of the abusers. In short, we are called to seek justice.

Shaping a Response

Social ethicist Beverly Wildung Harrison says that the role of ministry is to make public issues out of private pains, i.e., to take the individual suffering of people, attend to it, and then address it in a larger social context. This is certainly an appropriate way of viewing family violence. Violence is a personal tragedy for the individuals in a violent family, but it is not an isolated personal event. Family violence is largely a social problem created and sustained by social forces which underlie the individual battering incidents. It must be addressed as a crisis for the individual family *and* as an ongoing social problem of disturbing magnitude. Our response as the church must be to address family violence on both personal and public levels. Whether our role is parish pastor, pastoral counselor, Sunday School teacher or friend, we are part of the church's response to family violence and we each can be a significant part of the *pastoral, prophetic* and *preventive response.*

A Pastoral Response

Family violence raises particular religious issues which need attention; it may even precipitate a crisis of faith. Questions about separation and divorce, family authority and responsibility, the meaning of suffering, and the possibility of forgiveness are all critical concerns to those touched by family violence. Too often secular resources fail to address religious questions, and pastors—out of ignorance and discomfort—tend to respond with platitudes and empty prayers. Religious questions need an informed and appropriate pastoral response.

To respond with sensitivity, clergy and lay person need special education and training to understand what family violence is all about. Often general counseling techniques which many clergy learned in seminary—especially marriage counseling—are inadequate and inappropriate to deal with family violence. Clergy and lay persons need to know more about the dynamics of family violence and the kinds of help which are effective when responding to a parishioner or friend.

The first goal in counseling is to stop the violent act, which, potentially, can be terribly destructive or even lethal. The objective of an initial intervention, therefore, cannot be simply to perserve the family unit at all costs. To attempt to avoid separation or divorce — when there is violence — forces people to remain in a life-threatening situation. The once-viable marriage covenant has become empty and meaningless, and to remain physically together while the violence continues is a charade which is more damaging than a temporary separation or the consideration of divorce. If the abuser is willing to seek treatment to stop the violence, however, rebuilding the relationship may be possible in the future.

To stop the violence, pastors or lay counselors may need to be confrontative. Although the church tends to shy away from confrontation, in this case it may be the most loving and helpful thing to do. Sometimes the victims of family violence need to be confronted with the reality of the danger they and their children face in order to motivate them to seek protection. Likewise, abusers need to be confronted with the reality of what they are doing to themselves and their families. Too often no one cares enough to say: "This has got to stop." Confrontation is not the same as harsh and punitive judgment which drives abusers further into isolation. Confrontation can and should be supportive and encourage abusers to seek treatment.

To fully provide for the needs of victims and abusers, pastors and lay counselors need to be aware and make use of secular resources for shelter, legal advocacy and treatment. Most large communities and many smaller ones now have some type of crisis services for abused women. In smaller communities, these services have often been established by church people working with others in the community. These services are a valuable resource and can provide assistance which individual ministers cannot, especially in the area of shelter for victims and long term treatment for abusers. Pastors need to work cooperatively with community services in order to increase their effectiveness and be able to share their particular expertise as a pastoral resource.

The church as a community of faith also has a pastoral role to play. The congregation which responds with genuine concern and compassion when a family loses a loved one often has difficulty when that same family faces family violence. Yet, friends in the congregation can provide the ongoing community support which each of the family members needs to stop the violence and be healed from its pain. In one study, over half of the abused women who had left abusive relationships did so with the aid of family and friends rather than traditional counseling resources.[5] Many women who are unwilling to talk with a pastor or therapist about their abusive treatment may seek help from lay people whom they know through their church.

The Prophetic Response

One of the reasons that family violence has reached epidemic proportions is that there has been no public institution which has forthrightly said that family violence is unacceptable and must be stopped. We have the resurgence of the women's movement to thank for bringing the issue to public attention in the past ten years. But even so, the legal, religious, social service, mental health and medical institutions have moved slowly to take a strong public position opposing violence in the family.

The church is called to be *prophetic* and with a strong voice challenge the notion that family violence is a private matter — an area into which no one outside the family should venture. Further, the church must challenge the widely-accepted idea that the husband/father has the absolute right to do whatever violence he wishes with other family members. The absence of the church's outspoken

concern on this issue perpetuates the silence for both victims and abusers and minimizes the potential impact that the church should have in shaping public opinion and moral standards about domestic violence.

A prophetic response must be based on solid theological and ethical consideration and study. Unfortunately some of the history of the Christian tradition has reinforced the notion that family violence is acceptable. An example of this is apparent in a quotation from the 15th century publication called *Rules of Marriage:*

> "Scold your wife sharply, bully and terrify her. If this does not work, take up a stick and beat her soundly, for it is better to punish the body and correct the soul than to damage the soul and spare the body . . . Then readily beat her, not in rage but out of charity and concern for her soul so that the beating will redound to your merit and her good."

An embarrassment to Christians in the twentieth century, this passage nevertheless makes apparent the need for theological and scriptural homework in order to ground the prophetic voice in the liberating truth of the Gospels. Then, we can speak with the power and authority of the Word not only to the church but also the wider community. It is vital that the Christian community conveys the clear message that "people are not for hitting and abuse,"[6] a conviction based on the belief in the sacredness of human persons.

A Preventive Response

The church's preventive role is, in the long run, the most important one. The church remains a significant locus of education, new awareness and moral standards for many in the community. The church has the opportunity to shape people's understanding of themselves, their relationship with God, and their relationships with other persons, particularly in the family. Family life education in the church presents an ideal context for helping families learn how to shape their relationships in non-violent, respectful and creative ways. In this respect, prevention moves to a broader category of justice-making, and the work of the church is to enable families to address such issues as sex role stereotyping, multicultural experience and appreciation, stewardship of the family's material resoureces conflict and problem solving, shared decision making, use of television, etc. Such family modeling can also take place in the context of the Gospel's values (see Resources). Providing the awareness and skills to families to maintain caring, nurturing, challenging, just relationships is a primary prevention of strategy which can help break the cycle of violence.

Also, in the context of examining methods to prevent family violence, pre-marriage counseling must approach the topics of anger, conflict and violence, as well as the more common subjects of money, sexuality, in-laws, occupations, etc. For those couples who are still in the first blush of romance, this topic is often jarring and sobering. It pushes couples to consider what they will do if violence occurs, and it helps them clarify basic ground rules with each other in advance of marriage. The counseling session helps them realize that while anger and conflict are inevitable in their relationship, violence is not. They can make a covenant together based on a just and non-violent relationship. They can consider their potential for violence based on their personal and family histories and their expectation for the marriage relationship. This can help prevent them from being caught up in the cycle of family violence in the future.

Similarly, working with teenagers is an excellent educational opportunity to help prevent family violence. Adolescence is a formative period in the areas of self-image, sexuality and expectations of relationships, and abusive patterns formed in teenage relationships are hard to break in later marriages. Teenagers need a strong and consistent message which runs counter to the often abusive and exploitative media message which bombards their consciousness. Young people need information about their own sexuality, and about sexual abuse as well, so if someone in their family attempts to take advantage of them, they will know where and whom to ask for help.

The problem of abuse of the elderly by their adult children is becoming increasingly apparent. The church can help prevent this form of family violence by trying to minimize the stress created in families which have the responsibility of caring for an elderly person. In addition, regular visits by clergy and lay persons to shut-ins provides older persons with a dependable contact outside the family. A trained and sensitive person can detect difficulty and then assist the older person in dealing with an abusive situation before it becomes chronic.

The Church: Roadblock or Resource?

Violent families who are in any way affiliated with the church encounter it as either a roadblock or a resource. The church's silence and inability and, in some cases, unwillingness to realize the suffering caused by family violence create enormous roadblocks which prevent victims and abusers from seeking help. When the church does acknowledge the problem, its theological and pastoral approach can often be damaging, thereby creating still more confusion and guilt which immobilizes victims or abusers in their efforts to stop the violence. Sometimes the church even takes a defensive role and tries to isolate its members from assistance provided by state law. Thus it creates a roadblock for the family which might otherwise receive assistance from secular as well as religious resources. Sometimes these roadblocks force church members into a difficult choice between the church with its counter-productive advice, and the person's own survival.

The corporate church and personal faith can and should be invaluable resources for individuals facing family violence. Through prayer and personal support victims can gain the strength and courage to leave the abuse behind, and abusers can make the changes necessary in order to stop the violence. The church — the community of faith — working with and through other resources in our communities, can insure that there is adquate shelter, support and advocacy for those who need it. The church must speak out to remind people that there is nothing in the Christian message which justifies the abuse of another person.

As the Body of Christ, both the church and individual members of the congregation are called to remove the roadblocks to loving and effective care. Then our *pastoral, prophetic,* and *preventive response* can more adequately become the resources which make justice a possibility for both victims and abusers who suffer from family violence.

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1 In a recent survey conducted by the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, however, we found that parish clergy surveyed nationally averaged 13.7 persons per year coming to them with situations which constituted family violence.

2 In one survey sample of 81 abused women, only 18 percent indicated that they had called upon clergy for help; of those, half were satisfied with the clergy response and half were unsatisfied. This information comes from Ellsworth and Wagner, "Formerly Battered Women: A Follow-up Study," an unpublished manuscript, University of Washington School of Social Work, 1980.

3 It is estimated that 50 to 60 percent of couples will experience physical violence at some point in their relationship. One out of five female children and one out of 11 male children will experience sexual abuse before reaching the age of 18. At least half of this sexual abuse occurs in the family as incest. See *Family Violence: A Workshop Manual for Clergy and Other Service Providers,* Fortune and Hormann, 1980.

4 This survey was conducted by Peggy Halsey and results were published in the *Texas Methodist,* Oct. 9, 1981, Sharon Mielke, editor. The categories included in this total figure included physical and verbal abuse of a spouse, abuse of a child by the respondent, and physical and sexual abuse experienced by the respondent as a child.

5 Ibid., Ellsworth and Wagner.

6 An expansion of John Valusek's principle discussed in "People Are Not For Hitting," available at 3629 Mossman, Wichita, KS 67208.

Resources

The Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence is an interreligious, educational ministry. As a resource primarily to the religious community, it provides workshops for clergy and lay counselors as well as secular professionals on the problem of family violence. It also makes available workshop and curriculum materials for working with adults and teenagers. To receive the Center's bi-monthly newsletter, "Working Together," write to CPSDV, 4250 S. Mead St., Seattle, WA 98118 or call (206) 725-1903.

"Parenting for Peace and Justice," by Kathleen and James McGinnis with tapes, program guide and filmstrip is available from Discipleship Resources, 1908 Grand Ave., P.O. Box 189, Nashville, TN 37202. This is a fine resource for families in churches exploring positive models of parenting and family life.

Love and Negotiate: Creative Conflict In Marriage, by John Scanzoni. Using a strong biblical base, Scanzoni presents a sound alternative to the hierarchial view of marriage: an excellent resource.

Twelve Oppportunities to Help

1. Volunteer to serve on the board of your local shelter for abused women and gain the experience and knowledge that will enable you to make a significant contribution to the healing of violent families.
2. Volunteer to train as an advocate/counselor for the shelter or crisis line in your community.
3. Sign up for a trianing seminar to learn ways to effectively counsel victims and abusers.
4. Contribute to the local shelter money or material goods (clothing, furniture, supplies, etc.) through the women's fellowship in your church.
5. Speak up when someone tells a wifebeating joke. Wifebeating is not funny and you need to stand up and be counted.
6. Arrange an adult education series in your church on family violence.
7. Provide brochures in the church's narthex about community services dealing with family violence.
8. Speak up in the community in support of local services for victims and abusers.
9. Keep informed about all legislative issues at the state and national levels. Let your representives know of your concerns about family violence issues. Be especially aware of how budget cuts are affecting services in your area.

And for clergy . . .

10. Do the theological and scriptural homework necessary to better understand and respond to family violence.
11. Preach a sermon about family violence.
12. *After* you have taken a training seminar, volunteer to be on call at your local shelter when it needs a clergyperson.

Evangelical Feminism: Reflections on the State of the "Union"

Harvie M. Conn

What is a feminist? I agree with Alan Alda. It is "someone who believes that women are people."

My purpose in this essay is to review the opinions on feminism now current within the evangelical community. What do I mean by "evangelical"? To quote Robert K. Johnston, I speak of a group of over forty-five million North Americans and millions more worldwide. Two of their commitments are important for us in providing a functional definition for this paper. They affirm (1) the need for personal relationship with God through faith in the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and (2) the sole and binding authority of the Bible as God's revelation.[1]

More specifically, I focus on what some have called "conservative-evangelicals." This label, like so many other theological ones current, is purely functional. And even then it is clumsy. "Conservative" hardly seems appropriate as a designation for those in this circle who question past evangelical stances on the issue of women in the Bible. And I suspect there are many in this broad continuum who are even reluctant to use the term "evangelical" about some on the far opposite end of the spectrum from them.

However, my own purpose is not labelling so much as sampling. With a highly selective hand that has eliminated journal and magazine literature, I seek to introduce key selected writers in a growing discussion. I hope to point to some of the issues that are presently surfacing in the infra-fraternity discussion and to point to those that still need to be resolved for progress. As with most issues, the evangelical has entered the discussion as a latecomer. And ordinarily the choice of options perceived by the writers are limited to the two around which the contemporary discussion revolves - egalitarianism versus some form of hierarchism. Unfortunately the former is also designated as feminism, an equation I am not yet prepared to make. And equally unfortunately, the latter is often indistinguishable from some form of subordinationism, an equation more culturally formed than biblically, often as covert as overt.

Evangelical Options: Egalitarianism

The book that initiated evangelical participation came from within that camp in 1974 - *All We're Meant to Be* (Waco: Word Books) by Letha Scanzoni and Nancy Hardesty. Unlike so much evangelical writing, the work was not simply a negative, knee-jerk reaction against earlier feminist literature the evangelical frequently characterizes as "liberal" or "secular." Scanzoni and Hardesty, working within the evangelical orbit, startled it by commending an egalitarian position. Their call for equality in the male-female relationship, coming from within a community that assumed a hierarchical position as theoretically biblical, initiated the discussion. *Eternity* Magazine selected it as "book of the year" and it has remained very much at the center of evangelical discussions since then. Its serious attention to Scripture placed it in the evangelical camp and thus demanded evangelical attention for its new conclusions. The wide range of issues it dealt with were also striking. The width of its treatment, in fact, may be part of the reason why it continues to be a center of discussion. And why it also appears rather thin and superficial in its exegetical treatment of biblical texts. It minimizes a wide range of hermeneutical possibilities. And its resolutions of difficulties in interpretation are not always fully satisfactory. There is little admission of unanswered problems. Still, more than most evangelical literature in this field, it has come closest to understanding and interacting with the full agenda of topics raised by women's lib.

In 1975, the second major evangelical treatment of the issue appeared, this time from the pen of Paul K. Jewett. His book, *Man as Male and Female,* was much more narrowly limited in its scope and style. He paid little overt attention to the contemporary social and cultural questions. And one might even say it was more theological than exegetical. It remained more technically aimed at the theological issues involved.

Undoubtedly these were factors in making it a storm center of controversy. Many reasons could be added to the list. Like Scanzoni and Hardesty, the book rejected the traditional conservative defense of a hierarchical view of the man/woman relationship. Jewett saw such a view requiring not simply a priority of the male but even the superiority of the male. He rejected this classical statement of the evangelical as entailing a subordination of the female to the male. In its place, he argued for what he called "a model of partnership."[2]

In addition there were other reasons to anger the community in Jewett's argument. He used a modification of Karl Barth's idea of human sexuality as the key to understanding man, male and female, as image of God. In doing that, despite his strictures on Barth's argument, he angered the community in several directions. He had to challenge long-held exegetical traditions regarding the under-

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standing of the image of God in man. And he had to do it by using as a foil the views of a theologican long suspect in those circles.

Another issue, however, became even more controversial for the evangelical family in their dialogue with the book. It was not so much Jewett's defense of a modified egalitarianism but his perceived questioning of the full integrity of the Bible over the issue of women. Specifically, it was the testimony of Paul, and Jewett's exposition of it, that became the firestorm.

To Jewett, there was Paul, the ardent disciple of Jesus Christ affirming that "there is neither . . . male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28). But there was also Paul, the rabbi of impeccable erudition and chauvinism, forbidding women to teach, exhorting women to keep silence in the churches. Evangelical commitment to the Scriptures had always sought harmonization as the solution for such apparent collision points. For Jewett, "there is no satisfying way to harmonize the Pauline argument for female subordination with the large Christian vision of which the great apostle to the Gentiles was himself the primary architect."[3] Jewett's commitment to the egalitarianism of Paul the Christian clashed with his understanding of the subordinationism of Paul the rabbi. He could not accept the traditional resolutions and harmonizations. He could only see two Pauls in the New Testament.

Harold Lindsell, in his 1976 book, *The Battle for the Bible*, saw these admissions as a rejection by Jewett of inerrancy.[4] That concern was a legitimate one. I am quick to add as well that Lindsell's domino theory seems to come close to saying that egalitarians hold a low view of Scripture since they reject what to him is such a clear view of Scripture (hierarchicalism).

Jewett responded by defending these Pauline self-struggles as "an indication of the historical character of biblical revelation."[5] But Jewett's reply was too mild to defuse the agenda now enlarging around the question of feminism. Egalitarianism, in the eyes of the evangelical traditionalists, was being seen increasingly as tied both to "feminism" and to what was described as a "lower" view of Scripture.[6] Lindsell's domino theory they saw as being proved again. The growing exodus of congregations in this same decade from mainline Presbyterian churches reinforced these concerns. The issue of the ordination of women to the teaching office of the church was being seen by conservative dissidents as really the issue of biblical authority.

Since these earlier works, the egalitarian position in the evangelical movement has continued to add supporters. Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, who wrote the foreword to Jewett's title, has provided her own full work, *Women, Men, and the Bible* (1977). It is perhaps the most strident in tone of all these works. Ranging more widely than Jewett's early title, she followed him in his attitude toward Paul, but went beyond him in using the term "contradictions" to describe the Pauline material. Sensitive to the controversies stirred by Jewett's work, Mollenkott writes, "I believe that Paul's arguments for female subordination, which contradict much of his own behaviour and certain other passages he himself wrote, were also written for our instruction: to show us a basically godly human being in process, struggling with his own socialization; and to force us to use our heads in working our way through conflicting evidence."[7]

I myself do not agree with Mollenkott (or Jewett) either in the interpretation of the Pauline data or in the proposed alternatives to traditional harmonizations. And I struggle with how far one can move to the left of the evangelical continuum on biblical authority before moving off it altogether. But I continue to hear evangelical sensitivities resonating in Mollenkott's argument. In seeking an answer to what she perceives as Pauline rationalization, her resort is not to a questioning of Pauline authorship. She uses no deus-ex-machina appeal to the scissors-and-paste unity of the letters I sense in other scholarship. Her struggle is not against biblical inspiration but the face of it. The problems, she says, are not with the text but "learning to interpret accurately."[8]

Mollenkott, in all this, is not just a Jewett *redivivus*. The book, for example, interacts directly with traditionalist writers in a way that Jewett does not. And it raises issues Jewett or even Scanzoni and Hardesty did not. A full chapter for example, and perhaps a chronological first in contemporary evangelical literature, is her study of the question, "Is God masculine?".

In the years since the mid 1970s, the egalitarian movement has grown among the evangelicals. An Evangelical Women's Caucus, organized in the mid 1970s, continues to expand its membership. By 1980 it had reached approximately 600. A small bi-monthly journal, *Daughters of Sarah*, now provides a writing platform for expanding evangelical study and influence. Within this side of the continuum, studies are enlarging beyond the original, more general agenda.

Ecclesiastical concerns still retain a major interest. Jewett's 1980 work, *The Ordination of Women*, expands his argument into what, for many conservatives in the evangelical camp, will be regarded as "inevitable consequence" to his earlier title. And Jewett's method of argument will only reinforce that suspicion. He assumes the exegetical basis of his previous book and spends the bulk of his time here in demolishing what appear to him to be the major traditionalist objections to women's ordination—their appeal to the nature of women (ch. 2), the nature of the ministerial office (ch. 3), and the (masculine) nature of God (ch. 4). His positive arguments remain limited largely to the fifth chapter, women's "right to the order of ministry."

A possible tactical mistake of Jewett's may have surfaced in his "all-purpose" case for the ordination of women. He attempts a discussion of ordination that is general enough to interact with both Protestant and Catholic alike. Ramsey Michaels conjectures, "it is doubtful that his 'end run' around the ecumenical issue can succeed."[9] Given conservative sensitivities on this question, assuredly it will raise as many objections as eyebrows in that corner of the evangelical house. I personally suspect that the understanding of ordination may be more central than Jewett has made it.

In the meantime, there has appeared the beginnings of study on the biological, social and cultural influences affecting role relationships. Peter DeJong and Donald Wilson's 1979 work, *Husband and Wife: The Sexes in Scripture and Society* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House), focuses on traditional sex roles. Its strength is particularly in the valuable sociological input on these questions. Its weakest link is in its exegetical treatment of the topic.

Also growing at this end of the continuum spectrum is the discussion of the problem of sexist language in the Bible and worship. It is, to this writer, the best chapter in Jewett's 1980 volume. And it has been expanded further by a more recent title, Vernard Eller's *The Language of Canaan and the Grammar of Feminism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Comp., 1982). Eller's work is a brief, but intriguing, use of language analysis as a starting point for the examination of sexist language. The more traditional evangelical circles, by contrast, are virtually silent about this topic. Little seems to have appeared also from this latter camp regarding the influence of culture and society on role models.

Evangelical Options: Hierarchy Views

In all this, the "traditional" evangelical end of the spectrum has not been totally silent. But, with few exceptions, it has appeared as more negative in tone than the egalitarian view and decidedly more limited in its agenda. Its major writers have reacted not so much to the socio-cultural questions of western society as to the rise of egalitarianism within its own ranks. And even here there is further reductionism. Its temper is not always dictated so much by egalitarianism as it is by its concern over those positions it associates with the egalitarian position—in particular, a perceived "lower" view of Scripture. One senses much more fearfulness over compromise of biblical integrity in its defenders. That concern is a legitimate one. But too often it becomes more dominant in the literature than it should.

The end result of this narrowing of perceptions gives the "traditionalist" more the appearance of a knee-jerk reaction agent. And for those outside any Christian camp at all it reduces further any desire to listen. This is tragic at a time when evangelicals are awakening more and more to the social obligations of the gospel. And when western society frequently and incorrectly dismisses evangelical perceptions as "right wing" or "Moral Majority-ism."

A sample of how these problems arise is illustrated in the 1977 book by George Knight III, *The New Testament Teaching on the Role Relationship of Men and Women*. Knight's work is the briefest of all the books we have mentioned thus far. And that in itself works

against his own purposes. The style is extremely compact and difficult to follow. Again, his concerns are not with the social problems of male chauvinism and male/female equality. They are with "the question of admitting women to the teaching and ruling function of the church."[10] He deals briefly with the marriage relationship. But he does so only as part of his argument that this relationship, with its concept of male headship, is the basis for understanding the question of women in ecclesiastical office.

Adding to this complexity of style and narrowed agenda is Knight's strong apologetic against the works of Scanzoni and Hardesty, and of Jewett. Whether this is entirely fair is a question. None of these earlier works have the strongly narrowed area of interest Knight has limited himself to in his book. Further, each of Knight's chapters open with a section offering "biblical evidence" and then "objections answered." The sections responding to the egalitarian advocates are much lengthier than the more positive materials. Out of two central chapters (pp. 19–53), 27 pages out of a total of 34 are devoted to critical interaction. The effect is to minimize even more the positive elements of Knight's argument.

Knight recognizes that outside these family and church spheres are those areas where men and women "are mutually dependent upon one another and relate to one another outside of a particular sphere of authority."[11] At the same time, his strong advocacy of headship as a characteristic of maleness and of submission as the role of femaleness minimizes even this admission for the chauvinist-concerned reader. He cautions that "every relationship does have the overtone of one's maleness or femaleness."[12] And given his strong defense of hierarchy in the roles, this caution does not comfort the reader by way of balance.

Another feature of the discussion also hurts Knight's case. With many evangelicals, he shares a failure to verbally appreciate the cultural and social factors that also play a part in our understanding of even biblically-dimensioned role relationships. He gives no substantive acknowledgement to these dimensions anywhere I could find in the book. This absence is reinforced by his argument concerning the three key passages relating to these questions (I Timothy 2:11–15, I Corinthians 14:33b–38 and I Corinthians 11:1–16).He says the commands prohibiting women from ruling and teaching men in the church "are grounded not in time-bound, historically and culturally relative arguments that apply only to Paul's day and age, but in the way God created men and women to relate to each other as male and female."[13]

At this point, we are not saying Knight is right or wrong about this interpretation. But we are saying that the effect of this argument, combined with his strong defense of hierarchy, transforms for the hearer the argument for hierarchy into an argument for subordinationism. And this whether Knight intends it or not. His assault on any form of cultural relativism will be understood as a simplism that leads to subordinationism.

A much fuller and more helpful presentation of the traditional viewpoint of hierarchy is found in Susan Foh's *Women and the Word of God* (1980). She too dialogues constantly with evangelical egalitarians. But it is much more subdued and gracious, stylistically more controlled than that of Knight. Her writing style is rather wooden but far less antagonistic than Knight's. She too is concerned with egalitarian attitudes towards the Scripture. In fact, the opening chapter of her work is entitled, "Can We Believe the Bible?" Unfortunately, her work shows no awareness of the centrist postures of the Boldreys and of Gundry.

Her work benefits also from a more comprehensive search than Knight. There are useful discussions on singlehood, on God as male and female, on the metaphysics of sex. And, in addition, there are the expected treatments of headship, submission and women's ordination to ministry.

There is beyond all this a refreshing sensitivity to the exploitation of women in culture. And this is rather unique in traditionalist literature. Repeatedly her illustrations warn against the way in which evangelical male traditionalists can too easily capitulate to this chauvinist danger. She warns of a glib prooftexting of male boorishness or a subtle shifting of the responsibility of the husband to love his wife from him to her.[14] She does not hesitate to criticize fellow traditionalists like Wayne Mack,[15] and to support egalitarians like Scanzoni and Hardesty in several areas.[16] She is much quicker to distinguish between biblical demands for role-playing and cultural stereotypes than Knight seems to do.

At the same time, Foh's work is not ultimately directed by her concerns over cultural chauvinism. Her obvious awareness of the realities is there. But her argument and her solid exegetical work are not directed to that topic. She has written an "in-house" reaction to other evangelical writers. The subtitle of her book tells it: "A Response to Biblical Feminism" (her term for evangelical egalitarians). It is here she cannot match the scope of Scanzoni and Hardesty's work. She has not really seen the cultural woods for the egalitarian trees.

The end result of this narrowing of perceptions gives the "traditionalist" more the appearance of a knee-jerk reaction agent.

Why? Is it related to her argument over "cultural relativism" early on in the book? She argues that a recognition of cultural conditionedness to parts of the Bible makes the Bible therefore non-authoritative.[17] "The commandments to women rest on unchanging principles."[18] Her legitimate concern is undoubtedly over those, who in the name of cultural conditionedness, discredit the integrity of the Bible. And these views she obviously associates with the likes of Jewett, Mollenkott and others. But, at the same time, her rather simplistic response can overcompensate.

By far, the fairest and best of the hierarchical statements is that made by James B. Hurley in *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective* (1981). Hurley makes no sustained effort to paint the twentieth century discussions on women as the introductory context for his work. And this may be the book's largest problem to me. But it is clearly the setting which he seeks to address in the book. The major intent of the book is "to present a careful examination of the relevant biblical texts within the context of their day and to discuss their relevance to the present."[19]

His focus is heavily on exegesis, and not just limited to New Testament data. He proceeds chronologically through the Bible, with chapters on women in Israelite culture, women in the ministry and teaching of Jesus, women in the life of the apostolic church and basic attitudes reflected in the apostolic teaching.

A distinctive of his work, and one seldom used by the traditionalists, is his attention to the cultural settings of the Bible. How were women viewed in the ancient near east, the background to the Old Testament? How were women treated by Judaism and the Graeco-Roman world of the first century? This background goes a long way to unfolding the sharp break that biblical attitudes displayed in its host cultures.

In all this Hurley is less strident and apologetic in his tone. Though he is well aware of critical opinion on key texts, he deliberately refrains from naming names and devouring opponents' houses. Alternative choices are fairly laid out and answered. But his discussions do not get in the way of positive exposition of the text as they do in Knight's work. Hurley's volume will likely be *the* book for understanding the hierarchical position.

Finally, in the concluding ninth chapter, he seeks to draw guidelines for the application of his biblical study to the present day. He raises a large number of case studies and deals with each, using

the materials he has provided in previous chapters. In terms of his stated purpose, this is a rather skimpy offering in the name of application and relevance. And, to be sure, it is all very carefully defined by his understanding of submission to male authority. But it is worthwhile. And it is significant that he tries it.

Again, however, in common with so many of the traditionalist writers, Hurley's orientation is to ecclesiastical questions. Can a woman address a local congregation with the approval of the elders? Can she teach a Sunday school morning adult Bible class? There are other questions equally or more important to our culture that demand answers. What of culturally determined "maternal" roles in the home? What of sexual harassment on the job, salary inequities in society? How far does one use the Bible in determining marriage roles, and how far may one accede to cultural patterns? How does a Christian vote on the ERA? On the drafting of women? On legal action against discrimination because of "sexual preference" (a euphemism for homosexuality)? This agenda is not treated in the Hurley book.

I would have some difficulty describing Knight's book as "feminist". Most feminists would also, I suspect. But Hurley comes closer to hearing the pain. He is open enough to the agonies to be open to a larger agenda. Though still a traditionalist, he is a traditionalist who is sensitive to and truly listens to feminist concerns and arguments. That, to me, places him very close to the feminist camp, if not in it.

Part II, "Where Do We Go From Here?", will appear in the next TSF Bulletin.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Personal Renewal: Reflections on "Brokenness"

by Roberta Hestenes

The biblical promise and possibility of personal spiritual renewal is broader than any simple definition. In the Old Testament, "renewal" seems to carry a meaning of restoration and repair—putting right that which has been broken or disrupted (I Samuel 11:14; I Chronicles 15:8; Psalm 51:10, 104:30; Lam. 5:21). Renewal of strength is seen as drawn from waiting upon the Lord (Isaiah 40:31; 41:1), watching and listening in expectant anticipation for the powerful action of the creative and energizing Lord of the nations.

In the New Testament, renewal is used to speak both of the initial Christian experience of the working of God—"regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5)—and of the subsequent work where daily the Christian experiences the transforming power of God (2 Cor. 4:16; Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:23; Romans 12:1-2). Renewal is both that which is given to us and accomplished in us by God and a reality we seek and a process to which we give ourselves.

In this paper I will focus on one of the ingredients of personal renewal—a "broken and contrite heart". In addition, I will explore a few of the dangers along the way for even the experienced traveler. Three key texts form the center of my exploration:

> *Psalm 51*: especially verses 10-12 and 17 : "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. . . . The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise."
>
> *Matthew 5:6:* "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."
>
> *James 4:6* (quoting Psalm 138 and Proverbs 3): "'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.' Submit yourselves therefore to God."

I want to center on the theme of "brokenness" as an ingredient in renewal, drawing on David's statement, "A broken and contrite spirit you will not despise." It may seem strange to speak of brokenness to contemporary seminarians and academicians who live in an age constantly stressing self-actualization and self-fulfillment. Here are a group of people, many of whom are eager, committed, bright and energetic—successful according to many definitions of the word. Yet David also knew something of striving and success. It was in the middle of that success that the occasion for this psalm arises. It comes out of a devastating experience in David's life. It had begun with adultery and deception, had moved to trickery and murder, had resulted in confrontation and exposure, and the death of a child. The hidden sin was known and David was devastated.

In this response of David's there are some lessons for us:

1) The reality of temptation for even the most spiritual of persons in the most spiritual of places. David lives in the holy city, the resting place of the ark. Spiritual history and spiritual status provide no safe security. They are not impermeable barriers to temptation and sin. David loved God, but he sinned.

2) The necessity of the community of God's people willing to "speak the truth in love" to help us face ourselves and to know the holiness and the love of God. The dangers of isolation and personal lack of accountability in the midst of large numbers of people can only be overcome through the maintenance of a few significant relationships where the truth, even if unwelcomed, can be said and heard.

3) The reminder that the work we do for God and our study about God is no substitute for the holy life lived in vital relationship with God. It is important not to coast on our spiritual history, but to maintain a fresh, ongoing personal fellowship with God.

4) The forgiving and renewing mercy of God available at the deepest points of our need. This renewal comes in prayer, waiting for and seeking God.

In the face of exposed sin, David confessed and repented. He knew the value of a heart humbled before God. In our day which emphasizes self-confidence, self-assertion and self-fulfillment, we need to learn again the lessons of brokenness—of humility and gentleness before God and each other. This "brokenness" speaks not of self-worthlessness nor a malformed personality, nor deep clinical depression. It points toward a deeper reality, the response to a prompting of the Spirit in certain circumstances of need, demand, or spiritual yearning and hunger. Brokenness is a yielded heart open before God, a heart emptied of pride and self claims, of all arrogance, knowing our sin, our self-deception, our frailty, weakness and inadequacy. We discover ourselves again to be hungry and thirsty, poor and needy when we had thought ourselves full and needing nothing. Along with this awareness comes a rediscovery of God's love, mercy and forgiveness—His affirmation of us, care for us, and claim upon us.

Spiritual brokenness can come in different ways:

1) A vision of God. Isaiah sees the Lord "high and lifted up" and sees his own uncleanness and the uncleanness of the people of God. "Woe is me," he exclaims. Receiving the cleansing of God, he is able to hear and respond to the call of God upon his life—"Here I am; send me." But his ministry follows his heightened awareness of the holiness of God and his own sin.

2) A desire to be blessed. Jacob wrestled with God—"I will not let you go unless you bless me"—and emerges wounded and blessed to become Israel, the prince of God. In his encounter with God, he must acknowledge his identity as Jacob the deceiver before receiving the new name and promise.

3) An awareness of weakness, failure or sin, as we see in David in Psalm 51.

4) An encounter with Christ. Saul on the Damascus Road: "Saul, Saul why do you persecute me? It hurts you to kick against the

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goads." The proud Pharisee is led blind and defenseless into the city he had planned to enter as an avenging power. Later in seeking to have his "thorn in the flesh" removed, he is taught again by Jesus, "My strength is made perfect in weakness. My grace is sufficient for you."

5) The providential circumstances beyond my control—where we sense no alternatives, feel boxed in, cornered, no way to go, no where to go—as Job did when he lost all only to recover after a vision of God.

God wants to teach us the lessons of brokenness, not that He wants us to be weak, but so that we may know our weakness before we lean too hard on ourselves, depend on ourselves, or take an exalted view of self instead of the sober assessment required. God wants us to discover continually the true source of our strength—His Spirit and His power. Brokenness is not the opposite of wholeness; it is the continuing precondition for it. It is related to being "tender-hearted" (Eph. 4:32) and "gentleness," one of the fruits of the Spirit. It is part of the movement from pride to humility.

Sometimes we become aware of our own complicity in our brokenness. Sometimes we feel God is, even unjustly, doing this to us (as Job complained in chapter 17). Yet whether through brokenness or by other paths, we seek an openness to all that God offers. Renewal is a gateway to new possibilities, new beginnings.

The realities and dangers that can harden or soften us as we seek an awareness of the reality of God are diverse. We are hardened instead of softened when we:

1) Make excuses for our sin or for our shallowness. "I couldn't help it. I had no choice." We are softened when we confess and receive the faithful forgiveness of God (I John 1:9).

2) Blame someone else; refusing to take our share of responsibility. "They" are the problem.

3) Defend our actions as right or the only thing we could have done under the circumstances when in our hidden selves, a tremor warns us that all is or was not as we put it forth.

4) Ignore the tender shoots, the hidden promptings of the Spirit, to confess, make right, risk honesty or try love. This ignoring of the prompting of the Spirit can lead to hardness, brittleness, callousness, or insensitivity. It may cause us to miss the *Kairos*, the special time of God's acting. It is like those who are deaf in the higher ranges of sound. We simply lose the discernment to hear the Spirit unless He yells to us in the middle range. Can we hear the whisperings of the Spirit?

5) Fill our lives with activity, but are left empty of God.

Brokenness is only one part of the wholeness of Christian experience with its joy, peace, and power in the Holy Spirit. Awareness of it may be fleeting, but it is a gracious gift from God. For a moment our pride is shattered. We know ourselves and amazingly discover that the real selves we are, these very selves are *loved*, empowered, renewed. From that discovery and rediscovery flows healing, wholeness, and transforming newness.

In the midst of our comings and goings and our planning and programs, there are times, sometimes in solitude and sometimes in community, when we come to know our emptiness that we might be made full.

Remember that we are not loved for our success or our spirituality. All is of grace. We follow a Savior who one night in the Upper Room told us and the next day showed us that He was broken for us. Broken for us: an undeserved death in our place that we might be made whole in Him. This is our journey of renewal. It begins and continues in such great love. Broken before Him, we are continually made new and whole in Him.

BOOK REVIEWS

Toward Old Testament Ethics
By Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. (Zondervan, 1983, 345 pp., $12.95) Reviewed by Frank Ames, Acting Dean, Western Bible College Denver, CO.

In 1970, Bernard S. Childs concluded that "there is no outstanding modern work written in English that even attempts to deal adequately with the biblical material as it relates to ethics. . . ." Now there is. Kaiser's *Toward Old Testament Ethics*, published under the new Academie Books imprint of Zondervan, is a noteworthy attempt to sift the primary data and to suggest a comprehensive approach to the ethics of the Old Testament.

Kaiser proposes an eclectic approach to the task. He argues that the Old Testament must be taken on its own terms and in its final form. The theologian must inductively identify and exegete the summarizing ethical texts, then blend the results using synchronic, diachronic, and central theme techniques. To be complete, questions about the moral difficulties and continuing application of the Old Testament must be answered. A less comprehensive approach, argues Kaiser, would neither embrace the whole of the Old Testament nor meet the needs of those turning to a volume on Old Testament ethics.

The five divisions of the book reflect the major elements of his approach: I. "Definition and Method" (a hermeneutical excursus), II. "Summarizing Moral Texts in Old Testament Ethics" (an exegetical study of central texts), III. "Content of Old Testament Ethics" (asynchronic theology developed around a central theme), IV. "Moral Difficulties in the Old Testament" (an apologetic treatment of problem texts), and V. "Old Testament Ethics and New Testament Applications" (an argument for the continuing application of Old Testament morality).

Kaiser points out that Old Testament morality, or "the manner of life that the older covenant prescribes and approves," is rooted in the character, authority, and creation ordinances of God. This observation strengthens his argument for unity and consistency in Old Testament ethics. It also argues for a continuing applicability. Kaiser writes, "Laws based on the character and nature of God we call moral laws. Their permanence is set by the immutability or unchangeableness of the character of God. Similar insights are scattered throughout the first section of the book to support Kaiser's approach and to stimulate the reader's thinking.

In the second section, Kaiser examines the programmatic moral texts of the Old Testament: the Decalogue (Exodus 20:22–23:33), the Law of Holiness (Leviticus 18–20), and the laws of Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 12–25). Priority is given to the Decalogue. In this section Kaiser is at his best. One finds insightful exegesis, irenic argument, and informed commentary. His analysis of the Laws of Deuteronomy, for example, is especially helpful. He shows, following the thesis of Stephen Kaufman, that the outline of Deuteronomy 12–25 follows the structure of the Decalogue.

Kaiser, in the third section of his book, presents the content of Old Testament ethics. He argues that holiness is the central theme, then he incorporates it in a synchronic theology outlined like the Decalogue. He discusses holiness in connection with worship, family and society, the sanctity of life, marriage and sexuality, wealth and possessions, the discovery and use of truth, and intentions and motives.

In section four, Kaiser responds to the charge that the ethics of the Old Testament are morally offensive. He presents reasonable answers for those hard questions about the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, the use of deception, the "ban," slavery, sexism, and imprecation.

A very brief, and somewhat disappointing, defense of the continuing authority and applicability of the moral law of the Old Testament concludes the book. Here his exegesis and argument will be challenged especially by dispensational theologians. A longer and more detailed presentation would have been helpful.

Regardless of weaknesses in Kaiser's final chapter, this reviewer recommends the book for those studying the Bible and ethics.

The New Testament and Homosexuality
by Robin Scroggs (Fortress Press, 1983, 160 pp., $14.95). Reviewed by Robert Wall, Associate Professor of Biblical Studies and Biblical Ethics, Seattle Pacific University.

The concerns Robin Scroggs raises about the current debate in the church over homosexuality are important ones. While scriptural texts are invoked as a primary authorization for whatever opinion is being argued, the church - including its scholars - have paid precious little attention to the *hermeneutical* issues which are at stake in this discussion and others like it. What *is* the proper use of the Bible in moral discourse? More specifically, what are the biblical authors really up against when they oppose homosexuality? And what relevancy does this historical reconstruction have for the contemporary debate?

The task Professor Scroggs has set for himself is to convince the reader that the prevailing attitudes about homosexuality in the Greco-Roman world shape the NT prohibitions against homosexuality, and this conclusion in turn should control how the church uses these texts in its moral judgments about homosexuality. Thus, he casts his argument with three interrelated discussions: 1) He first describes the secular and sacred attitudes about male homosexuality in the Greco-Roman world; 2) assuming these attitudes shaped the NT writers, he exegetes the Pauline texts which prohibit homosexuality (1 Cor 6:9–10; Rom 1:26–27; he does not consider the 1 Tim 1:9–10 vice-list Pauline); and 3) he finally assesses the value of his exegetical conclusions for today's debate. Included in his work are three appendant discussions of questions which the interlocutor might raise against his thesis.

The thesis of his entire work is to show that the *only* model of male homosexuality known to the Greco-Roman culture and so to Paul and his churches was *pederasty*. While some platonic pederastic relationships were known in the academy or military, most were between young slaves or call-boys and adults who abused and dehumanized them. The outrage over such practices within the secular world was reflected in the religious traditions passed on to Paul and by Paul to his audiences. Indeed, references which prohibited adult homosexuality in The Torah were reinterpreted by the rabbis to condemn the "gentile vice" of pederasty; the vice-lists and arguments which included a condemnation of homosexuality were used rather uncritically by Paul to make theological rather than moral points.

Thus, Scroggs concludes that the NT does not address the sort of homosexuality we find today in our churches (i.e. adult and mutually caring). *"Biblical judgments against homosexuality are not relevant to today's debate . . . not because the Bible is not authoritative,* but simply because it does not address the issues involved" (p. 127, his italics). In any case, the infrequency and disinterest in the issue reflected by the biblical citations corrects the "homophobia" which Scroggs finds in certain segments of today's church.

I am not convinced that Scroggs has made his case. While the book is a commendable piece of historical research, and no doubt clarifies the *Sitz im Leben* behind the NT prohibitions, Scroggs exhibits, in my view, a disconcerting tendency of drawing firm conclusions from, at best, selected evidence. Further, he treats contested, yet crucial issues far too casually. For example, while he acknowledges the difficult nature of those discussions about Paul's formative religious tradition (whether Hellenistic or Palestinian Judaism), he finally situated Paul in line with the Hellenistic midrashim (which understood the prohibitions in Torah as against pederasty) and then exegetes the Pauline texts accordingly. Had he decided, as most scholars now would, to situate Paul in line with Palestinian Judaism (which understood Torah more literally and so condemned *adult* homosexuality), he could not have concluded so easily that Paul had pederasty in mind when prohibiting homosexuality.

I am most troubled, however, by Scroggs' hermeneutical moves. Two criticisms must suffice. First, he severely limits the role the Bible can play in contemporary moral discourse. For instance, he discounts the Hebrew Scriptures as unimportant for Christian debate; he locates ultimate meaning of the biblical text in the past rather than for the present; and he gives too much value to those secular forces which determined the biblical view of things moral and immoral.

Second, with Scroggs, I too want to admit that deciding about homosexuality is a complex issue involving norms drawn from many sources; however, the focus of his book is on the usefulness of the Bible as one authorized source for making the church's moral judgments. In my view, Scroggs erodes the Bible's role as the church's inspired canon—its *ongoing* rule of faith and practice. In fact, against Scroggs, the church continues to use these words of Paul because they assume that they are used by God's Spirit in conveying to it a fresh understanding of his Word and will. No part of the Bible should be discounted; that some scholars, conservative and liberal, do so shows the bankruptcy of their view of the sacred text. Now, to a possibility. . .

Scroggs persuasively argues that male homosexuality within the Greco-Roman culture was a natural manifestation of that culture's dominant male reality. Might it be suggested, based upon Scroggs' analysis, that to the extent a society is determined by a male mythology, homosexuality will result as its concrete manifestation? Is not such a social reality against the biblical view of creation which envisages the *equality* between females and males? Does not Paul utilize a Jewish argument in Romans 1:18–32 to suggest that idolatry, homosexuality and social vices are all manifestations of a gentile world which stands against God's *creation*? Indeed, it *is* a theological point, but one which condemns certain practices as integral to it.

It may be true that homosexual relationships found within the church today are not at all analagous to those in the Greco-Roman world; however, like that world, homosexuality today continues to reflect a social reality (male dominance in the West) that is against creation's ideal of sexual equality. It occurs to me that even lesbianism might be understood as a radical form of feminist protest against a male world. Thus, the Pauline texts, especially Romans 1, can be used by the church to judge in a fallen world an appetite which is homosexual rather than an equality between male and female characteristic of the new creation.

The Power of the Poor in History
by Gustavo Gutierrez (Orbis, 1983, 240 pp., $10.95). Reviewed by Todd Speidell, Ph.D. student in systematic theology, Fuller Theological Seminary.

Ten years after the 1973 English publication of Gutierrez' pioneer work, *A Theology of Liberation,* we have a collection of essays which span the author's theological development from 1969 to 1983. The title indicates the common theme of the book and the distinctive method of liberation theology: *The Power of the Poor in History.* This is no academic theology written as an appendage to two millenia of Christian theology—composed "from above"—but it is a rereading of history enacted "from below."

Gutierrez first surveys the biblical sources of liberation theology by rereading Scripture from "the underside of history." God's revelation in history as the liberation of the poor, recorded in Scripture as the mighty events from Exodus to Christ, demonstrates the historical nature of revelation and God's preferential (though nonexclusive) option for the poor. A *re-reading* of Scripture indicates a *remaking* of history.

Gutierrez next discusses the liberating power of the gospel for the poor, who themselves can achieve liberation, proclaim the gospel, and theologize from the situation of oppression. God's "preferential option for the poor," however, makes the poor the bearers of salvation for all humanity. The church, then, should express a clear option in concrete solidarity with the poor and their liberating praxis, for salvation includes (without being reduced to) the economic, social, and political well-being of humanity and society.

Gutierrez finally provides a critique of the salient individualism of modern theology (with some exceptions; for example, Bonhoeffer and Barth). Liberation theology differs from the dominant ideologies, whether conservative or progressive, by emphasizing the lived faith of the poor in history. The poor do not offer academic criticisms of modern theology, but question first of all the socioeconomic order.

The hermeneutical implications of liberation theology are clear: biblical and theological interpretation are contextual and not timeless. Gutierrez does not permit the "neutrality" of "scientific" exegesis, but points out the inevitable sociological influence on one's reading of Scripture and doing theology. One can agree that hermeneutics is not context-independent—so that third world peoples will interpret God's Word from the situation of oppression, just as first world interpreters have a marked bourgeois bias—but it is a mistake to raise context-dependency to a methodological axiom. The point is neither to be totally context-independent, nor simply context-reflexive, but to reflect critically on contemporary context in the light of the Word of God. God's Word is a critical norm of solidarity, judgment, and hope in every human situation and cannot be reduced to a "preference," method, or program, but is the free and concrete commitment of God to humans in history. The Word of God acts among and speaks to the poor and oppressed, for example, without being exhausted or defined by the situation of poverty and oppression.

The practical implications of liberation theology are equally clear: salvation history is salvation *in* history, and the liberation of the poor will be effected by the power of the poor. Gutierrez avoids the reductionistic options on both sides: salvation as either structural *or* spiritual, political *or* personal, for one should not "baptize the revolution" nor "disincarnate the gospel." Gutierrez calls the church to concrete commitment and active involvement with the popular, historical movements of the poor in history. Banners for the "new humanity" and visions of a "classless society," however, often replace concrete descriptions of the situation of oppression in Latin America and realistic projects of liberation—not asceptic descriptions, but with the active commitment and critical reflection of the church; not impartial proposals, but with the passionate, pastoral, and prophetic praxis of the gospel.

The "power of the poor in history" challenges our way of interpreting the Word of God and calls us to solidarity with the historical praxis of the poor. Gutierrez' work is important as a recent and overview statement of the theology being done "from the underside of history" in Latin America.

Ethics: Approaching Moral Decisions
by Arthur F. Holmes, (InterVarsity Press, 1984. 132 pp., $4.95.) Reviewed by Charles Van Patten, Ph.D. student in philosophy, University of Notre Dame.

Ethics is divided into three sections. The first part discusses nontheological options for ethics. Holmes's exposition of the basic tenets of relativism, emotivism, egoism and utilitarianism is fair and accurate with piercing criticisms—philosophical *and* Christian—which show these theories to be inadequate. For example, since utilitarianism can ignore justice when unjust means result in a good end greater than the unjust means employed, Holmes argues that this teleological theory is inadequate and must be augmented by a deontological theory.

That theory is developed in the second part of *Ethics*. Deontological alternatives are briefly critiqued and dismissed in favor of the Christian and biblical natural law theory, viz. the Divine Command Theory. Holmes argues that only the moral being and will of God offers a true and sufficient metaphysical foundation for moral rules and principles (which determines the actual "ought" in particular moral cases and situations). Because the nature of God is loaded with moral significance, love, justice, goodness and law, all follow from this moral foundation.

The third part of *Ethics* attempts to apply the above developed moral foundation to the contemporary issues of human rights, criminal punishment, the legislation of morality (this chapter is the most relevant for social ethics), and sex and marriage. There are two methodological and analytic deficiencies that have generally characterized modern moral philosophy, and it is important to point them out to contextualize the discussion of the third part of this book.

First, modern moral philosophy has paid al-

most no attention to a theme in ethics that runs throughout classical philosophy, medieval philosophy and the Bible, namely that ethics are not reducible to outward actions. The prohibitions against coveting (Ex. 20:17), anger (Matt. 5:28) and lust (Matt. 5:22), are unanalyzable to the modern moral philosophers whose theories are capable of categorizing the rightness and wrongness of outward acts only. Second, modern moral philosophy offers alternative theories for the foundation of *personal* ethics. Personal ethics are obviously very important, but this methodological approach is incapable of developing an equally important social ethic. A social ethic must inform individuals and society of their moral obligations and responsibilities in respect to social nuances and complexities of power, economic injustice, war, etc. To this end a social ethic must also describe and define the social structures which often results in the individual being directly unresponsible - but indirectly responsible -for the structures' social injustice. Yet how is the mere foundation for personal ethics to do the work of morally informing on these levels?

It is within this vacuum that modern moral philosophers must write, Christian or not, and Holmes has clearly avoided the first deficiency by pointing out that "motives as well as actions are morally significant" (p. 115). In this vein, Holmes discusses the importance of a person's inner will, character and dispositional state, along with the outward complement of acting rightly. The fact that Holmes makes this connection not only corrects a trend in modern moral philosophy, but also reveals sensitivity to the moral realities of the intending and acting moral agent.

If this book has a weakness, it would be that the second deficiency of moral philosophy is not entirely corrected by Holmes's application of his theory to moral and social issues. For example, Holmes's Christian moral foundation understands the complementary roles that love and justice must play when the moral agent must decide how he or she ought to act. But if love and justice are to do their work effectively on the societal level in the context of the world's present structural injustice, the *partial* favoring of entire disenfranchised and marginal groups may be called for. The individual and personal approach to morality can not even begin to affect a just restructuring alone. Furthermore, since groups can exploit other groups regardless of how loving and just individual moral agents within the exploiting group might act, a foundation for morality that wishes to change society toward morality and justice—and not only inform what "the right thing to do" is—must include sufficient social categories and methodology for the establishment of a Christian social ethic along with a personal one.

I recommend this book highly. *Ethics* is helpful as an introduction to some of the important ethical theories and categories of contemporary and traditional moral philosophy. The book will be especially helpful to anyone who wants a concisely stated yet complete theoethical foundation for a Christian moral philosophy and to anyone who wishes to apply such a foundation as a methodology for determining what one ought to do regarding current moral issues and situations. The book's clear and concise writing style sacrifices neither the penetrating analysis of Holmes's exhaustive knowledge of moral philosophy nor the development of the appropriate Christian alternative to the discipline. This makes the book for beginner and expert alike.

God's Truth: A Scientist Shows Why It Makes Sense to Believe the Bible
by Alan Hayward (Thomas Nelson, 1983, 331 pp. $ 6.95) Reviewed by Richard H. Bube, Department of Materials Science and Engineering, Stanford University.

This is a revised edition of a book originally published in England in 1973. The author, Dr. Alan Hayward, is research and development adviser with Redwood International Ltd., in England, up to 1977 principal scientific officer in a government research laboratory, and the author of *God Is*. In the opening chapter the author tells us that it is his purpose to "open up the Bible," and that he does this not "from the point of view of a scientist, but as a student of the Bible." He intends the book for "ordinary men and women" and promises to stick to "simple English." In this he is very successful and the book should be readily understandable to general readers.

The book is divided into three parts. In Part I, Hayward presents positive arguments for believing that the Bible is the Word of God in eleven chapters. Part II counters objections raised against the bible, and consists of fourteen chapters. Part III consists of a brief two chapters providing encouragement and guidelines for Bible study. The book concludes with Notes and References, and an Index.

Hayward's case for the Bible as God's Word rests upon discussions of fulfilled prophecy, the uniqueness of Jesus, the evidence of the Resurrection, the relevance of the Old Testament law for continuing concerns in health, conservation and family life, and evidences of internal harmony and consistency. Chapter 6 entitled, "Who Could Have Invented Jesus?" is particularly effective in supporting the argument that "the Jesus of whom we read in the Gospels was, at the time the Gospels were written, uninventable." In general, Part I presents a strong case for the unique power and character of the Bible. The reader may wonder at a few statements. The fulfillment of Daniel 2:44 is ascribed to the future rather than to the establishment of the kingdom with the coming of Jesus 2000 years ago. Since the Jews are said to have accepted many Old Testament passages as being Messianic in character, Hayward argues that "we are bound to take the Jews' word for it." Hayward advances two somewhat curious arguments in support of biblical harmony: "the failure of the firstborns," or the Old Testament record that "Not one acknowledged firstborn is ever a success in God's sight" until God's own First-Born appears; "the story of sweat," in which it is pointed out that the three mentions of sweat in the Bible (Gen. 3:19, Luke 22:44, Ezek. 44:18) summarize the whole Christian Gospel. He also argues that Jesus "had an uncanny knowledge of the twentieth century" (see also Chapter 5).

The thrust of the argument in Part II often tends to become more problematical. Underlying any specific statements are two approaches that are underlined repeatedly. The first of these is "Don't let the experts pull the wool over your eyes," which, although a timely warning, tends easily to become a choice for obscurantism rather than for thorough understanding. On a somewhat populist note, Hayward tells the reader, "like a civil servant, you are well able to consider the evidence and decide for yourself." This might or might not be true, but it certainly would require a careful assessment of all of the evidence. Because it is by nature "scholarly," however, much of the evidence with which a Christian apologist needs to deal is not given to us by Hayward. Instead one often feels the impact of a second approach: argument by ridicule. Those who object to the Bible as the Word of God tend to be countered as much by poking fun at them as by substantive comments. At the root of Hayward's approach is the position,

> Being a scientist might help you to spot the mistakes of other scientists when they condemn the Bible, but scientific knowledge cannot help us to decide whether the Bible is a message from God. Studying the Bible for ourselves is the only way we can do that. And we can study the Bible without knowing any science, or even any of the more useful subjects like Hebrew and Greek and ancient history. The only essential equipment is a thoughtful, inquiring mind. (p. 15)

Hayward's position becomes most clearly defined in Chapter 14, appropriately titled, "All or Nothing." Here he argues that if Adam was not a literal historical man, then how can we be sure that Jesus was a literal historical man? There can be "only one right answer for the Christian." "The whole Bible stands or falls together." This leads Hayward to a simplistic dichotomy:

> It stands to reason that there are only two possibilities. Either the Bible's astonishing claim is true - or the book is the biggest confidence trick in history!. . . Many leaders of religion refuse to accept that these are the only alternatives. They adopt a third point of view. They say that the Bible is sort-of-true and sort-of-false. Of course, they don't put it like that. They express their views in language that is almost impossible for the man in the street to understand. (p. 141, 142)

For Hayward this means that "If the Bible is what it claims to be, its sixty-six books must have been written by the men named as their authors." Or again, "If the Book of Isaiah did not even contain the words of Isaiah, you could hardly expect it to contain the words of God." What is the matter with people who would hold a contrary view? "Brilliant men are often lacking in plain common sense." In a section entitled "Why They Do It," Hayward attributes such foolish thoughts to a desire to conform, the fear of seeming ridiculous to their peers, too much respect for the "experts," and too professional a view of the Scriptures. Now all of these motives may or may not apply in particular cases, but are there no authentic reasons why devout Christian scholars would deviate from Hayward's rather fundamentalistic stance? Is there something unexpectedly revealing in Hayward's words,

> There are a few scholars who use the methods of higher criticism in a sensible way and remain staunch Bible-believers. But for simplicity's sake I shall disregard their existence. (p. 154)

Although it is certainly true that the Bible's message of salvation by grace through faith is simple enough for the most naive minds to grasp for their eternal redemption, it is not true that the Bible's message comes to us without interpretation on our part. Yet this is what Hayward seems to argue in several places.

> A large part of the Bible is perfectly straightforward, needing no more interpretation than any other non-fiction book. . . Interpreting it is no great problem, if only - and this is a big "if" - we manage to read it with a humble, seeking mind. Much of it interprets itself for us. (p. 195, 196)

One thing is certainly true: just as in science no fact interprets itself for us but must be given an interpretation by us, so no written material of any kind interprets itself for us. Interpretation of the Bible is the work of the Holy Spirit using all the means at His disposal, and working in and through the Body of Christ.

Hayward does deal successfully with many of the objections raised against the Bible, and these

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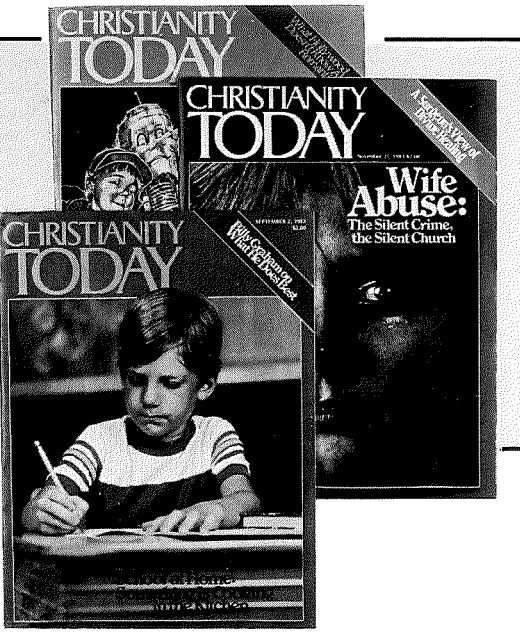

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chapters in Part II provide a helpful summary for the Christian in dealing with others who raise such objections. In dealing with the traditional question, "Is the Bible Scientific?" in Chapter 21, he points out the well-founded distinction between "how" answers provided by science and "why" answers provided by the Bible, and indicates how each approach provides us with inputs not available from the other. He argues strongly for the acceptance of the scientific evidence for the age of the earth and against Flood Geology, and states that "Genesis was never intended to teach science." In spite of this, however, Hayward sees Genesis 1 as "a broad picture of the entire geological history of the earth - and a remarkably accurate one at that." In attempting to harmonize the scientific record with the days of Genesis 1, Hayward is enthusiastic about accepting the theory that the days of Genesis 1 were actually the days on which God revealed the story of creation "to the angels or to one of His inspired historians."

With this orientation, it is not surprising that Hayward enters into some length to reject the theory of biological evolution. He so seriously prejudices the discussion at the very beginning by choosing to use the word "evolution" to mean "evolution by natural processes alone . . . to describe the belief that God played no active part in the development of life on earth," that any objective discussion for the Christian becomes impossible. He opposes the growing Christian awareness that what we call "scientific chance" may indeed be our description of "God's Providence." What *must* be a most unfortunate misprint occurs in the midst of this discussion, reading, "It is not necessary to accept the facts of science." (p. 257) Hayward makes another serious mistake when he interprets "the principle of uniformitarianism" to mean "an assumption that God does not exist, or at least that He has left the world alone." At any rate, Hayward is certain that "by a special creative act God made the first man and woman."

In the chapter on "The Problem of Suffering," Hayward poses the dilemma in a most acute way, but does not seem to recognize its existence. Having told us that suffering came into the world because of Adam's sin, "so we too must suffer, and we too must die," he then tells us three pages later (having in the meanwhile interpreted "eternal death" to mean cessation of existence, not eternal punishment) that "the world would be worse off, not better off, if there were no suffering in it." Or again, "Strong characters can only be developed in a world where suffering is always present." The reader cannot help but wonder what would have been the consequences if Adam had not sinned!

I've been critical of many of Hayward's simplifications. I must for completeness also cite an aphorism that struck me as being appealing: "Jellyfish always go along with the tide; it takes a fish with a backbone to swim against it."

There is much in this book that will prove helpful to the discriminating Christian reader. One must be aware, however, that Hayward is providing a one-sided perspective, and that his dogmatic assurance of having the one simple answer may not stand up under inspection in the real world. It is unfortunate that some of his treatment of the interaction of science with the Bible may be totally misleading for the layperson.

(This review was initially prepared for the *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation*)

Faith, Feminism & the Christ
by Patricia Wilson-Kastner (Fortress Press, 1983, 147 pp, $8.95). Reviewed by Frances F. Hiebert, Director for Women's Concerns, Fuller Theological Seminary.

Finding feminist literature with a theological basis acceptable to evangelicals often seems like looking for a needle in a haystack. This book will be very helpful to those who feel that ideology must submit to theology rather than take precedence over it. Not only is theology given precedence, there is much here that would support an evangelical feminist theology. The author presents a Christological discussion that is both orthodox and supportive of feminist concerns. What is gratifying to an evangelical feminist is that she does not find it necessary to shred Scripture or discard great chunks of orthodox Christian tradition in the process.

In the first chapters of the book, the author provides a very helpful description of the radical feminist critique in which Christianity and Judaism are seen as hopelessly patriarchal. At the heart of the problem stands Jesus Christ, a male savior. She then sets out to respond to this critique by raising issues in the areas of the new epistemology, the nature of God, and the meaning of the Incarnation.

The author consistently and convincingly argues that orthodox Christian understandings can be used to support feminism while never denying the history of misunderstandings that has oppressed women at various times and places in the actual practice of the Christian community. For instance, she insists that a perception of male and female being united in common humanity rather than one that makes a radical distinction on the basis of sex provides the best support for true equality. She notes that for radical feminists like Mary Daly, however, the question of equality is increasingly irrelevant. It is the woman's fundamental goodness and her own female experience of the world that is definitive for the humanity of womankind. For Daly, men and their patriarchal God represent an oppressive "other" to whom relationship is unnecessary for authentic women's experience.

Ironically, states Wilson-Kastner, the most vigorous proponents of a binary theory of humanity are the feminist separatists and male opponents of women's equality in church or society. She argues for an inclusive anthropology in which persons are perceived as primarily human and secondarily divided into male/female. Scripture focuses on the *human* responsibility toward God and creation and any feminism that does not begin with an assumption of one human race, diverse in some aspects but unified in equal humanity, is not compatible with Christian faith.

The conclusion drawn from epistemology is that there is no difference in the male or female way of knowing; there is only the human way to know. Feminists, however, are justified and in step with contemporary epistemological insights when they argue against a radical Cartesian disjunction between knower and known. "The knowing subject is a psychophysical reality which perceives the greater reality of which it is a part and is integrated into the greater reality it perceives."

While the digression into epistemology at first may seem peripheral to the theological issues, it becomes clear that this supports the author's contention that both male and female humanity come to know God through the revelation of Jesus and are equal beneficiaries of his soteriological activity. By strongly affirming the classical doctrine of the Trinity, the author shows how reconciled humanity is taken up into the relationship that already exists in the God who transcends sexuality.

Jesus' "maleness" is incidental to his humanity. Therefore, it is also appropriate to think of Jesus as having "feminine" characteristics and to use the metaphor of Jesus, our mother, as did Julian of Norwich. This is not to substitute a female image of Christ for the historical male Jesus but to provide an exercise in visualizing the nurturing aspect of his work for humanity.

Wilson-Kastner, while acknowledging its attractiveness, challenges the feminist approach that is ahistorical or creates an imaginary past. "The illusory attempt to pretend that feminist positions can be created from nothing, or can spring fully formed from the air, remains compelling for contemporary Americans." She urges Christian feminists to do the hard work in history, scriptural studies, theology and ethics that will take into account feminist insights into and criticisms of Christianity without violating its central message. She believes that such an inquiry will uncover a richness in the self-revelation of God in Christ that discloses more inclusiveness than Christianity often has dared to preach.

A History of Christian Theology: An Introduction
by William C. Placher (Westminster, 1983, 324 pp., $16.95 pb.). Reviewed by John L. Thompson, Ph.D. candidate in History of Christianity, Duke University.

Any book which would purport to treat the twenty centuries of Christian theology within the confines of about 260 pages of actual text inevitably calls to mind the claims of one of those whirlwind packaged tours: "See eleven countries in six days!" Nonetheless, it is only one virtue of Placher's work that he does not allow the scenery to dissolve into a blur, a virtue which is cultivated in part by the author's clear awareness of what his book is *not*: it is not a general history of Christianity, nor is it a history of doctrine *per se*; it is rather a history of theology, and accordingly it "focuses more on the ideas of individual theologians and less on the statements of the institutional church."

The book is divided into seventeen chapters, each of which is thematically structured, and each of which takes up about fifteen pages. Two chapters deal with the theological impetus of the Old and New Testaments; four chapters survey theological developments through Augustine in the west and Chalcedon in the east; four treat the theology (east and west) of the middle ages; and three chapters each are devoted to the Reformation and Counter-Reformation and to the Enlightenment and modern developments. Each chapter is followed by a brief annotated bibliography of primary sources as well as basic and advanced secondary literature.

Placher's is, above all, a book for beginners. His style is conversational, occasionally even witty. He endeavors at all times to invoke the reader's sympathy for whatever position is under discussion, especially when it is a position which the twentieth-century mind would tend to dismiss as trivial, obscure, or repugnant. Often Placher does this by calling the reader's attention to the historical circumstances which made what might seem trivial a matter of great moment; at other points, Placher unobtrusively suggests what lessons may be learned from a particular controversy in a way that should be acceptable to both Christian and non-Christian readers. The author successfully navigates around the bewilderment often induced in the beginner by constant recourse to technical or foreign terminology by avoiding some technical terms and by translating, explaining, or paraphrasing others.

Placher has a knack for introducing analogies from everyday experience which simplify complex issues. Thus, to elucidate the nuance of disagreement in the post-Nicean dispute over the creedal phrase, "of one substance with the Father," Placher illustrates: "Suppose I told you that the paperweight on my desk is made from the marble from which the Parthenon is constructed—the same substance. You might think I meant 'the same substance' in the sense of 'the same type of marble,' or you might think I had crept up to the Parthenon

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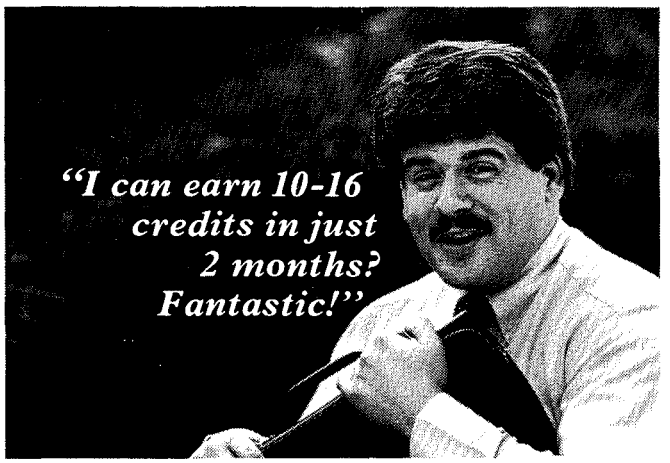

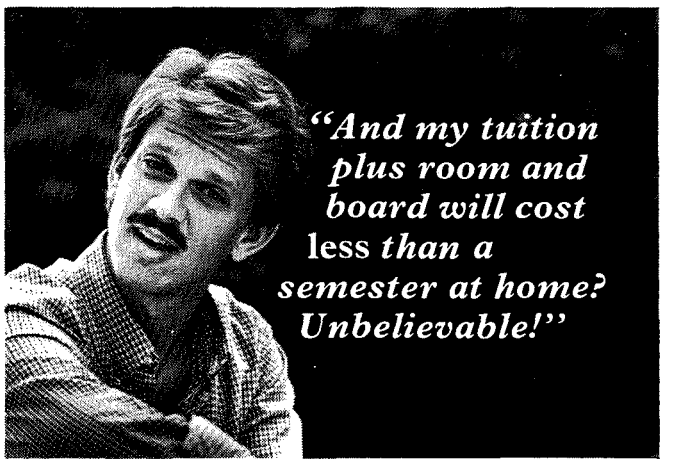

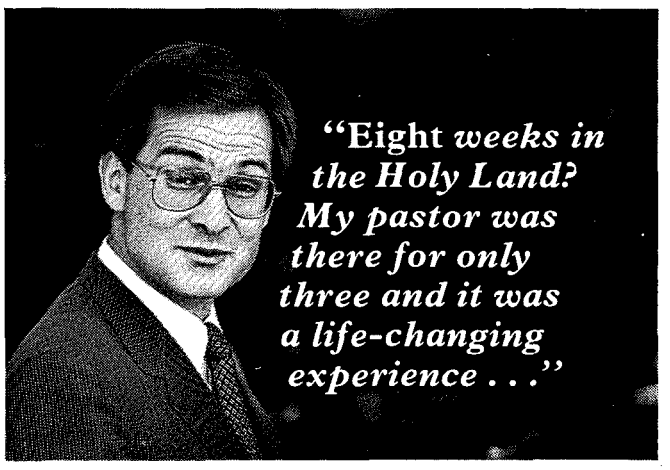

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late one night and chipped off a piece of *that very substance*. Most of the bishops at Nicaea interpreted *homoousios* in the first sense. . . . [But in Athanasius' view,] that led away from monotheism, since it implied the existence of two separate beings, both made of divine substance" (pp. 75–76).

Placher encourages both the reader's interest and the reader's comprehension by limiting details rather than multiplying them, following the maxim that it is better to whet the appetite than to sate it prematurely. Placher recites the history of theology as a story; a diverse story, but with still a unified plot. Yet the question must be raised: When does a sketch become a caricature? By and large, this reviewer would give Placher high marks for preserving a maximum of accuracy in a minimum of space. Nearly all the faith's major figures receive enough mention to put them in a fair context, and none seems to have been particularly favored. This is not to say that no distortions can be found. Placher's compactness sometimes leads him to present as a completed portrait what is, to the historian, only a status report of research in progress. Along these lines, I found his treatment of late medieval "nominalism" somewhat too redolent of the usual stereotype that Ockham's God is unpredictable and capricious and that his theology merely reflects the social chaos of the fourteenth century. Surely Placher's presentation of the Ockhamist concept of God's absolute power needs to be rounded out by at least some mention of the significance of his teaching on God's *ordained* power, whereby the present orders are affirmed as resting firmly and reliably on God's own covenant.

There are other problems which will be more apparent than the preceding to the non-specialist. It is a great strength of this book that it begins the story of Christian theology with its earliest roots, in the accounts of God's activity in the two testaments. However, most evangelicals will not be comfortable with Placher's ready acceptance of the current critical views concerning the historicity of the patriarchal narratives and the origins of Israel's twelve tribes. Many will also object to his accent more on the diversity than on the unity of the New Testament witness to Jesus; and Placher's account of Jesus' resurrection is confined to a single ambiguous statement. Such points are termed problematic because they will surely disappoint conservative readers, but the book should not therefore be dismissed. An introduction such as this is properly a summary of current "historical" research, and it must be admitted that the dominant views in biblical studies today which Placher reports are not views which please most conservatives. In defense of Placher's occasional ambiguity, it may be said that such deliberate ambiguity does make the work useful to a wider audience where a more confessional treatment would not. Placher employs such ambiguity, for example, to acknowledge that Pauline theology and ethics have come under fire from various twentieth-century critics (e.g. those who object to the Pauline injunctions against homosexuality). Placher thus registers the criticism, yet avoids passing judgment.

Again, Placher's is a book for beginners, whether those beginners are to be found among undergraduates or interested laity. In its scope and purpose, it stands virtually alone among books currently in print, falling nicely between the atomism and brevity of a dictionary of church history and the more technical and detailed treatment of Cunliffe-Jones' *History of Christian Doctrine*. Placher's text is less demanding than one would normally assign for divinity students, but even here it may be recommended for remedial purposes or for a quick overview of unfamiliar territory.

Your Wealth in God's World
by John Jefferson Davis (Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Co., 1984), pp. 134, $4.95. Reviewed by Douglas J. Miller, Professor of Christian Social Ethics, Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, PA

Davis' book is another in the deluge of recent books by conservative Christians which attempt to legitimate the principles undergirding capitalism by an appeal to Scripture. The author uniquely contributes to the discussion by his broader inclusion of Biblical themes such as creation, providence, image of God, sin, work, stewardship, etc., in defending the free market.

However, the result is a less than adequate exegetical analysis of the Biblical texts. Moreover, the absence of any consistent or sophisticated hermeneutical stance leaves the reader with a literal-mythical proof-text approach that ends up bolstering the dubious position that modern day capitalism is discoverable in the Bible.

An even greater weakness of the book is its onesided (with a slight deference to the other side here and there) and nearly uncritical approach to capitalism. Most issues are settled by unsupported claims (e.g., that progressive tax policies are the reason for no new jobs nor increased productivity) or by quotes from well-worn ideologies (Gilder, Friedman, et. al.). The book oozes with rehashed conservative themes: that poverty in America and world hunger are not as bad as people think; that a crucial factor in poverty is a character flaw in the poor themselves, that Colonalism was really a benefit; that the problem of riches is our attitude toward it; that big government has caused most of our problems (including the Depression); that obedience, diligence, and hard work are priority virtues; that Social Security weakens the family; that the "robber barons" really improved life for people; that DDT is a benefit to humanity; and on and on.

While the author does push for compassion, it is within the context of Adam Smith's moral feelings so that volunteerism and philanthropy become the answer to social injustice. The author's ethical justification often borders upon utilitarianism and pragmatism -positions that are only tangentially Biblical.

The free enterprise system is too significant to be defended in these hackneyed ways. Nor does one do it justice by anarchronistically reading it back into Biblical texts. Moreover, its moral vision is dissipated by the book's decided sexist language (mankind, businessmen and housewives), its somewhat national chauvinism (reference to communist countries as "Iron Curtain") and its implicit racism (quoting Arthur Ashe and Thomas Sowell as spokespersons for Blacks).

The Old Testament Writings: History, Literature, Interpretation
by James M. Efird (John Knox, 1982, 295 pp., $11.95). Reviewed by James L. Jaquette, Pastor, Union Church of South Foxboro, Foxboro, Massachusetts.

The serious Bible student consults the "introduction" or "survey" to find historical, geographical, and literary information about each biblical book as well as comments about its authorship, dating, audience, and message. Professor Efird's book seeks to introduce the beginning student to the complex world of the Old Testament literature and is a companion volume to his *The New Testament Writings* (John Knox, 1980).

The author begins with a discussion of general themes (i.e., Holy War, the sanctity of covenant relationships, sympathetic magic, the importance of corporate identity among Semitic people, etc.) and then examines other introductory matters (i.e., the geography of the area, the types of literary material found in the Old Testament, the process of canon formation, etc.).

The rest of the work is divided into three major parts corresponding to the three divisions of the Hebrew canon. In each division, Efird follows the threefold pattern of his book's subtitle: a brief history (where reconstruction is possible), an analysis of the literary questions *apropos* to the books within that division, and a discussion of each book's critical problems and interpretation. Each section closes with a helpful list of major works on each division and suggested commentaries for further study on individual books. The book ends with a bibliographic guide to the major areas of Old Testament study and a short glossary.

The author avoids the danger of oversimplification by constantly calling the reader's attention to scholarly flux in many matters. He is particularly interested in what lies behind the editing of books and the formation of the entire canon. He espouses the documentary hypothesis of the Tetrateuch (and Joshua) and Noth's theory of the composition of Deuteronomic history through Kings.

He appeals to scholarly uncertainty, however, and fails to remove a major flaw. There is virtually no interaction with conservative scholarship. Since Efird unequivocally seeks an eclectic position, the beginning student may arrive at the mistaken conclusion that all major views have been presented. Further, with respect to historicity, he assumes uncritically that "historical accuracy was not as important to (the people who heard the stories) as religious understanding and teaching" (p. 17). He minimizes the literary integrity of each book through discussion of contradictory theological emphases within the literature and, for example, by separating the "original" oracles of the prophet whose name appears with a book from later development of his thinking (i.e., finding post-exilic messages in a pre-exilic work). In other words, he assumes that the Old Testament is the result of humanity's developing religious ideas and not a revelation of God.

A pastor would probably not recommend this book to an interested parishioner without a large number of qualifications. A work such as the Bush, Hubbard, LaSor *Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form and Background of the Old Testament* (Eerdmans, 1981) would be a better recommendation. Likewise, the introductory seminary course would demand the more complete introduction of Eissfeldt and Harrison. From an evangelical viewpoint, Efird serves best as an excellent overview of a particularly prominent approach to Old Testament studies.

BOOK COMMENTS

Whose Promised Land?
by Colin Chapman. (Lion Publishing Ltd. 1983. 253 pages. Paperback. £1.95.)

Israelis call it "Israel". Palestinians call it "Palestine". Both call it their "Promised Land". But to whom was it promised; to whom does it rightfully belong?

Colin Chapman has been working with university students in a variety of nations in the Middle East since 1968. He has had to face first-hand the explosive issues which bedevil this Promised Land.

In this book he presents the claims, counterclaims, and arguments which Israelis and Palestinians put forward. He analyzes the surficial and the underlying causes behind the uprooting of families, the refugee problem, the violence.

He treats thoroughly the claims of each party—then traces the story behind them, going back to the time of the Bible. What do Bible prophecies concerning this land mean? How were the promises and prophecies (made to ancient Israel concerning the land) understood by Jesus and first-century Christians? How should they be understood today?

The author traces the development of Zionism, of the UN partitioning plan, of the founding of the modern state of Israel. He shows how anti-semitism in the West has been a stimulant to the birth of today's Israel.

The book evidences thorough historical research, quoting generously from historical documents. The author has some devastating things to say about the hidden role of westerners—and of Christians—who, behind the scene, helped set the stage for much of the violence in the Promised Land and who, under the spotlight of Old Testament prophecies, stand guilty. The book is not comfortable reading for Western Christians in general; evangelicals in particular. But it is highly illuminating and gives an excellent analysis (with thought-provoking questions) of both sides of the problem.

–John W. Alexander

Luther's Ecumenical Significance: An Inter-confessional Consultation
edited by Peter Manns and Harding Meyer in collaboration with Carter Lindberg and Harry McSorley (Fortress Press and Paulist Press, 1983, 336 pp., $24.95).
Luther: A Reformer for the Churches. An Ecumenical Study Guide
by Mark Edwards and George Tavard (Paulist Press and Fortress Press, 1984, 96 pp., $4.95).

One of the fruitful outcomes of the 1983 celebration of the quincentennial of Luther's birth was the amount of inter-confessional dialogue that resulted over Luther's theology and his place in the development of Christian doctrine. Often ecumenical dialogues try to minimize the past in order to bring harmony in the present. The type of dialogue in evidence in the two books under review here—a dialogue which explores the resources of the church's history in depth—seems to offer a much richer source for Christian unity.

Luther's Ecumenical Significance is a collection of papers and responses originally delivered at a consultation sponsored by the Center for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg and the Institute for European History in Mainz. Topics included are Catholic Luther research, Luther's influence on Protestant confessions, Luther's concept of the church, *simul iustus et peccator*, and Luther's understanding of Scripture.

All of the papers are written from the perspective of the most recent research on the topics at hand and represent a variety of confessional positions, the majority Lutheran and Catholic, but also including Reformed and Anabaptist. The theological student could benefit immensely from studying any and all of the essays in this volume. Only one problem mars this effort—some of the translations from German are almost unreadable.

Luther: A Reformer for the Churches is the joint effort of a Lutheran historian who teaches in a state university and a Catholic theologian who teaches in a Methodist seminary. This combination makes for a book with many strengths and a few odd weaknesses. Edwards is well known as a careful historian of the Reformation, specializing in Luther's polemics—a fertile field indeed. Several sections show his hand in analysis of the center of several of Luther's important battles. Tavard's hand also shows in several idiosyncratic interpretations of Luther. All in all, the book will provide a good introduction to Luther and source book for lay study groups.

–Robert A. Kelly

Creeds of the Church
edited by John H. Leith (John Knox Press, 736pp., $9.95).

It has been said by some that the best texts for the study of theology are the creeds. If this be so, Leith's volume, now in its third edition, has proved invaluable. It commences with the historical credos and declaratory affirmations of the Old Testament and includes as recent a document as the Lima Text on baptism, eucharist, and ministry (World Council of Churches, 1982). Short introductions provide helpful information concerning the historical background and the significance of each document, while sources with more complete information are noted in brief bibliographies. This third edition includes everything in the second (both substituted Vatican II material on the church for the *Humani Generis* encyclical of the first edition) plus over one hundred pages of additional material including the Athanasian Creed, the London Confession (1644, interestingly, without updated language), the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (Vatican II), and recent declarations on the mission and unity of the church. These are important additions to a very fine book.

–Kevin Dodd

When The Kings Come Marching In
by Richard J. Mouw (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1983, 96pp., $3.95).

Conceptions of God's future kingdom affect one's view of the present world. In this meditative reflection on the "New Jerusalem" of Isaiah 60, Richard Mouw enlightens us concerning some significant elements of continuity between future life in the Holy City and the present order in which we live.

Within Isaiah's vision, the "ships of Tarshish," "kings of nations" with their wealth, and other symbols characterizing our unredeemed world and culture are not simply judged and destroyed as some eschatology and piety would lead us to believe. Instead, there will be a transformation on a cosmic scale in which Jesus Christ (the light of this Holy City) will bring all empirical structures (political, social, economic, religious, etc.) into conformity with His Lordship. Our posture toward culture is to be like that of our Lord who calls us to await the transformation of oppressive and haughty patterns of human authority by identifying with the lowly. This means Christ's redemptive ministry must be given full reign in all areas of human life, in addition to the individualistic.

The distinctive value of Mouw's effort is that it supplies an example of how to give exegetical content to the predominantly philosophical-theological formulations of the "transformationalist" perspective on Christianity and culture. More broadly, it offers all readers a new appreciation for the integral relationship between the "already" and the "not yet" without getting tangled up in the differences over millennial positions. Finally, the readable style, as well as personal and concrete applications, make this short work an excellent tool for educating a congregation about these very relevant Biblical concerns.

–Robert G. Umidi

Human Rights: A Dialogue Between the First and Third Worlds
by Robert A. Evans and Alice Frazer Evans (Orbis, 1983, 264 pp., $9.95).

This work consists of eight "case studies" of complex social conflicts and personal dilemmas in countries ranging from the United States to the People's Republic of China. Each study is followed by commentaries by Christians from other parts of the world. The authors' intent is to promote dialogue between first and third world Christians and, to that end, it includes bibliographies and questions for use in Church discussion groups.

The case studies succeed brilliantly. The stories are moving and provocative and will challenge the commitment and thought of any reader. They are a testimony to the value of a case study approach in theological and political analysis and make the book recommended reading for seminarians and teachers.

There are three major drawbacks to the book. First, the discussion materials are too advanced for the general reader. Second, while the commentators are drawn from many parts of the world, they are all of very similar political and theological orientation, ranging from social-democrats to liberation theologians. The dialogue that results is thus quite narrow and evades the real divisions among Christians. Third, it is not clear what the authors mean by "human rights." Apparently every injustice is characterized as one of "rights," which so overloads the term as to make it virtually meaningless.

–Paul Marshall

Together Toward Hope: A Journey to Moral Theology
by Philip J. Rossi, S.J. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983, 201 pp.)

This book is born of the conviction that both Catholic moral theology and Anglo-American moral philosophy fail to understand moral reality in its most fundamental terms: as freedom in the service of our likeness to, and dependence upon, one another. Jesuit philosopher-theologian Philip J. Rossi responds with a Kantian analysis of freedom to pull us out of the "crisis" of being impotent "to sustain, intact and unambiguously, the set of moral beliefs and practices bequeathed to us from the past" (p. 4). He purports to give an "argument" that goes as follows: (1) A proper analysis of moral freedom requires that we acknowledge "our likeness to one another and that we go on together as a community." (2) This acknowledgment requires the imagining of future possibilities for fulfillment. (3) This imagining provides a context for the theological idea of hope. The concepts of freedom, mutuality, imagination and hope that are developed in this argument help explain how moral practices are formed and continued through imagery, liturgy and worship.

What Rossi calls an "argument" is more a display of rough coherence of definitions than rigorous reasoning from premises to conclusions or careful analysis of conditions necessary for thinking or acting. The reader will often get lost in unnecessary verbiage and oft-repeated summaries. The value of the book is its creative use of recent Kant scholarship challenging those who charge Kant with a formalism of abstract moral principles. The way this is brought to bear on narrative contributes to discussions in narrative theology by raising questions of theory and truth-claims too easily dismissed in that literature. These assets, however, are severely threatened by the simplistic relation Rossi establishes between philosophy and theology, the lack of clarity in his writing and reasoning, and the absence of theological perspective in his analysis of our modern "crisis" and "moral" reality.

–Douglas J. Schuurman

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FAMILY VIOLENCE & THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION
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The purposes of this conference are: to educate seminary administrators, students, faculty and staff around issues of family violence and its meaning for and with theological education; to share what has been done in seminaries across the U.S. to integrate issues of family violence into curricula; to develop strategies for incorporating family violence issues into theological education; and to empower participants with knowledge and concrete strategies to bring change within their institutions.

The conference is sponsored by The Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence. Funding support is provided by The United Methodist Church, United Church of Christ and other denominations and foundations.

For more information, contact CPSDV, 1914 N. 34th St., Suite 205, Seattle, WA 98103.

What Would You Do?
by John H. Yoder (Herald Press, 1983, 115 pp., $6.95).

"What would you do if a violent person threatened to harm a loved one?" Most people (depending on whether they are pacifists or nonpacifists) have either used this question or have had this question used on them. The purpose of this short volume is to respond to this question from the pacifist perspective.

In Section 1, Yoder deftly brings to light and then calls into question the assumptions behind this question. In so doing, he attempts to establish a pacifist response which is logical, realistic and Christian. In Section 2, we get a look at other strategies which have been used by pacifists in response to this question. Essays by Leo Tolstoy, Joan Baez and Dale Aukerman are among the seven essays in this section.

But does the pacifist response work? While Yoder refuses to use success as his final ethical criterion, he devotes Section 3 to actual accounts of situations when the pacifist response has indeed been successful. Essays by Tom Skinner and Gladys Aylward are among the six comprising this section.

Yoder has done us a service in bringing together this volume. It has the distinction of being a serious contribution to theological ethics while at the same time being readable and entertaining. This is a book that can and should be read by pacifists and nonpacifists—whether they be in the classroom or in the pew.

–Randall Basinger

God's Activity in the World: The Contemporary Debate
edited by Owen C. Thomas (Scholars, 1983, 240pp., $8.50).

This collection of essays by contemporary theologians and philosophers such as Farrer, Gilson, Gilkey, and Bultmann offers a critical appraisal of divine presence and activity in the world. At least four distinct positions are offered by the twelve contributors: (1)*Personal Action.* This position is based on the analogy of human personal action and argues that God is an agent, a singular being, existing in time and having some locus from which His action proceeds. (2)*Primary Cause.* This traditional viewpoint asserts that God as primary cause acts in and through all secondary causes in nature and history. (3)*Process.* Based on the philosophy of Whitehead and Hartshorne, this approach posits a God who acts in all events by influence or persuasion. If God acts as an efficient cause, it is not through overt, sensible, observable actions. He acts by constituting himself in such a way that other events take account of him. (4)*Uniform Action.* Maurice Wiles insists that to speak of God acting in history is to speak of the varying human response which is elicited by the unvarying divine presence in historical events.

The approach of process theology is clearly favored by editor Owen C. Thomas, who has included essays by the process theologians Ogden, Cobb, and Griffin. This view, says Thomas, treats the perplexing questions of divine activity most clearly and fully. God acts in all events, is the partial cause of all events, and the sole cause of none. These twelve essays are enlightening, provocative, and challenging—worth while reading viewed through the theological tradition as critically reinterpreted.

–Frederick R. Pfursich

***Human Life: A Biblical Perspective for Bioethics* by J. Robert Nelson (Fortress Press, 1984, 194 pp., $10.95).**

The thesis of this work is "that a theory of human life, whether philosophical or theological or both, is indispensable to the reaching of valid decisions of a bioethical nature" (p. 155). The author's main concern is not to present the "biblical position" on gene-splicing, abortion, or other specific issues. Rather, he attempts to show the need for a clear, comprehensive, and optimistic understanding of human life (chapters 1-2), to delineate the biblical teachings concerning such life (chapters 3-4), and to propose a biologically, philosophically, and theologically informed definition of life that not only considers what life is, but also what it means and what gives it value (chapter 5). Finally, this "workable" definition of life is applied—although much too briefly—to the realm of genetic engineering (chapter 6).

The strength of *Human Life* lies in its generally careful discussion of the Hebrew and Greek terminology for the concept of life, and in Nelson's thorough and nuanced definition of life. However, the book would be more useful as a guide to decision-making if the writer had correlated more directly the consideration of specific bioethical issues in the final chapter with the discussion of relevant scriptures and arguments in earlier chapters so as to make more evident his theological foundations and ethical methodology.

On the whole, though, the work is a solid contribution to Christian ethics. A book of this sort is a must for anyone grappling with the issues of human life.

—Robert V. Rakestraw

***Readings in Moral Theology No. 4: The Use of Scripture in Moral Theology* edited by Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick (Paulist, 1984, 384 pp., $9.95 pb.).**

In recent years there has been an increasing interest in the methodology and appropriateness of using the Scriptures for contemporary ethics. In this volume, seventeen essays in this discussion have been reprinted. The eminent American Catholic ethicists who edited it are to be complimented for the quality, divergence of approach, and theological diversity represented in their selections. Evangelical authors include Richard Mouw, John Howard Yoder, and Allen Verhey. The selection by Verhey is appreciated because it makes available the methodology of his important unpublished doctoral dissertation on Walter Rauschenbusch's use of the Bible. Well known articles by Curran and James Gustafson also are made available. The approach to the Bible in liberation theology is presented and analyzed, including black (James Cone) and feminist (Elisabeth Schauussler Fiorenza) approaches. Readers accustomed to ethical propositions and norms of the Bible being applied to all of life will find the articles by Jack Sanders and Stanley Hauerwas controversial and hopefully stimulating. I make a response to them in my article in the second and third issues of *Transformation* (the new international journal of Evangelical social ethics from the World Evangelical Fellowship). This anthology provides a solid presentation of a broad spectrum of current approaches to the hermeneutics of the Bible and ethics.

—Stephen Charles Mott

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Neil Bartlett, Production Mgr.

Foundations of Evangelical Theology
by John Jefferson Davis (Baker, 1984, 282 pp., $9.95 pb.)

This book is intended to serve as a general introduction to systematic theology from an evangelical perspective. It is notable for being oriented to the world mission of the church, to the responsibility of cultural reclamation, and to the North American context.

One of the most interesting features of the author's own perspective is his commitment to a modified Christian reconstructionist position. He likes the work of R.J. Rushdoony and the postmillennial hope for the christianisation of culture, but questions the propriety of trying to impose the Mosaic social ethic upon a modern country. In this way he lifts up the positive contribution of that school called "Chalcedon" without carrying forward their implausible kind of theonomy.

The book starts out with a discussion of evangelical theology in North America. Going over familiar ground, Davis notes that it is neither fundamentalist or modernist. Chapter two goes into theological method, and emphasises the importance of contextualising biblical truth in the modern setting. On several occasions Davis warns against anti-intellectualism in evangelicalism, a danger to which we are prone on account of our history in pietism and revivalism.

Several chapters follow which are given over to topics such as revelation, Scripture, reason, experience, and tradition. Although they do not go very deep, they are informed discussions of issues that matter in theological method. It is interesting that in the treatment of revelation he would be particularly concerned about the impact of God's Word upon society and not just theology. Similarly the title of his chapter on reason is suggestive: "Reason: a Kingdom Extending Tool." They illustrate the political dimension of the whole book, and the new variety of liberation theology we are now seeing on the right.

At the end of each of the eight chapters we find a generous bibliography. The footnotes are conveniently found at the bottom of the pages. This is a wise and well-informed book, a good sign of growing vitality in evangelical theological reflection. It does not get into heavy issues very far, but it points us in the proper directions.

–Clark H. Pinnock

Religion: The Great Questions
by Carmody, Denise L. and John Carmody (New York: The Seabury Press, 1983. ix + 182 pp. $9.50).

Most introductory texts to the world's great religions treat them separately, as integrated systems of belief. This approach helps students understand the internal logic of each religion, but does little to provide them with a framework for a critical comparison between them. Denise and John Carmody have opted for comparison, and introduce students to the major religions by looking at the answers they give to four universal questions.

The questions the authors raise have to do with the nature of the human search for reality, meaning and purpose; the essence of evil; the concept of God; and the definition of the good life. To each they give three answers chose from the world's great religions with special attention given to Christianity and Buddhism.

The comparative approach is a refreshing change because it forces both students and teachers to seek answers to central religious questions we all should ask, rather than to look at religions only as historical movements. Unfortunately, the answers given are drawn piecemeal from various traditions within these religions with little attempt to show their overall claims to truth. Moreover, evangelicals will disagree with much of the Christianity presented which is drawn from the more liberal traditions. In the end the impression is left that religion is a matter of subjective preference rather than of objective truth and eternal consequence. But this is characteristic of most phenomenological (and Hindu) approaches to religion.

–Paul G. Hiebert

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BOOK REVIEWS

BOOK COMMENTS

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Maintaining the Scripture Principle Today

by Clark Pinnock

The adoption of the bipartite Christian Bible as the authoritative Scripture of the church was probably the most momentous choice ever made in the history of doctrine. By doing so, the church provided herself with a standard of identity to evaluate and shape her theology, life, and mission. Therefore, the place to begin a discussion of biblical authority is with the simple fact, not really disputed, that entrenched in Christian thinking of every kind is a belief in the Bible as the written Word of God. Even if we are not impressed with this belief or persuaded by it, we have to acknowledge it and appreciate why it is held to so stoutly. For better or for worse, belief in the Scriptures as the canon and yardstick of Christian truth, the unique locus of the Word of God, is part of an almost universal Christian consensus going back to at least the second century. Until the recent rise of revisionist theology, Christian thinking was done in the house of authority, a fact that is not doubted even by the writer most eager to overturn such belief, Edward Farley.[1] Theology in the premodern period was always done on the assumption that the Bible was the written Word of God.

More than an isolated belief, this conviction about the Bible was an integral part of a larger package of classical convictions and cannot be discarded without tearing the fabric of the whole garment of traditional Christian beliefs. Without much exaggeration one could say that the history of theology is a history of the interpretation of the Bible, so basic to this message was this medium. The way Christians have thought about God, Christ, humanity, salvation, and church is indebted to the teachings of the Bible. This is not to deny that cultural factors have entered into the various formulations at different periods, but simply to point out that the creed as we all know and accept it is utterly tied up with its scriptural foundations, making the authority of the Bible, if not a soteriologically indispensable belief (one can be saved by believing in Christ whatever one thinks of the Bible), then certainly an epistemologically crucial belief. Without belief in the authority of the Bible, there would not have been any creedal backbone to the Christian movement, and certainly not the bony structures of Nicaea and Chalcedon. Beliefs like the atonement and the resurrection unquestionably stand or fall with belief in biblical authority, and that is the measure of the seriousness of the modern debate about it. We are not arguing over some minor detail in Christian belief, like the rapture or the classes of angels, but over the basis of religious knowledge as such and how we know what God has promised and commanded. How can we worship God if we do not know who God is? How can we trust his promises if we do not know what they are? How can we obey God if we have no sure knowledge of his will? The reason Christians have felt historically that the authority of the Bible is a crucial conviction is that they have realized the Bible is needed to give us a reliable knowledge of the truth, without which we cannot exist long as Christians. Calvin spoke of this so practically when he referred to the Bible as the spectacles our dim eyes require to make out what the will of our creator is (*Institutes* I, chap. 6).

To be candid, however, the classical conviction about Holy Scripture was not always developed in sound and healthy ways, and some of our difficulties today are due in part to inadequacies in it. Given the polemical atmosphere between evangelicals and more liberal Christians, it is uncommon for conservatives to admit any un-ideal elements in the orthodox view of the Bible, but admit them we must if we hope to gain a fair hearing and to advance in our own understanding. There has been, for example, a tendency to exaggerate the absolute perfection of the text and minimize the true humanity of it. One of the weaknesses of the fathers, as Bromiley notes, was their failure to give full weight to the human and historical aspects of the text. "The truth is that the fathers seem not to have appreciated the real significance of the human dimension nor to have grasped the possibilities of a better exegesis that lexical, literary, and historical inquiry would present."[2] In addition, there was a strong, "catholic" tendency to link the authoritative Scriptures to an infallible ecclesiastical institution, thus providing even more security for the believer—more, in fact, than the Lord had planned for us. It must be obvious to any reader of classical theology that the people who spoke so highly of the infallibility of the Bible very often spoke just as highly of the church's creeds and hierarchy, and that they do not witness to what we today would regard as an evangelical position, though they are repeatedly cited by evangelicals today for that purpose.[3] Evangelicals who hold to the sole authority of the Bible do not do justice to themselves when they appear to be uncritical of tradition, even when it happens to be tradition about the Bible. Rather than trying to argue unconvincingly, as Rogers and McKim did, that the traditional view of authority was less rigorous than we have thought (Woodbridge has shown it was very rigorous indeed), what we have to do is admit honestly that the old view of the Bible that we treasure is not biblical and serviceable in every detail today and, like every other theological topic, can use some improvement and development by the thinkers and scholars of our generation.[4] We simply must transcend the neglect of the humanity of the Bible, so familiar in orthodoxy, and liberate the Bible from too close an association with mother church, an association that can easily smother its independent voice. The legacy we honor is noble and true, but it is not infallible or perfect, and we must be free to improve it if we can.

The Crisis of the Scripture Principle

Despite the ecumenical range and great antiquity of the classical conviction about the Bible as the written Word of God, we face a "crisis of the Scripture principle" today and with it the unmaking and unraveling of traditional Christian doctrine.[5] Farley and Hodgson put it succinctly and accurately when they write:

> Until recently, almost the entire spectrum of theological opinion would have agreed that the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, together with their doctrinal interpretations, occupy a unique and indispensable place of authority for Christian faith, practice, and reflection. But this consensus now seems to be falling apart[6].

Out of the liberal theological revision has come a flat denial of the Scripture principle in the classical sense, the collapse of the house of authority based upon it, and the subsequent disintegration of the orthodox creed. Whether the denial comes in a direct[7] or in an indirect form[8] does not matter much: the point is that the normative authority of the Bible has been called into question deliberately and repeatedly since Schleiermacher by adherents of the new theology.

But what can possibly explain such behavior? There are three basic reasons for this far-reaching change of theological opinion. The first and most important is the cultural shift to secular modernity beginning in the Renaissance, and to rationalist modernity, brought on by the Enlightenment, and the liberal response to it. The modern mind dislikes traditional authorities such as the Bible and insists on subjecting them to rational scrutiny. The final authority of the Bible can hardly stand if the message it conveys provokes, not belief, but unbelief. Ed Farley makes it plain that this is a fundamental reason for his own rejection of biblical authority.[9] We face a rebelliousness in the modern period that seeks to edge God out of the world and leave humanity autonomous in it. To achieve this, the Bible that challenges this insurrection must be silenced as divinely authoritative.

The second reason, second also in importance, is the rise of biblical criticism of the kind that treats Scripture as a merely human document and frequently debunks its claims on various levels. Pretending to be a key to the elucidation of the text, criticism had the effect of situating the Bible so thoroughly in the human context as

to make it well nigh impossible to consider its authority as anything more than human. It became less and less natural to regard the text as divine communication and more and more plausible to regard it as fallible human utterance.[10] What made it even more difficult for the conservative believers who wanted to be honest in their study of the Bible was the burden of their own heritage, which had erred in both exaggerating the absolute perfection of the text and obscuring its genuine, humble humanity. They were thus not in a strong position to distinguish between the positive and the negative proposals that the new criticism advanced. To this day, this is the conservative burden. It makes it difficult for those who keenly desire to respect the Bible highly but are put off by the form the conservative tradition often still takes.

The third reason, though it is more in the nature of an afterthought, I suspect, is theological in character. Orthodoxy, it is felt, silences God from speaking today—locking him up in a book—and creates a petrified and rigid style of faith that is false to the dynamic transcendence of the Bible. It closes us off from appropriating fresh truth and creates a whole set of oppressive attitudes and dogmas. Surely, as Auguste Sabatier argued, religious experience is the heart of Christianity, and though this gives rise to dogmas in time, such are the work of human beings, not the declarations of God.[11]

Leaving aside for the time being the conservative theologian might counter these three contentions, it is obvious that we have here a confrontation between classical Christianity based upon the Scripture principle and a neo-Christianity without a Scripture principle, a collision that, in the realm of theological ideas, makes the differences between Roman Catholic and Protestant seem trivial by comparison. Theology without the controlling influence of the Scripture principle could only degenerate into open-ended pluralism of belief that none could adjudicate, and its classical concepts could only suffer unlimited revision. The crisis of the Scriptures is in fact the crisis of Christian theology itself and the cause of the deepest polarization of all in the churches. The gap is unbridgeable between those who stand by the historic confidence in the infallible truth of the Bible and those who adopt the pancritical view, which relativizes the entire theological enterprise. Seeking reconciliation is always a good thing, as it is between theological liberals and conservatives, but when the full measure of the difference here is taken, I doubt that reconciliation is possible.[12]

The Struggle to Maintain the Scripture Principle

Seeing a real threat to the authority of the Bible and to the *bene esse* of the churches, classical Christians today respond by wanting to defend and explicate the Scripture principle in this newly critical context. In one sense, they are in a strong position to do so. The conservative position is deeply rooted not only in the most ancient traditions but also in the Bible itself, as we shall see, and the task is made easier by the fact that the liberals are scrambling to find a viable alternative to it—not an easy thing to do. The church as a whole is not likely to respond well to a denial of the real basis of her apostolicity when nothing solid is proposed to be put in its place. In another sense, however, it is not so easy, because in the course of the criticism of the Scripture principle some very tough questions have been raised and placed on the agendas of all serious students of the matter. How shall we use as authority a text that was written when people thought in very different ways than we do? How shall we respond to critical "discoveries" on a host of issues pertaining to biblical literature and history? What about the diversity of biblical teaching? How should we think about the present defective copies and translations? What books properly belong to the canon? How is the Old Testament authoritative when the New Testament appears to correct it? What is the nature of the claim the Bible makes for itself? Those who are honest in pursuing these issues (not all Christians are) know there are some hard questions for the conservative scholar to answer and know also that there is little agreement among such scholars how to answer some of them. Even though there is agreement on the basic approach to the Bible as God's written Word, and a widely felt desire to preserve unity among Bible-believing Christians in face of the present crisis, there is lack of consensus on some rather important questions and on what to do about them. From a distance it seems that everyone dwells in the same house of biblical authority, but closer in, it becomes quite apparent that the house contains various rooms and closets in which one or another of this mixed multitude resides. Thus there are debates among conservatives, despite the need for a united front[13].

Why do Christian people believe the Bible to be God's Word? Because it has been able to . . . introduce them to a saving and transforming knowledge of Christ.

What obviously is needed is a systematic treatment of the Scripture principle that faces all the questions squarely and supplies a model for understanding that will help us transcend the current impasse. Though one has the impression that evangelicals are always writing such tomes, there are in reality almost no full-scale expositions that cover the ground adequately and set forth the evangelical conviction in a balanced and sensible way. Much of our work operates within a circle of limited visibility, presupposing evangelical readers, and never raises its eyes to the larger perimeter of the theological mainstream where such issues are discussed professionally and in depth[14].

In a broad outline, I want to suggest a paradigm utilizing three dimensions: first, the divine inspiration of Holy Scripture that arises organically out of the Christian pattern of revelation; second, the human character of the biblical text as the form in which the Word of God was communicated to us; and third, the ministry of the Spirit in relation to the Bible and the dynamic interaction between the two. Such a paradigm is sufficiently broad to capture the major themes and specific enough, when opened up, to introduce the reader to a large number of issues without losing his or her attention.

More specifically, my treatment of the Scripture principle will focus on and orient itself to the kind of practical, evangelical emphasis found in 2 Timothy 3:15-17:

> From childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

In this wonderful text Paul places his emphasis on the plenary

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profitability of the Scriptures in the matter of conveying a saving and an equipping knowledge of God. He does not present a theory about a perfect Bible given long ago but now lost, but declares the Bible in Timothy's possession to be alive with the breath of God and full of the transforming information the young disciple would need in the life of faith and obedience. I think we can all learn from this kind of concentration and orientation[15]. It is important for us to stress the practical effectiveness of the accessible Bible in facilitating a saving and transforming knowledge of God in Jesus Christ. We must not shift the emphasis to the unavailable Bible of the past, about which one can speculate, or to the inaccessible Bible of the future, after the experts will (supposedly) have cleared away every perplexing feature of the text, removing all possibility of doubt. It is this present Bible we need to be able to trust, this New International Version or King James Version, and this practical purpose of communicating the saving knowledge of God we need to be focusing on. Furthermore, it is this Bible that all Christians have come to trust through the grace of God, and this purpose that has proven valid in their experience. Given by God's breath, the Bible proves to be quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword and gives life and truth to the one who trusts in Jesus. This is the doctrine of Scripture I am concerned to discuss and defend: Not the Bible of academic debate, but the Bible given and handed down to be the medium of the gospel message and the primary sacrament of the knowledge of God, his own communication, which is able to reconcile us to God so that we might come to love and obey him. Not a book wholly free of perplexing features, but one that bears effective witness to the Savior of all.

Why, in the last analysis, do Christian people believe the Bible is God's Word? Not because they have all studied up on Christian evidences and apologetics, however useful these may prove to some. Christians believe the Bible because it has been able to do for them exactly what Paul promised it would: introduce them to a saving and transforming knowledge of Christ. Reasons for faith and answers to perplexing difficulties in the text, therefore, are supportive but not constitutive of faith in God and his Word. Faith rests ultimately, not in human wisdom, but in a demonstration of the Spirit and power. Therefore, let us not quench the Spirit in our theology of inspiration, whether by rationalist liberal doubts or by rationalist conservative proofs, because both shift the focus away from the power of God in the Scriptures and onto our ability to rationally comprehend these matters. There is, of course, a place for ordinary understanding with the mind and a place for scholarly discussion and vindication. But it is greatly overdone if we leave the slightest impression that we are able to ground faith in God's Word by rational arguments alone and that God's working in the human heart in response to faith is not the main cause of faith. The Bible is not so interested in our academically proving, as in our holistically seeing the truth, in our believing the gospel and obeying God. This is something I have had to learn myself, and it is a liberating truth[16].

[1] Edward Farley, *Ecclesial Reflection: An Anatomy of Theological Method.*

[2] Bromiley, "The Church Fathers and Holy Scripture,"in *Scripture and Truth*, ed. D. A. Carson and John Woodbridge, p. 217.

[3] Virtually all evangelicals, including myself, have done this in times past, so eager are we to enlist such great worthies as Augustine on our side in the great battle with liberalism. Edward Farley calls our bluff on this practice very effectively; *Ecclesial Reflection*, pp. 83–105.

[4] The subtitle of Woodbridge's book, Biblia Authority is *A Critique of the Rogers/McKim Proposal*, and effectively refutes the view that classical theologians limited the inerrancy of the Bible to matters of faith and practice. The book referred to is by Jack B. Rogers and Donald K. McKim, *The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible.*

[5] Wolfhart Pannenberg, "The Crisis of the Scripture Principle" in *Basic Questions in Theology*, vol. 1, pp. 1–14. I appreciated the candid humor of Maurice Wiles near the end of his book *The Remaking of Christian Doctrine*, when he asked himself, in view of the radical nature of the changes he was proposing, whether the title of the book ought not to be "the unmaking of Christian Doctrine." His instincts are on target, of course.

[6] Peter C. Hodgson and Robert H. King, ed. *Christian Theology: An Introduction to Its Traditions and Tasks*, p. 35.

[7] For direct denials, in addition to the work of Farley and Pannenberg already referred to (notes 1 and 12), consult C. F. Evans, *Is "Holy Scripture" Christian?*; James Barr, *The Bible in the Modern World;* and *Holy Scripture: Canon, Authority, Criticism;* Gordon D. Kaufman, *Theological Imagination: Constructing the Concept of God.*

[8] For indirect denials, note the shift of the "functional" authority of the Bible in a whole range of modern writers who take the Bible to be authoritative, not in its teachings as history but in its power to occasion new experiences of revelation in us. See David H. Kelsey, *The Uses of Scripture in Recent Theology.* For Langdon Gilkey, the Bible is a fallible human witness reflecting all the biases and fears of its age and is subject to our correcting its errors. What he holds to be true is the symbolic structure and its power to illuminate our existence. See Gilkey, *Message and Existence: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, p. 52 f. Many prominent theologians make the shift to the functional while continuing to pretend they are operating within the classical picture. Hodgson and King name Bultmann, Tillich, and Barth in this category: *Christian Theology*, p. 53.

[9] Farley, *Ecclesial Reflection*, pp. 153–65.

[10] Farley, *Ecclesial Reflection*, pp. 135–40.

[11] Auguste Sabatier, *Religions of Authority and Religions of the Spirit.*

[12] Compare Richard J. Coleman, *Issues of Theological Conflict: Evangelicals and Liberals.*

[13] No conservative book I know of responds to anything like the full range of hard critical questions, though most of them are treated helpfully by someone somewhere. I hope this book will fill this important gap satisfactorily.

[14] Barth and Berkouwer see themselves in line with the historic doctrine of biblical authority and address themselves to the comtemporary discussion, but neither one, partly because of the European context, and partly because of their emphasis upon event rather than content, really speaks for or to the evangelicals in the English-speaking world. Carl Henry is the only one thus far to fulfill my prescription (*God, Revelation and Authority*) unless my own *Biblical Revelation* be mentioned as a poor second. There are signs that better work will come forth from the diverse circle that groups itself around the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy. The appearance of Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, vol. 1, which will grow to three large volumes, is the best treatment of the subject so far in a full-scale systematic theology.

[15] Paul's text is discussed helpfully in Edward W. Goodrick, "Let's Put 2 Timothy 3:16 Back in the Bible," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 25 (1982), pp. 479–87; and Howard J. Loewen, *Karl Barth and the Church Doctrine of Inspiration*, (Seminary, May 1976), chap. 2.

[16] While still wary of fideism, I understand better what scholars like Daane; Berkouwer, Rogers, Bloesch, Barth, Wink, and Grounds have been trying to tell conservatives like me who have an overly rationalist bent.

BIBLICAL STUDIES

Reading the Bible as an Icon

by Duane Christensen

In the Baptist tradition, icons do not play a signficant role; unless of course, as some more liberally oriented critics would have it, the Bible itself becomes an icon. There is irony here: whereas some would accuse a good many Baptists of "bibliolatry", or worshipping the Bible, these same Baptists would be quick to point the finger back at those who produce and make use of icons, accusing them of idolatry, or worshipping images. And though the language used in both cases is pejorative, there may be value in an attempt to combine these two negatives to see whether the result may somehow yet be positive.

My introduction to the field of iconography was a meditation by Henry Nouwen on "Rublev's Icon of the Trinity" published recently in the *Harvard Divinity Bulletin.*[1] I was struck with how deeply Rublev's icon spoke to Nouwen, and others as well, who have taken the time to enter deeply into its structure and symbolism. Let's take a brief look at this remarkable work, considered by some "to be one of the most perfect achievements in the history of art".[2]

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Nouwen was experiencing what he calls "a hard period of (his) life, in which verbal prayer had become nearly impossible".[3] It was "a long and quiet presence to this Icon (which) became the beginning of (his) healing".[4]

Rublev painted his icon in memory of St. Sergius, in a desire to bring fifteenth century Russia together around the name of God so its people would conquer "the devouring hatred of the world by the contemplation of the Holy Trinity".[5] He chose a moment in the Old Testament narrative of Abraham's three heavenly visitors in Gen. 18 to portray the Trinity. Notice that "the three men" of the story become three women in the icon. And the table which Abraham set for them beneath the oak of Mamre becomes an altar on which the flesh of the freshly slaughtered calf is placed in a chalice. The picture is shaped by two geometric forms. On the one hand, the figures compose a circle with the chalice at the center and each of the three figures speaks by means of her right hand. For Nouwen the central figure is God the Father and His two fingers point to the chalice and to God the Son.

The message is clear. It is the message of the incarnation itself; and the Son, understanding its full significance, accepts that painful

task in the gesture of the hand. The Holy Spirit opposite extends a hand of blessing on the action thus signified and at the same time directs our attention to the peculiar opening beneath the chalice. It is here, according to Nouwen, that the viewer is drawn literally inside the icon itself in an upward direction—through the chalice, to God the Father, and then to a tree.

At that point the second structural pattern becomes clear. For together with the alignment of the three faces, we now have a cross which speaks of the profound mystery of God's self revelation. As Nouwen put it, "It is a mystery beyond history, yet made visible through it. It is a divine mystery, yet human too. It is a joyful, sorrowful, and glorious mystery transcending all human emotions, yet not leaving any human emotion untouched".[6]

Is this a proper way in which to read the Old Testament? Are we permitted to use a single episode in a narrative complex in the book of Genesis as a window through which to view the whole of the Scriptures, as Rublev has done? I think so, in spite of the obvious tension such a reading creates with the historical critical method itself.

Then, the question of whether it is possible to press the analogy a bit further arises. Is it possible to read the Bible itself, as a whole, in a manner somewhat like Nouwen has read Rublev's icon? If we take the long hours necessary to contemplate the structural detail of the Bible taken as a whole, is it possible to see the hand of an artist at work in the formation and structure of the canon of sacred Scripture? And if so, is it possible that this contemplative insight may touch our emotions and ultimately transform us? Let's take a closer look and see.

It is possible to see two structural configurations in the canon of the Old Testament which curiously seem to intersect and point beyond themselves to the same redemptive/revelatory act of God which Nouwen has seen in Rublev's icon. The first of these structures is concentric in nature and embraces what we commonly call the Law and the Prophets. At the center we have two groups of four books in the Hebrew canon: / Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy // Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings /.

The first group appears on first glance to be the story of Moses, beginning with his birth (Exod. 1-2) and ending with his death (Deut. 34). A closer look at detail within Exodus and Deuteronomy will reveal further aspects of a concentric arrangement. There are two "Songs of Moses", Exod. 15 and Deut. 32, which in turn frame two great covenant ceremonies under Moses' leadership—one at Mount Sinai (Exod. 19) and the other on the Plains of Moab (Deut. 29-31). The first of these is concluded by the giving of the "ten commandments" (Exod. 20) followed by the "Covenant Code" (Exod. 21-23); whereas the second is preceded by a second giving of the "ten commandments" (Deut. 5) followed by the "Deuteronomic Code" (Deut. 12-26).[7] And the books of Exodus and Deuteronomy seem to frame the two parallel wilderness books of Leviticus and Numbers. Edward Newing has investigated the concentric design of this section of the Pentateuch in some detail and argues that the very center is to be found in Exod. 33 which he calls the "Promised Presence", where Moses gets a glimpse of the glory of YHWH.[8]

According to A. H. van Zyl, the so-called Deuteronomic History in the parallel group of four books also has a concentric design.[9] We move from the conquest of the land under charismatic leadership (Joshua) to the loss of the land under monarchic government (2 Kings). In between we have the possession of the land under charismatic leadership (Judges and 1 Samuel) set over against the possession of the land under monarchic government (2 Samuel and 1 Kings). If I am not mistaken, this section too has a center which consists of two parallel mountaintop experiences on the part of Elijah.[10] In 1 Kings 18 Elijah calls down fire from heaven in the great contest with the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel. In the next chapter Elijah, fleeing from Jezebel, makes his way to Mt. Horeb, the mountain of God's revelation to Moses where he too gains a glimpse of the glory of YHWH. But after each theophanic visitation the narrator is careful to comment that God was not present in the wind, nor the earthquake, nor the fire. This time God communicates His glory through the awesome silence of His absence. Needless to say, the confluence of these two encounters with God on that same sacred mountain seem to point beyond themselves to another mountaintop experience where Moses and Elijah are joined by a prophet greater than either of them through whom the glory of God is revealed in what the Gospel writers call the transfiguration of Jesus.[11]

These two groups of four books focus on Moses, over against the subsequent succession of leaders in ancient Israel which extends from Joshua to Jehoiachin, the last king of Judah who is released from prison in Babylon. These eight books are framed by the stories of the "Fathers" (Gen. 12-50) and the "Prophets". Joseph Blenkinsopp has noted the structural parallel between Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the "Book of the Twelve" so-called minor prophets, on the one hand, and Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the twelve sons of Jacob/Israel, on the other.[12] The designation of Abraham in the book of Genesis as a prophet (Gen. 20:7) who is the recipient of God's covenant promise now takes on a deeper dimension. In the words of the great classical prophets of ancient Israel, the old epic story receives a powerful new meaning. Here we meet another structure within the Old Testament canon which points beyond itself as well.

It is an empty tomb that draws each one of us inside the icon of sacred Scripture to discover the meaning of its curious structures.

The primary epic story of the Old Testament may be outlined in linear form in terms of a journey out of bondage in Egypt, through the waters into the wilderness, on route to the promised land. And though these terms are rooted in past events, however elusive they may prove to be to the historian, in the hands of the great prophets of Israel each of these symbols is transformed and projected beyond history into an eschatological dimension. The creation stories of Gen. 1-11 anticipate a new *Opus Dei*,[13] the city of God which will be described as a "New Jerusalem". The people of God see themselves as once more in exile and bondage, awaiting a new deliverance which will carry them through the waters and the wilderness of a New Exodus to a New Conquest which will become the Kingdom of God.[14]

Is it any wonder that Luke, in his description of the transfiguration of our Lord, describes the conversation between Moses, Elijah and Jesus as focusing on "His Exodus" which was to be accomplished at Jerusalem (Luke 9:28-31)? As Rublev saw, in his own way, it is an empty tomb that draws each one of us inside the icon of sacred Scripture to discover the meaning of its curious structures. Those structures converge in a cross and a great circle, where the end is also the beginning.

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[1] Henri J. M. Nouwen, "Rublev's Icon of the Trinity: A Reflection on the Spiritual Life", *Harvard Divinity Bulletin*, XIV/5 (June-August 1984), pp. 8-9.

[2] Sr. M. Helen Weier, O.S.C., *Festal Icons of the Lord* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1977), p. 45.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 9, col. 1.

[4] *Loc. cit.*

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 9, col. 3.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 9, col. 2.

[7] On the close connection between the Decalogue and chs. 12-26 of Deuteronomy see Stephen A. Kaufman, "The Structure of the Deuteronomic Law", *MAARAV* 1 (1979), pp. 105-158, who argues that Deut. 12:1-25:16 is in fact a literary expansion of the Decalogue on the part of a single author.

[8] Edward George Newing, "A Rhetorical & Theological Analysis of the Hexateuch", *The South East Asia Journal of Theology* 22 (1981), pp. 1-15.

[9] A. H. van Zyl, "Chronological Deuteronomic History", *5th World Congress of Jewish Studies*, vol. I (1969), pp. 12ff.

[10] For a more detailed discussion of the concentric structure of the Deuteronomic History which focuses on 1 Kings 18 & 19, see my article on "Huldah and the Men of Anathoth: Women in Leadership in the Deuteronomic History", *SBL Seminar Papers 1984* (forthcoming).

[11] Cf. Samuel Terrien, *The Elusive Presence: Toward a New Biblical Theology*" (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), pp. 227-36 and 422-28.

[12] Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Prophecy and Canon: A Contribution to the Study of Jewish Origins*" (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977), pp. 120-21 and G. Östborn, *Cult and Canon* (Uppsala, 1950), p. 44 which is cited by Blenkinsopp.

[13] The term is borrowed from Samuel Terrien, *ibid.*, p. 380.

[14] Cf. Isa. 11 where all of these images appear.

Annie Dillard: Praying With Her Eyes Open

by Eugene Peterson

Annie Dillard is an exegete of creation in the same way John Calvin was an exegete of Holy Scripture. The passion and intelligence Calvin brought to Moses, Isaiah, and Paul she brings to muskrats, rotifers, and mockingbirds. She reads the book of creation with the care and intensity of a skilled textual critic, probing and questioning, teasing out, with all the tools of mind and spirit at hand, the author's meaning.

Calvin was not indifferent to creation. He frequently referred to the world around us as a "theater of God's glory." He wrote of the Creator's dazzling performance in putting together the elements of matter and arranging the components of the cosmos. He was convinced of the wideranging theological significance of the doctrine of creation and knew how important the understanding of that doctrine was to protect against the gnosticism and manicheanism that are ever-present threats to the integrity of the incarnation. Matter is real. Flesh is good. Without a firm rooting in creation religion is always drifting off into some kind of pious sentimentalism, or sophisticated intellectualism, or snobbish elitism. The task of salvation is not to refine us into pure spirits so that we will not be cumbered with this too solid flesh. We are not angels, nor are we to become angels. The Word did not become a good idea, nor a numinous feeling, nor a moral aspiration; the Word became *flesh.* It also *becomes* flesh. Our Lord left us a command to remember and receive him in bread and wine, in acts of eating and drinking. Things matter. The physical is holy. It is extremely significant that in the opening sentences of the Bible, God speaks a world of energy and matter into being: light, moon, stars, earth, vegetation, animals, man, woman (not love and virtue, faith and salvation, hope and judgment, though they will come soon enough). Apart from creation, covenant has no structure, no context, no rootage in experienced reality. Calvin knew all this, appreciated it, and taught it.

But, curiously, he never seemed to have purchased a ticket to the theater and gone in and watched the performance. He knew that it was going on and knew that it was essential that it go on. But he was busy reading scripture and seemed not inclined to attend the theater himself. He lived for most of his adult ministry in Geneva, Switzerland, one of the most spectacularly beautiful places on earth. Not once does he comment on the wild thrust of the mountains into the skies. He never voices awe at the thunder of an avalanche. There is no evidence that he ever stooped to admire the gem flowers in the alpine meadows. He was not in the habit of looking up from his books and meditating before the lake loaded with sky that graced his city. He had other fish to fry. He would not be distracted from his scripture exegesis by going to the theater, even the legitimate theater of God's glory.

Annie Dillard has a season ticket to that theater. Day after day she takes her aisle seat and watches the performance. She is caught up in the drama of the creation, of the glory. *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* is a contemplative journal of her attendance at the theater over the course of a year. She is breathless in awe. She cries and laughs. In turn she is puzzled and dismayed. She is not an uncritical spectator. During intermissions she does not scruple to find fault with either writer or performance—all is not to her liking and some scenes bring her close to revulsion. But she always returns to the action and ends up on her feet applauding, Encore! Encore! "I think that the dying pray at the last not 'please,' but 'thank you,' as a guest thanks his host at the door. Falling from airplanes the people are crying thank you, thank you, all down the air; and the cold carriages draw up for them on the rocks. Divinity is not playful. The universe was not made in jest but in solemn incomprehensible earnest. By a power that is unfathomably secret, and holy, and fleet. There is nothing to be done about it, but ignore it, or see. And like Billy Bray I go my way, and my left foot says 'Glory,' and my right foot says 'Amen': in and out of Shadow Creek, upstream and down, exultant, in a daze, dancing, to the twin silver trumpets of praise" (*PTC, pg. 270–71*).

Pilgrim at Tinker Creek (*PTC*) was published in 1974 when Annie Dillard was 28 years old. It won the Pulitzer Prize and brought widespread but short lived acclaim. Nothing she has written since has commanded an equivalant attention. This is unfortunate, because American spirituality needs her. It is difficult to account for her neglect, especially in the evangelical Christian community, which should know better. Her unpretentiousness (the telephone call that told her that she had won the Pulitzer pulled her out of a softball game in which she was playing second base) and her youthful beauty (she has long yellow hair and smiles winningly) account, perhaps, for the failure to take her seriously as a mystical theologian, which she most certainly is. Subsequent books have developed the articulation of her spirituality. *Holy the Firm* (*HF*), 1977, wrestles pain to the mat in a wild, unforgettable agon. If it were a poem, which it started out to be, my entry for a title would be "Annie Agonistes". *Teaching a Stone to Talk* (*TST*), 1982, takes up listening posts and watchtowers from Atlantic to Pacific coasts and in both American hemispheres, contemplatively alert for the sacred voice and presence. *Living by Fiction* (*LF*), 1982, shifts ground slightly, searching for meaning in what people create with words (fictions) using the same critical and contemplative disciplines with which she examines what God creates with word. Her early volume of poems, *Tickets for a Prayer Wheel* (*TPW*), provides many of the texts and images that are developed in the prose works.

Annie Dillard is an exegete of creation in the same way John Calvin was an exegete of Holy Scripture.

Annie Dillard Enters Holy Orders

Shadow Creek. It started out as Tinker Creek, burgeoning with life: "The creator goes off on one wild, specific tangent after another, or millions simultaneously, with an exuberance that would seem to be unwarranted, and with an energy sprung from an unfathomable font. What is going on here . . . that it all flows so freely wild, like the creek, that it all surges in such a free, fringed tangle? Freedom is the world's water and weather, the world's nourishment freely given, its soil and sap: and the creator loves pizzazz" (*PTC* 137). Then one night when she was out walking, Tinker Creek vanished and Shadow Creek blocked its banks (*PTC* 68). The meaning leaked out of the creek. Imbecility replaced beauty. She praises anyway. Dark shapes intruded: the giant water bug, the dragonfly's terrible lip, the mantis's jaw, the parasites that make up ten percent of living creatures (she calls them "the devil's tithe"). Brutality, pain, mindlessness, waste. "Shadow is the blue patch where the light doesn't hit" (*PTC* 69). It is child's play to "appreciate nature" when the sun is shining and the birds are singing. Something far more strenuous is involved when we face and deal with the cruelty and terror which the creation also deals out in spades. How we handle "the blue patch where the light doesn't hit" is the wilderness test for creation-exegesis. It is this test that pushes Annie Dillard into a religious vocation, into holy orders.

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Annie Dillard does not go in for nature appreciation; she is no gossip of the numinous. Nor is she an explainer, flattening existence into what will fit a rationalizing diagram. "These things," she says "are not issues; they are mysteries" (*TST*, pg. 64). She is after bigger game—after meaning, after glory, after God. And she will not, attempting a shortcut in her pursuit, brush aside a single detail of the appalling imbecility that she meets in the shadows.

Here is where she parts company with most of her contemporaries and becomes such a valuable ally in Christian pilgrimmage. Avoiding the camps of neo-pagan humanists who go to the wilderness to renew their spirits, and neo-darwinist scientists who drag specimens into the classroom to explain them, she explores the world's text with the ancient but unfashionable tools of sacrifice and prayer. She embraces spiritual disciplines in order to deal with lost" (*HF* 24).

She seeks orientation. She draws a map of the islands visible on the horizon, fixing their locations, giving them names. She is looking around—seeing, smelling, listening: "All day long I feel created . . . created gulls pock the air, rip great curved seams in the settled air: I greet my created meal, amazed" (*HF* 25). Even so, all is not well. She remembers a night in the mountains of Virginia when she was reading by candlelight and moths kept flying into the candle. One incinerated moth served the candle as a wick, and the flamed soared through it, "a saffron-yellow flame that robed her to the ground like any immolating monk" (*HF* 17). There is pain out there. And death. There is also an immense mystery in it, something that has to do with sacrifice: the death gives light. The book she is reading is about the poet Rimbaud who burned himself

Annie Dillard does not go in for nature appreciation; she is no gossip of the numinous.

a Creator and a creation: "Then we can at least wail the right question into the swaddling band of darkness, or, if it comes down to that, choir the proper praise" (*PTC* 9).

Persons in the middle ages who withdrew from the traffic of the everyday to contemplate the ways of God and the mysteries of being, giving themselves to a life of sacrifice and prayer, were called anchorites (from the Greek, *anachoreo*, to withdraw to a place apart). They often lived in sheds fastened to the walls of a church. These spare shacks commonly had a world-side window through which the nun or monk received the sights and sounds of the creation as data for contemplation. These barnacle-like rooms were called anchorholds. Annie Dillard calls her cabin on Tinker Creek an anchorhold, and plays with the word: "I think of this house clamped to the side of Tinker Creek as an anchor-hold. It holds me at anchor to the rockbottom of the creek itself and it keeps me steadied in the current, as a sea anchor does, facing the stream of light pouring down. It's a good place to live; there's a lot to think about" (*PTC* 2). She announces her exegetical agenda. First, the active mystery of creeks: "Theirs is the mystery of the continuous creation and all that providence implies: the uncertainty of vision, the horror of the fixed, the dissolution of the presence, the intricacy of beauty, the nature of perfection." And then the passive mystery of the mountains: "Theirs is the one simple mystery of creation from nothing, of matter itself, anything at all, the given. Mountains are giant, restful, absorbent. You can heave your spirit into a mountain and the mountain will keep it, folded, and not throw it back as some creeks will. The creeks are the world with all its stimulus and beauty; I live there. But the mountains are home" (*PTC* 2).

It is clear now that this is not academic exegesis, weighing and measuring, sorting and parsing. This is contemplative exegesis, receiving and offering, wondering and praying. She describes her vocation as a blend of nun, thinker, and artist: "A nun lives in the fires of the spirit, a thinker lives in the bright wick of the mind, an artist lives jammed in the pool of materials. (Or, a nun lives, thoughtful and tough, in the mind, a nun lives, with that special poignancy peculiar to religious, in the exile of materials; and a thinker, who would think of something, lives in the clash of materials, and in the world of spirit where all long thoughts must lead; and an artist lives in the mind, that warehouse of forms, and an artist lives, of course in the spirit)" (*HF*, pg. 22).

Her vocational self-understanding is most explicit in *Holy the Firm*, written in three parts as the contemplative result of three consecutive days in her life when she lived on an island in Puget Sound.

On November 18 she wakes. The world streams in through her world-side window ("I live in one room, one long wall of which is glass" *HF* 22) and she is stunned by divinity: "Every day is a god, each day is a god, and holiness holds forth in time" (*HF* 11). She "reads" the world as a sacred script: "The world at my feet, the world through the window, is an illuminated manuscript whose leaves the wind takes, one by one, whose painted illuminations and halting words draw me, one by one, and I am dazzled in days and out in the life of art, word-flames that illuminate the world.

Still, the day is, incredibly, fresh and full of promise. She notes that Armenians, Jews, and Catholics all salt their newborn. And all the first-offerings that Israel brought to the Lord were "a convenant of salt" preserved and savory. And—the "god of today is a child, a baby new and filling the house, remarkably here in the flesh. He is day" (*HF* 29). She salts the day, as she salts her breakfast eggs, anticipating delight, exultant.

On November 19 an airplane crashes in a nearby field. She hears the sound of the crash. The pilot pulls his seven year old daughter from the wreckage and as he does a gob of ignited fuel splashes her face and burns her horribly. On November 18 she wrote, "I came here to study hard things—rock mountain and salt sea—and to temper my spirit on their edges. 'Teach me thy ways, O Lord' is, like all prayers, a rash one, and one I cannot but recommend." (*HF* 19). She hadn't bargained on having to deal with a seven year old girl with a burnt off face.

On November 18 God "socketed into everything that is, and that right holy" (*HF* 30). Now, on November 19, a child is in the hospital with her grieving parents at her side and "I sit at the window, chewing the bones in my wrist. Pray for them . . . Who will teach us to pray. The god of today is a glacier. We live in his shifting crevasses, unheard. The god of today is delinquent, a barnburner, a punk with a pittance of power in a match" (*HF* 49).

What is God up to? What is real? What is illusion? She asks all the hard questions: "Has God a hand in this? . . . Is anything firm, or is time on the loose? Did Christ descend once and for all to no purpose, in a kind of divine and kenotic suicide, or ascend once and for all, pulling his cross up after him like a rope ladder home?" (*HF* 47–8). And she faces the worst: "We're logrolling on a falling world, of time released from meaning and rolling loose, like one of Atlanta's golden apples, a bauble flung and forgotten, lapsed, and the gods on the lam" (*HF* 50).

She looks out of her world-side window and sees an island on the horizon that she hadn't noticed before. She names it God's Tooth.

On November 20 she walks to the store to buy the communion wine in preparation for Sunday worship at the white frame congregational church in the fir trees. Is there any accounting for this juxtaposition of the best and the worst, this grandeur and this obscenity of the past two days? She recalls and meditates the medieval idea that there is a created substance at the absolute base of everything, deep down "in the waxy deepness of planets, but never on the surface of planets where men can discern it; and it is in touch with the Absolute, at base . . . the name of this substance is: Holy the Firm" (*HF* 69). Everything eventually touches it. Something that touches something that touches Holy the Firm is in touch with the Absolute, with God. Islands are rooted in it, and trees, and the little girl with the slaughtered face.

Two weeks before, the little girl's parents had invited sixteen neighbors to their farm to make cider. Annie Dillard brought her cat and the girl played with it all afternoon. "All day long she was

dressing and undressing the yellow cat, sticking it into a black dress long and full as a nun's" (*HF* 40). She and the girl resembled each other in appearance.

She names her little look-alike friend, Julie Norwich. Juliana of Norwich was a fourteenth century English nun, an anchorite, who steadily and courageously, through a suffering lifetime, looked the world's pain full in the face, and summed up her contemplation in the remarkable sentence, "And all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well." From anyone else that sentence would risk ridicule as glib gibberish, but from this nun, "thoughtful and tough . . . in the exile of materials" it is tempered truth, flexible and hard. Annie Dillard gives the name of the nun whose life of prayer transmuted pain to wellness to the girl whose face two weeks before was much like her own but now puts every concept of beauty and meaning and God to hazard, and in meditative prayer addresses her: "Held fast by love in the world like the moth in wax, your life a wick, your head on fire with prayer, held utterly, outside and in, you sleep alone, if you call that alone, you cry God" (*HF* 76). She invites her into the full goodness of life in the years ahead of her healing: "Mornings you'll whistle, full of the pleasure of days, and afternoons of this or that, and nights cry love. So live." (*HF* 76).J

Then an abrupt turning, returning to her own vocation. Earlier she observed that "a life without sacrifices is abomination" (*HF* 72). Now she embraces this sacrifice, burning in a life of art and thought and prayer through the canonical hours. While "elsewhere people buy shoes" she kneels at the alter rail, holding on for dear life in the dizzying swirl of glory and brutality, and calls to Julie Norwich that she herself will be Julie Norwich. The last words of the book: "I'll be the nun for you. I am now" (*HF* 76).

Annie Dillard Reads Scripture

Even though her field is creation, not scripture exegesis, Calvin would not, I think, be displeased with her competence in scripture. She has assimilated scripture so thoroughly, is so saturated with its cadences and images, that it is simply at hand, unbidden, as context and metaphor for whatever she happens to be writing about. She does not, though, use scripture to prove or document; it is not a truth she "uses" but one she lives. Her knowlege of scripture is stored in her right brain rather than her left; nourishment for the praying imagination rather than fuel for apologetic argument. She seldom quotes scripture; she alludes constantly—there is scarcely a page that does not contain one or several allusions, but with such nonchalance, not letting her left hand know what her right is doing, that someone without a familiarity with scripture might never notice the unobtrusive ubiquity of biblical precept and story.

The verbal word of scripture is the wide world within which she gives her exegetical attention to the non-verbal word of creation. The revealed world of torah and gospel is the spacious environment in which she works out the localized meanings of sycamores, weasels, eclipses and sunlighted minnows. A sense of proportion develops out of her scripture reading in which the so-called "general" revelation is subordinate to and enclosed by the "specific" revelation of scripture. She would agree, I think, with P.T. Forsyth: "It is a vast creation, but a vaster salvation."

One example: the title essay in *Teaching a Stone to Talk*, where I count seventeen allusions to holy scripture (not counting repeats) and three quotations.

She tells the story of Larry, her neighhbor on a Puget Sound island, who is trying to teach a stone to talk. He keeps the stone on his mantle, "protected by a square of untanned leather, like a canary asleep under its cloth. Larry removes the cover for the stone's lessons" (*TST* 68). The quirky story of the island crank is representational: "Nature's silence is its one remark" (*TST* 69); we are restive with the silence and are trying to raise a peep out of mute mother nature.

She finds the orienting background to the story of Larry in the story of Israel, scared witless at Siani with its thunder and lightning, asking Moses to beg God, "Please, never speak to them directly again. 'Let not God speak with us, lest we die.' Moses took the message. And God, pitying their self-consciousness, agreed. He agreed not to speak to the people anymore. And he added to Moses, 'Go see to them, Get into your tents again" (*TST* 70).

Now the entire non-human world is silent. We told God, like we tell a child who is annoying us, to shut up and to to his room. He heard our prayer. After these many centuries we are bored and fitful with the unrelieved patter of human speech. Even our scientists who earlier seemed to be the most determined of all to confine speech to the human are trying to teach chimpanzees to talk, decipher the language of whales, and listen for messages from some distant star.

The island in Puget Sound on which Larry is trying to teach a stone to talk is one result of Israel's prayer; the Galapagos Islands are another. Since Darwin's time scientists have gone there, treating the island as a laboratory in which to find meaning in a world dissociated from the living voice of God, to study the process of evolution, to unravel the biological story of the race. Annie Dillard goes there reading a different text, a creation text that is environed by a biblical text. She calls the Galapagos a "kind of metaphysics laboratory" (*TST* 73). She might as well have called them a prayer laboratory.

Annie Dillard does not use scripture to prove or document; it is not a truth she "uses" but one she lives.

The sea lion is the most popular resident of the Galapagos, gregarious and graceful, welcoming and sportive, "engaged in full-time play" (*TST* 74). Visitors joke that when they "come back" they would like to come as a sea lion. "The sea lion game looked unbeatable." After long reflection and another visit to the island, she made a different choice: the *palo santo* tree. She had hardly noticed them on her first visit. The trees were thin, pale, wispy—miles of them, half dead, the stands looking like blasted orchards. If she were to "come back," she decided it would be not as a sea lion, evolved into the nearly human, but as a *palo santo* tree, devolved into the nearly dead. She chose the *palo santo* because even though "the silence is all there is," (*TST* 76), it is not a silence of absence but presence. It is not a sterile silence but a pregnant silence. The non-human silence is not because there is nothing to say but because in disobedience or unbelief or sheer terror we asked God not to speak and he heard our prayer. But though unspeaking, God is still there. What is needed from us is witness. The *palo santo* is a metaphor for witness. The premier biblical witness, John the Baptist, said "He must increase but I must decrease." The witness does not call attention to itself; what it points to is more important. Being takes precedence over using, explaining, possessing. The witness points, mute, so not to interfere with the sound of silence: the *palo santos* ". . . interest me as emblems of the muteness of the human stance in relation to all that is not human. I see us all as *palo santo* trees, holy sticks, together watching all that we watch, and growing in silence" (*TST* 74).

Witness is the key word in all this. It is an important biblical word in frequent contemporary use. It is a modest word—saying what is there; honestly testifying to exactly what we see, what we hear. But when we enlist in a cause it is almost impossible to do it right: we embellish, we fill in the blanks, we varnish the dull passages, we gild the lily just a little to hold the attention of our auditors. Sea lion stuff. Important things are at stake—God, salvation—and we want so much to involve outsiders in these awesome realities that we leave the humble ground of witness and use our words to influence and motivate, to advertise and publicize. Then we are no longer witnesses but lawyers arguing the case, not always with scrupulous attention to detail. After all, life and death issues are before the jury.

Annie Dillard returns us to the spare, simple, modest role of witness. We live in a time when the voice of God has been extin-

guished in the creation. We want the stones to talk, the heavens to declare the glory of God, but "the very holy mountains are keeping mum. We doused the burning bush and cannot rekindle it; we are lighting matches in vain under every green tree . Did the wind use to cry, and the hills shout forth praise? Now speech has perished from among the lifeless things of earth, and living things say very little to very few" (*TST* 70).

Our necessary and proper work in such a world is witness— like the *palo santo* trees. Out in the open, in our desacralized and much-studied Galapagos Island world, perfect witnesses, watching, mute, and waving our arms, calling the world's attention to what is, the silence—for "whereever there is stillness there is the still small voice, God's speaking from the whirlwind, nature's old song and dance, the show we drove from town" (*TST* 70).

("On a Hill Far Away", the anecdotal story that follows "Teaching a Stone to Talk", makes the same point with different materials. It is a winsome-pathetic account, told with sympathy and understanding, of parishioners of Jerry Falwell who have been instructed by their pastor to witness to every person they meet with, "Do you know the Lord as your personal savior?" But the witness is intrusive, inappropriately verbal, obsessive with duty, insensitive to context. Larry teaching his stone to talk and Jerry Falwell teaching his parishioners to accost everyone with, "Do you know the Lord as your personal savior" are more alike than different, both noble but grotesque parodies of witness.)

Two pithy quotations (but not marked as quotations), the first from the Old the second from the New Testament, conclude this essay: Quit your tents. Pray without ceasing.

Quit your tents. Earlier she had quoted from Deuteronomy: God ordered the Israelites who did not want to hear his voice, "Get into your tents again." It is time now to come out. Get out into creation. Our task, though, when we come out is not to put creation to use either for profit or piety: "All we can do with the whole inhuman array is watch it . . . We are here to witness. There is nothing else to do with those mute materials we do not need . . . We do not use the songbirds, for instance. We do not eat many of them; we cannot befriend them; we cannot persuade them; we cannot befriend them; we cannot persuade them to eat more mosquitoes or plant fewer weed seeds. We can only witness them—whoever they are" (*TST* 72–3).

Pray without ceasing. Prayer is personal openess to God, however he may present himself. It is the decision to be intimate with the holy. It does not demand, it is. The eccentric effort of Larry in teaching his stone to talk centers into prayer: " . . . like any other meaningful effort, the ritual involves sacrifice, the suppression of self-consciousness, and a certain precise tilt of the will, so that the will becomes transparent and hollow, a channel for the work" (*TST* 68). The effort to teach a stone to talk and undo the results of our earlier (Israel's) prayer is admirable and understandable—but futile. What is required is to listen to the silence. And the way to listen is to pray, for it is God to whom we are listening—not chimpanzee speech, not whale language, not extraterrestrial messages. "You take a step in the right direction to pray to this silence" (*TST* 76).

Annie Dillard Goes To Church

The American writers with whom Annie Dillard is often grouped—Henry Thoreau, Waldo Emerson, John Muir—didn't go to church. They distanced themselves from what they saw as the shabbiness and hypocrisy of institutional religion and opted for the pine purity of forest cathedrals. Emily Dickinson gave them their text: "Some worship God by going to church/I worship him staying at home/with a bobolink for a chorister/and an orchard for a throne." Their numerous progeny spend Sunday mornings on birdwatching field trips and Sierra Club walks. Annie Dillard goes to church: "I know only enough of God to want to worship him, by any means ready to hand . . . there is one church here, so I go to it" (*HF* 55, 57). It doesn't matter that it is out of fashion, she goes anyway: "On a big Sunday there might be twenty of us there; often I am the only person under sixty, and feel as though I'm on an archaeological tour of Soviet Russia" (*HF* 57). It is unfashionable because it is ridiculous. How can searchers after God and seekers after beauty stomach the "dancing bear act" that is staged in Christian churches, protestant and catholic alike, week after week? Annie Dillard, cheerfully and matter-of-factly, goes anyway. Her *tour de force* on worship, "An Expedition to the Pole", provides the image and rationale. Wherever we go, to the Pole or the Church " . . . there seems to be only one business at hand—that of finding workable compromises between the sublimity of our ideas and the absurdity of the fact of us" (*TST* 30).

In *Pilgrim* she wrote, "These northings drew me, present northings, past northings, the thought of northings. In the literature of polar exploration, the talk is of northing. An explorer might scrawl in his tattered journal, 'Latitude 82 15' N. We accomplished 20 miles of northing today, in spite of the shifting pack.' Shall I go northing? My legs are long." (*PTC* 249). She describes the parallel goals. The Pole of Relative Inaccessibility is "that imaginary point on the Arctic Ocean farthest from land in any direction." Reading the accounts of polar explorers one is impressed that at root they were seeking the sublime. "Simplicity and purity attracted them; they set out to perform clear tasks in uncontaminated lands . . . they praised the lands' spare beauty as if it were a moral or a spiritual quality: 'icy halls of cold sublimity.' 'lofty peaks perfectly covered with eternal snow' " (*TST* 28). That is geography. There is an equivalent Pole in worship: "the Absolute is the Pole of Relative Inaccessibility located in metaphysics. After all, one of the few things we know about the Absolute is that it is relatively inaccessible. It is the point of spirit farthest from every accessible point of spirit in all directions. Like the others, it is a Pole of the Most Trouble. It is also—I take this as a given—the pole of great price" (*TST* 19).

She quotes Fridtj of Nansen on polar exploration, referring to "the great adventure of the ice, deep and pure as infinity . . . the eternal round of the universe and its eternal death" and notes that everywhere "polar prose evokes these absolutes, these ideas of 'eternity' and 'perfection' as if they were some perfectly visible part of the landscape" (*TST* 28–9). And she quotes Pope Gregory who calls us to Christian worship "to attain to somewhat of the unencompassed light, by stealth, and scantily" (*TST* 44).

She tells the comic-tragic stories of polar explorers who "despite the purity of their conceptions . . . manhauled their humanity to the Poles" (*TST* 29). The Franklin Expedition in 1845, with 138 officers and men carried a "1,200 volume library, a hand-organ playing fifty tunes, china place settings for officers and men, cut-glass wine goblets, sterling silver flatware, and no special clothing for the Arctic, only the uniforms of Her Majesty's Navy" (*TST* 24–5). It was a noble enterprise and they were nobly dressed for it. They all died. Their corpses were found with pieces of backgammon board and a great deal of table silver engraved with officer's initials and family crests. Dignity was all.

Sir Robert Falcon Scott had a different kind of dignity: he thought the purity of polar search dictated a purity of effort unaided by dogs or companions. He also died. "There is no such thing as a solitary polar explorer, fine as the conception is" (*TST* 27). Some of the most moving documents of polar writing, expressing his lofty sentiments, his purity and dignity and self-control, were found under his frozen carcass.

The explorers who made it weren't so fussy. They abandoned their roles, their privileges, their preconceived notions, and adapted to the conditions of pack ice and glaciers in the light-drenched land.

Annie Dillard going to worship—"a kind of northing is what I wish to accomplish, a single-minded trek toward that place . . . " (*PTC* 251)—faces equivalent difficulties. Her experiences in the church's worship are interweaved with commentary on polar explorations. The amateurism is distressing: "A high school stage play is more polished than this service we have been rehearsing since the year one. In two thousand years we have not worked out the kinks" (*TST* 20).

The attempts to be relevant are laughable: "I have overcome a fiercely anti-Catholic upbringing in order to attend Mass simply and soley to escape Protestant guitars. Why am I here? Who gave these nice Catholics guitars? Why are they not mumbling in Latin and performing superstitious rituals? What is the Pope thinking of?" (*TST* 18).

The blithe ignorance is frightening: "Why do we people in churches seem like cheerful, brainless tourists on a packaged tour of the Absolute? . . . On the whole, I do not find Christians, outside the catacombs, sufficiently sensible of conditions. Does anyone have

the foggiest idea what sort of power we so blithely invoke? Or, as I suspect, does not one believe a word of it? The churches are children playing on the floor with their chemistry sets, mixing up a batch of TNT to kill a Sunday morning. It is madness to wear ladies' straw hats and velvet hats to church; we should all be wearing crash helmets. Ushers should issue life preservers and signal flares: they should lash us to our pews" (*TST* 40). Explorers unmindful of "conditions" died. Why don't similarly unprepared worshipers perish on the spot?

Never mind. She sheds her dignity, sloughs off schooling and scruples, abandons propriety. "I would rather, I think, undergo the famous dark night of the soul than encounter in church the dread hootenanny—but these purely personal preferences are of no account, and maladaptive to boot" (*TST* 33). So she manhauls her humanity to her pew, gives up her personal dignity and throws in her lot with random people (*TST* 31). She realizes that one can no more go to God alone than go to the Pole alone. She further realizes that even though the goal is pure, the people are not pure, and if we want to go to the Land we must go with the People, even when they are playing banjos, singing stupid songs, and giving vacuous sermons. "How often have I mounted this same expedition, has my absurd barque set out half-caulked for the Pole?" (*TST* 44).

So she worships. Weekly she sets out for the Pole of Relative Inaccessibility, "where the twin oceans of beauty and horror meet" (*PTC* 69). Dignity and culture abandoned, silence and solitude abandoned, she joins the motly sublime/ludicrous people who show up in polar expeditions and church congregations. "Week after week we witness the same miracle: that God, for reasons unfathomable, refrains from blowing our dancing bear act to smithereens. Week after week Christ washes the disciples' dirty feet, handles their very toes, and repeats, It is all right—believe it or not—to be people" (*TST* 20).

The spiritualities involved in going to the Pole (and the creek, and the mountains, and to Church) are essentially the same. Why choose between them? Annie Dillard embraces both. and she deals with the hard things in both ventures, the absurd vanities in the explorers and the embrassing shabbiness in the worshipers, with immense charity: "We are clumped on an ice floe drifting over the black polar sea. Heaven and earth are full of our terrible singing" (*TST* 34). She is blessedly free, whether in the wilderness or at worship, of sentimentalism and snobbery (the twin sins of touristy aesthetes). She is as accepting of absurdities in Christian worship as she is of absurdities in polar exploration. She is saying, I think, that we have put up with nature sentimentalism and liturgical snobbery long enough. If there are difficulties in going to church they are no greater than those encountered in going to the Pole. Besides, as she says, "nobody said things were going to be easy" (*TST* 18).

Annie Dillard Prays With Her Eyes Open

There are two great mystical traditions in the life of prayer, sometimes labeled apophatic and kataphatic. Kataphatic prayer uses: icons, symbols, ritual, incense. The creation is the way to the Creator. Apophatic prayer attempts emptiness: the creature distracts from the Creator and so the mind is systematically emptied of idea, image, sensation until there is only the simplicity of being. Kataphatic prayer is "praying with your eyes open"; apophatic prayer is "praying with your eyes shut." At our balanced best the two traditions intermingle, mix, and cross-fertilize. But we are not always at our best. The western church, and even more so the evangelical church, is heavily skewed on the side of the apophatic, "praying with your eyes shut." The rubric for prayer when I was a child was, "Fold your hands, bow your head, shut your eyes, and we'll pray." My early training carries over into my adult practice. Most of my praying still is with my eyes shut. I need balancing.

Annie Dillard prays with her eyes open. She says, Spread out your hands, lift your head, open your eyes, and we'll pray: "It is still the first week in January, and I've got great plans. I've been thinking about seeing. There are lots of things to see, unwrapped gifts and free surprises" (*PTC* 15). We start out with her on what we suppose will be no more than a walk through the woods. It is not long before we find ourselves in the company of saints and monks, enlisted in the kind of contemplative seeing "requiring a lifetime of dedicated struggle" (*PTC* 32). She gets us into the theater that Calvin told us about and we find ourselves in the solid biblical companionship of psalmists and prophets who watched the "hills skip like lambs" and heard the "trees clap their hands" alert to God everywhere, in everything, praising, praying with our eyes open: "I leap to my feet, I cheer and cheer." (*PTC* 32).

THEOLOGY

Redeeming the Evangelical Experiment

by William Abraham

It is becoming increasingly clear that the recent renaissance of the evangelical tradition is proving to be more ephemeral than its advocates ever realized. The renaissance itself was real enough. In the 1950's and 1960's, there was a remarkable attempt to develop a conservative version of the Christian faith which would shed the worst of the fundamentalism of an earlier generation, incorporate what was best in critical scholarship, and include a serious social ethic. Billy Graham, perhaps more than anyone, launched this effort when he broke with fundamentalism and established an inclusivist policy in evangelism. He ultimately became accepted across the world. The cost to Graham was considerable: theologically, he had to rework his views in ecclesiology and on the activity of the Holy Spirit; personally, he had to endure the wrath of his fundamentalist brethren.

Graham, however, could never have made it on his own. He is an evangelist rather than a serious theologian, so it was fortunate that around him there gathered a new generation of scholars who provided the conceptual tools to cope with his break from fundamentalism. Chief among these were figures like Harold Ockenga, Carl Henry, Bernard Ramm, Harold Lindsell, Edward Carnell, and Francis Schaeffer.[1] Their efforts proved so successful that in a short time they had established themselves as the standard-bearers of the evangelical tradition. Their vision of the heritage became rapidly institutionalized in educational centers like Fuller Theological Seminary and Wheaton College, magazines like *Christianity Today*, in para-church groups like IVCF, and in a host of media, from dictionaries to theological journals, publishing houses, conferences, and creedal announcements.

The material results and effects of the new vision are worthy of sustained applause. It spurred on evangelicals to take academic scholarship seriously. It pressed evangelicals to heed the cry of a hurting world. It introduced evangelicals to the classical tradition of the church. It led to a much less suspicious attitude toward other Christians outside evangelicalism. It provided a host of Christians with a plausible body of doctrine. It called the church at large to take evangelism seriously. It gave hope to those who feared that Christianity required them to send their brains on a permanent holiday. Above all, it provided the resources and motivation that was needed by evangelicals if they were to think seriously and responsibly about their faith.

So successful was the shift out of fundamentalism into conservative evangelicalism that it is now very difficult to lump the two movements together and interpret them as one. James Barr has skillfully attempted to do this, but his efforts owe more to deliberate polemical intent than they do to historical accuracy. Barr has persistently failed to note that there was a deliberate break between conservative evangelicalism and fundamentalism; he has either not

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seen or acknowledged that there was a genuine evangelical renaissance in the last generation.[2]

Yet the substance of Barr's proposals are correct.[3] The modern evangelical crusade still owes so much to the theology of fundamentalism that in the contest to preserve what is best in the evangelical tradition there is value in insisting that the commonly known modern version of the tradition is a timid and inadequate reworking of fundamentalism. This claim deserves attention, for it is a much more radical criticism of the movement than the criticism normally offered by evangelical insiders. The usual criticism is social and moral.[4] Evangelicals, it is repeatedly said, have failed to develop an adequate social ethic; they have ignored the structural character of evil and failed to develop a suitable orthopraxis. But this criticism leaves the theology of modern evangelicalism intact and secure. Yet it is precisely the theology of the tradition which is least secure and adequate.

There are two ways of developing this thesis: the high way and the low way. In taking the high way one does theology proper. One argues carefully that modern evangelical theology fails as a coherent, systematic, and biblical expression of the Christian message. For example, its internal weighting of the various elements of theology is fundamentally Cartesian in character. There is an obsession with intellectual foundations, reflected most clearly in the debate about inerrancy, which suffocates the actual articulation of essential Christian doctrine and relocates the center of Christianity not in the affections but in the mind. Equally one could argue that the actual work done on the foundations is conspicuously inadequate. Thus the claims proposed about the Bible cannot be reconciled with the actual character of the Bible as we know it; they betray a superficial awareness of the analogical character of religious discourse; they invariably confuse divine inspiration and divine speaking, and they rest on arguments which are narrowly historical in nature.[5] So might one travel along the high road of theology proper.

This is a difficult road to negotiate. The relevant data are rich and open to varying interpretation, the arguments are complex and long-winded, and in time the debate reaches an impasse in the quicksands of contested philosophical and hermeneutical presuppositions. So proponents of the modern neo-evangelical experiment will deny or fend off theological criticism. If need be, the Goliaths of the movement can readily summon a new round of scholarly weapons and armor to ward off the enemy. So leaders of the tradition can trade on the complexity to claim that they have reached the desired goal of theological coherence.

Yet it is debatable whether the exponents of the present expression of the evangelical tradition have the resources to mount a really substantive, theological defense of their position. On the contrary, the evidence indicates that several of the key architects, rather than take this difficult route, have regressed into a classical fundamentalist position. It is surely no accident that Francis Schaeffer's last work announced that the modern evangelical movement was set on nothing less than a disaster course.[6] Equally, it is no accident that Jerry Falwell, a real old-fashioned fundamentalist, both by name and by nature, can team up with Harold Lindsell and draw on his work in his efforts to revitalize the fundamentalism of the twenties and thirties. Schaeffer and Lindsell are regressing into fundamentalism as a way out of the intrinsic theological instability of the neoevangelical experiment. Sensitive historical perception can see this quite clearly despite the fact we are in the midst of the process we are observing.

In mounting this kind of criticism of modern evangelicalism, one has abandoned theology proper and turned to historical analysis for evidence. In other words, one has left the high road of theological appraisal and turned down the low road of historical study.

It is exactly at this juncture that the current celebrations of the founding of Methodism are so crucial. By exploring the vision and practice that lies behind the great evangelical revival of the eighteenth century which created Methodism and sustains the Wesleyan tradition, one very quickly begins to question the theological adequacy of fundamentalism and its modern evangelical offspring. In other words, modern evangelicals have as much to learn from Wesley as do modern apostate or nominal Methodists who are presently wont to rattle the theological bones of their esteemed founder, shiver a little in embarassed silence, and then return to business as usual. In fact there is so much to learn that it will take at least a generation for its full implications to be recognized and digested.

The crucial source of the Wesleyan tradition is John Wesley. There is scarcely a single important theological issue where Wesley has not something illuminating to offer.[7] In his own inimitable fashion he wrote succinctly and critically on the central themes of any balanced expression of the Christian message. Creation, redemption, justification, assurance, sin, sanctification, grace, predestination, revelation, reason, authority, the sacraments, prayer, and so on, were thought through rigorously. His short, devastating critique of unconditional predestination has been either ignored or quietly assimilated; it has never been adequately answered.[8] His inclusivist approach to the issue of authority, an approach that is genuinely open to relevant considerations drawn from tradition, reason and experience, is a fascinating attempt to integrate the insights of both the Reformation and the Enlightenment. His doctrine of sanctification, despite its initial strangeness and ambiguity, is a valiant effort to allow divine grace to have the primacy over human evil and thereby drive out both pessimism and moralism from Christian ethics. His emphasis on a catholic spirit sought to kill sectarianism at its foundations; equally it makes clear that the real heart and soul of Christianity lies in the seat of the affections and not in doctrinal orthodoxy. Steady, critical interaction with Wesley's writings will bring to light a unique configuration of the central ingredients of the classical Christian heritage. In short, Wesley constitutes a crucial theological exponent and theological model of the historic evangelical tradition. Like Calvin and Luther, he is one of the great doctors of the heritage.

There is scarcely a single important theological issue where Wesley has not something illuminating to offer.

He deserves this status not just because his writings intrinsically merit such a reading, but because he also initiated and inspired a body of theological reflection every whit as impressive as that developed by the successors of Luther and Calvin. This fact can no longer be ignored. From Fletcher, Clarke and Benson in his own day, through Watson, Miley, Pope, Nast and a host of others in the nineteenth century, down to Gamertsfelder, Wiley, Hildebrandt, Sangster and a goodly number in our own century, there is a long line of recognizably Wesleyan theologicans who deserve to be taken seriously. We need not here decide either the pedigree or the boundaries of the tradition. All we need to do is recognize its existence and thereby implicitly acknowledge the intellectual stature of its founder and mentor.[9]

In insisting on the theological stature of Wesley, I am not of course seeking to deny the role commonly assigned to Wesley in evangelical circles. Wesley was an evangelist, a church-builder, a genius of an organizer, a sacramentalist, a prophet, a social activist and reformer, a hymn-writer, a friend of the poor, and the like. In his own way he was even a competent logician and philosopher. But these common designations not only serve to highlight that he is a fascinating figure in the history of the church, they show how informed and rich he was as a theologian. It is precisely this latter designation that modern evangelicals have ignored or suppressed. Perhaps they have suspected all along that if they travel the low road of historical study in the origins of Methodism they will find the central thesis of this paper abundantly vindicated.

At the very least, such study reveals that modern evangelicalism is a far cry from the version of the tradition articulated by Wesley. Wesley offers a different weighting of the central elements of the Christian message. He offers a different analysis of religious au-

thority. He openly rejects the much beloved doctrine of eternal security. He provides a very radical analysis of the pastoral needs of new converts. He shows a remarkable openness to the Enlightenment. He cares passionately for the writings of the early Fathers of the church. He is ecumenical in outlook. He has a very pronounced love for the eucharist. He is utterly determined that everyone think and let think. Compared to the Wesleyan paradigm of the tradition, the modern evangelical experiment offers a very different articulation of the evangelical heritage. Like its fundamentalist parent, it has reduced the high peaks of classical Christian doctrine to a narrow range of concerns. It has failed to convince its own adherents that the issue of authority can be solved by invoking Warfield's dooctrine of inspiration. It has only reluctantly, if at all, come to terms with the insights of the Enlightenment. It has very little sense of a catholic spirit. It has added precious little to the church's liturgical life. It is conspiciously lacking in any deep love and understanding of the diverse riches of the Christian past.

No doubt the contrasts could be drawn very differently than I have drawn them here. The point, however, is that contrasts must be drawn. One cannot work honestly and intensively with the theological proposals of Wesley without noticing how he differs quite radically from the editions of evangelicalism currently available. This in itself has radical consequences for evangelicals today.

It means that we must provide a much richer analysis of the internal, theological contents of the heritage. To follow the normal course and offer a list of doctrinal propositions as the essence of the heritage is totally inadequate. Such an approach is not just superficial, it is downright misleading. What we have to do is develop a complex historical narrative which brings out the inescapably contested character of the tradition. To be sure there are elements in common. Evangelicals are committed to a set of specific theological proposals. But they have differed quite radically across the generations on how best to express and defend these. Once one looks carefully at, say, Calvin, Luther, and Wesley, one soon sees that they are locked in mortal combat in a fascinating contest to capture the riches of the Christian gospel. Thus the contrasts across the generations call us to a radical revision of evangelical self-understanding.

They also call us to alter the present climate of debate. Rather than go for the quick kill by verbally excommunicating each other from the tradition, evangelicals should joyously enter into a serious contest to work out the riches of the heritage in optimum fashion. This will not be easy. It will involve eschewing the temptation to regress into fundamentalism. It will mean facing up to the serious inadequacy of the neo-evangelical experiment. Above all, it will require a full acknowledgement of the fallible and experimental character of the evangelical position. Whatever it costs, evangelicals must abandon the spirit of hostility and suspicion so generously fueled by modern fundamentalism and provoke one another to outthink both their friends and their opponents in a spirit of mutual love and friendly rivalry. Celebrating the contribution of Wesley to the tradition can provide the catalyst for such a healthy development.

It can also spur us all on to the theological renewal of the tradition. Following the low road of historical study of a Wesley (or a Calvin, or a Luther, or a Warfield) has its limits. Remembering Wesley's achievement can, of course, do much for us. It can establish the contested character of the heritage and highlight afresh the great riches of the past. It can chasten our theological reflection and enliven our theological judgement. It can relieve us of the guilt and burden of the recent past and breathe new life into weary hearts and minds. It can even call into question the theological adequacy of the present phase of the evangelical tradition. It cannot, however, conclusively demolish or conclusively establish the theological legitimacy of any version of the heritage. To do that we must return to the high road of theology proper.

It is to this task that a fresh awareness of Wesley ultimately points. As things stand, his position threatens and calls into question much that currently passes for evangelicalism. Those who share this assessment must attempt to show that this is not idle talk by articulating a theology that outwits and outshines the present paradigm. Those who reject it must back up their opposing claims by providing better proposals than those enunciated by Wesley and his present admirers. Either way we are summoned to optimum theological performance. Either way life shall not be boring. Either way we can hope and pray that God will in this process redeem the current evangelical experiment.

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[1] This is a small sample of a host of theologians who could be mentioned.

[2] Barr's recent book *Escaping from Fundamentalism* (London: SCM,1984) shows no improvement on his earlier Fundamentalism (Philadelphia: Westminister, 1978) in this respect.

[3] Most evangelicals have missed Barr's deep concern to encourage the development of a responsible evangelical tradition.

[4] Other criticisms have focused on failure to pursue critical study of the Bible, failure to develop adequate liturgical practices, failure to be suitably ecumenical, and so on.

[5] Nowhere is this more obvious than in the debate launched by Jack Rogers and Donald McKim in *The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible: An Historical Approach* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979).

[6] *The Great Evangelical Disaster* (Westchester, Illinois: Crossway, 1984).

[7] The best place to begin the study of Wesley is with Wesley's own writings. For a useful selection consult Albert Outler, *John Wesley* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964).

[8] The full text of Wesley's "Predestination calmly considered" can be found in *John Wesley*, ed. Albert Outler.

[9] A useful descriptive survey of Wesleyan theology is provided by Thomas A. Langford, *Practical Divinity: Theology in the Wesleyan Tradition* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1983). For a fascinating analysis of the 'apostasy' of the Wesleyan tradition from its Wesleyan origins see Robert E. Chiles, *Theological Transition in American Methodism: 1790-1935* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1965).

CHURCH HISTORY

Religion and the American Dream: A Study in Confusion and Tension

by Robert D. Linder

"The American Dream" is an illusive concept.[1] Roughly speaking, it has something to do with freedom and equality of opportunity. As a matter of fact, in the political realm, it involves the shared dream of a free and equal society. The fact that the reality does not fit the dream is probably well known, for no society can be both free and equal at the same time. Even in a relatively open and mobile nation like America, there are still relatively few at the top of the heap, many more in the middle, and some at or near the bottom. Nevertheless, in the United States, even those who have the most reason to deny its reality still cling to its promise, if not for themselves, at least for their children. In any case, it can be said of the American Dream, in the words of sociologist W. Lloyd Warner, that ". . .though some of it is false, by virtue of our firm belief in it, we have made some of it true."[2] What is true in the case of the American Dream and society-at-large also seems to be true in the realm of religion and the Dream.[3]

Puritan John Winthrop's oft-cited and well-known 1630 metaphor of "A City upon a Hill" and sometime Baptist and Seeker Roger Williams' less known but equally hallowed vision of a country in which, as he observed in 1644, "God requireth not an uniformity of Religion to be inacted and inforced in any civil state . . ." provide the background for understanding the historic tension between two aspects of the American Dream in religion. Over the years, the Puritan sense of cosmic mission as God's New Israel eventually became part of America's national identity and the Radical stand for religious freedom developed into the American ideal of religious and cultural pluralism. And so the two dreams of Americans for a religiously harmonious nation and a religiously free nation have existed side-by-side down to the present-day—sometimes in relative peace but often in considerable tension.[4]

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The First American Dream and Religion: Puritan vs. Radical

The Puritans who gave the country its rich imagery of America as a City on a Hill and as a second Israel lived with a great deal of tension themselves. They were, by self-definition, elect spirits, segregated from the mass of humankind by an experience of conversion, fired by the sense that God was using them to revolutionize human history, and committed to the execution of his will. As such, they constituted a crusading force of immense energy. However, in reality, it was an energy which was often incapable of united action because the saints formed different conceptions of what the divine will entailed for themselves, their churches, and the unregenerate world at-large. But, still, they were certain of their mission in the New World—to be an example of how a convenanted community of heartfelt believers could function. Thus, in New England the relation of church and state was to be a partnership in unison, for church and state alike were to be dominated by the saints.[5]

This arrangement worked fairly well for the first American Puritans, but in the second and third generations the tension began to mount between the concept of a New Israel composed of elect saints on the one hand, and the Puritan conviction that true Christians were those who had experienced a genuine conversion to Christ on the other. Everything in the New Israel depended on the saints. They were the church and they ruled the state. But what if the second generation did not respond to the call for conversion and the supply of saints ran out? The answer was eventually to create a device usually called the halfway covenant, whereby those of the second generation who did not experience conversion in the Puritan mold could be admitted to church membership after making a profession of communal obedience and thereby have their children baptized in order to place them under the covenant. The Puritans found how difficult it was to make certain that the second and third generations were soundly converted and thus qualified to keep the City on the Hill operating properly according to the ordinances of God.

In any case, the Puritans maintained their sense of destiny and purpose by means of this patch-work arrangement. However, the concept of New England as God's New Israel was given new impetus during the First Great Awakening in the first half of the seventeenth century. American theologian and Congregationalist minister Jonathan Edwards, for one, saw the hand of God at work in the awakening, in both a theological and social sense. Edwards believed that there would be a golden age for the church on earth achieved through the faithful preaching of the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit. The world thus would be led by the American example into the establishment of the millennium. In this, the New Englanders were surely God's chosen people, his New Israel.[6]

As most people know, the millennium did not come in Edwards' day or even immediately thereafter. Instead the First Great Awakening died out and the original theistically-oriented chosen nation theme was metamorphosed into a civil millennialism. This occurred in the period between the end of the awakening in the 1740s and the outbreak of the American Revolution in 1775. It was in this era that the transferral of the central concepts of seventeenth-century Puritan ideology to all America, including the New Israel motif, took place. Disappointed that the great revival did not result in the dawning of the millennium, many colonial preachers turned their apocalyptic expectations elsewhere. In short, when the First Awakening tailed off, its evangelical spokesmen had to reinterpret the millennial hope it had spawned. In the process, the clergy, in a subtle but profound shift in religious values, redefined the ultimate goal of apocalyptic hope. The old expectation of the conversion of all nations to Christianity became diluted with, and often subordinated to, the commitment to America as the new seat of liberty. First France and then England became the archenemies of liberty, both civil and religious. In his insightful study of this development, historian Nathan Hatch concludes:

> The civil millennialism of the Revolutionary era, expressed by the rationalists as well as pietists, grew out of the politicizing of Puritan millennial history in the two decades before the Stamp Act crisis. . . . Civil millennialism advanced freedom as the cause of God, defined the primary enemy as the antichrist of civil oppression rather than that of formal religion, traced the myths of its past through political developments rather than through the vital religion of the forefathers, and turned its vision toward the privileges of Britons rather than to heritage exclusive to New England.[7]

Thus, the first Great Awakening was not only a significant religious event, but also a popular movement with wide-ranging political and ideological implications that laid the groundwork for an emotional and future-oriented American civil religion. The revolutionary generation began to build an American nation based upon religious foundations of evangelical revivalism. The latter-day New England Puritans were joined by many Anglicans, Presbyterians, and Dutch Reformed of equally evangelical persuasion in seeing themselves as jointly commissioned to awaken and guide the nation into the coming period of millennial fulfillment.

But in the process, where the churches moved out, the nation moved in. Gradually, the nation emerged in the thinking of most Americans as the primary agent of God's meaningful activity in history. They began to bestow on their new nation a catholicity of destiny similar to that which theology usually attributes to the universal church. Thus, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution became the covenants that bound together the people of the nation and secured to them God's blessing, protection, and call to historic mission. Most important, the United States itself became the covenanted community and God's New Israel, destined to spread real freedom and true religion to the rest of the world.[8]

In the nineteenth century, this transmutation of the millennial ideal resulted in what became known as "Manifest Destiny." Coined by journalist John L. Sullivan in 1845. Manifest Destiny came to mean for countless Americans that Almighty God had "destined" them to spread over the entire North American continent. And as they did, they would take with them their uplifting and ennobling political and religious institutions.[9]

But there was another religious dream abroad in the land which did not rest upon the model of a City on a Hill or God's New Israel. This was the belief in religious liberty which had grown out of the Protestant left, generally known as the Radical Reformation. This view originally stood alongside of and in many cases opposed to the idea that New England was God's New Israel. The classic spokesperson for this second concept was Roger Williams, founder of the Rhode Island colony—the first real haven for religious dissidents on American soil.

As already mentioned, Williams rejected the Puritan notion of a religiously covenanted community which could exercise political power. He valued religious liberty and religious individualism more than religious uniformity and religious communitarianism. In fact, he stoutly rejected the Puritan teaching that New England was God's New Israel and flatly stated that:

> The State of the Land of Israel, the Kings and people thereof in Peace and War, is proven figurative and ceremoniall, and no patterne nor president for any Kingdome or civill state in the world to follow.[10]

In sum, Williams boldly asserted his basic premises that civil magistrates are to rule only in civil and never in religious matters, and that persecution for religion had no sanction in the teachings of Jesus, thus undercutting the whole ideological foundation for the Puritan hope in creating a Christian state that would be a City on a Hill.

Quaker William Penn was also in this radical tradition. In both Baptist Rhode Island and Quaker Pennsylvania, religious liberty resulted in religious pluralism. This was all right with Williams and Penn, for both believed that this was the biblical way. But how could God's New Israel survive such a cacaphony of spiritual voices? How could the religious mosaic which soon emerged in the new nation be reconciled with the view that America was God's chosen nation? How could any semblance of religious unity be achieved if religious liberty prevailed? In short, how could this religious smorgasbord ever be regarded as a covenanted community?

The answer lay in the willingness of Enlightenment figures like Thomas Jefferson to reach out to the New Israel exponents on the right and the religious liberty champions on the left in order to create an American civil religion. Jefferson, the great champion of

religious liberty and political individualism, also embraced the imagery of the United States as a second Israel. In his second inaugural address on March 4, 1805, Jefferson told the American people that during his second term as their national leader he would need:

> . . . the favor of that Being in whose hands we are, who led our fathers, as Israel of old, from their native land and planted them in a country flowing with all the necessaries and comforts of life; who has covered our infancy with His providence and our riper years with His wisdom and power, and to whose goodness I ask you to join in supplications with me that He will so enlighten the minds of your servants, guide their councils, and prosper their measures that whatsoever they do shall result in your good, and shall secure to you the peace, friendship, and approbation of all nations.[11]

Thus Jefferson articulated the belief held by most Americans of that day that the United States and not just New England was a City on a Hill.

The American Amalgam: Civil Religion

Exactly what was the civil religion which was able to subsume, for a time at least, these two divergent strands of the American Dream? Briefly stated, civil religion (some call it public religion) is that use of consensus religious sentiments, concepts and symbols by the state—either directly or indirectly—for its own purposes. Those purposes may be noble or debased, depending on the kind of civil religion (priestly or prophetic) and the historical context. Civil religion involves the mixing of traditional religion with national life until it is impossible to distinguish between the two, and usually leads to a blurring of religion and patriotism and of religious values with national values. In America, it became a rather elaborate matrix of beliefs and practices born of the nation's historic experience and constituting the only real religion of millions of its citizens.[12]

The first American civil religion was supported by both the nation's intellectuals—mostly children of the Enlightenment—and the country's Christians—mostly Bible-believing evangelicals. The intellectuals like Jefferson supported it because it was general enough to include the vast majority of Americans and because it provided the moral glue for the body politic created by the social contract. The evangelicals supported it because it appeared to be compatible (perhaps even identical) with biblical Christianity. In any case, from this confluence of the Enlightenment and biblical Christianity, American civil religion emerged to promote both the concept of religious liberty and the notion that America was God's New Israel![13]

Under the aegis of American civil religion, the idea of the City on a Hill and God's New Israel was advanced to that of the "redeemer nation" with a manifest destiny. In other words, gradually, the old Puritan notion was infused with secular as well as religious meaning, and joined with political as well as religious goals. This was accomplished in the course of American expansion and by means of political rhetoric and McGuffey's Reader.[14]

The result of these developments is perhaps best illustrated by the story of President William McKinley's decision to annex the Philippines following the Spanish-American War in 1898. In November of the following year, McKinley, himself a devout Methodist layman, revealed to a group of visiting clergymen just how he came to sign the bill of annexation following a dreadful period of soul-searching and prayer:

> I walked the floor of the White House night after night until midnight; and I . . . went down on my knees and prayed to Almighty God for light and guidance. . . . And one night late it came to me this way—(1) That we should not give them back to Spain—that would be cowardly and dishonorable;
>
> (2) that we could not turn them over to France or Germany—our commercial rivals in the Orient—that would be bad business and discreditable;
>
> (3) that we could not leave them to themselves—they were unfit for self-government—and they would soon have anarchy and misrule worse than Spain's was; and (4) that there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them. . . . And then I went to bed, and went to sleep and slept soundly. . . .[15]

In short, McKinley said that destiny and duty made it inevitable that the Americans should bring civilization and light—democratic civilization and biblical light—to the poor Filipinos! Manifest destiny had led God's New Israel down the primrose path of imperialism!

The concept that the United States is God's New Israel and a chosen nation is hardly dead. In his 1980 acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention in Kansas City, presidential nominee Ronald Reagan declared:

> Can we doubt that only a Divine Providence placed this land, this island of freedom, here as a refuge for all those people in the world who yearn to breathe free? Jews and Christians enduring persecution behind the Iron Curtain; the boat people of Southeast Asia, Cuba and of Haiti; the victims of drought and famine in Africa, the freedom fighters in Afghanistan. . . . God Bless America![16]

In many ways, Reagan's words in that instance extended the concept from America as a City on a Hill to America as a Cosmic Hotel, from the nation as a Model of Merit to the nation as a Magnet to the Masses.

President Reagan has used the City on a Hill/Manifest Destiny motif with telling effect on many occasions since taking office in January, 1981. For example, in September, 1982, he received roaring approval from a large crowd at Kansas State University when he asserted: "But be proud of the red, white, and blue, and believe in her mission. . . . America remains mankind's best hope. The eyes of mankind are on us . . . remember that we are one Nation under God, believing in liberty and justice for all.[17] In March, 1983, he brought cheering evangelicals to their feet in Orlando, Florida, when he proclaimed to the annual convention of the National Association of Evangelicals: "America is great because America is good" and reiterated that this nation was "the last best hope of man."[18] The idea that America is God's chosen nation, in a religious as well as in a political sense, is alive and well and living in Washington, D.C.!

While the former Puritan concept of a City on a Hill and God's New Israel evolved over the years from an evangelical, communitarian application to a religious, national one, there has been a parallel development from religious liberty to cultural pluralism. Originally, religious liberty meant that the various denominations were free to spread the Gospel as they understood it, without intrusion by either the government or a state church. In this context, an evangelical Protestant consensus emerged which made the United States in the nineteenth century into what historian William G. McLoughlin called "a unified, pietistic-perfectionist nation" and "the most religious people in the world."[19] However, that consensus began to crack near the end of the century as new immigrants from non-Protestant churches or no churches at all flowed into the country and as the secularizing forces associated with Darwinism, urbanization, and industrialization made their presence felt in American society. And, as the country became more diverse, that diversity was protected—some would even say encouraged—by the nation's commitment to religious liberty. Thus, slowly but surely, religious freedom was translated into cultural pluralism.

However, by the post-World War II period, this cultural pluralism was beginning to strain the very bonds of national unity. It was a time of increasing tension and confusion. Looking back on the period 1945-1960, the late Paul Goodman lamented:

> Our case is astounding. For the first time in recorded history, the mention of country, community, place has lost its power to animate. Nobody but a scoundrel even tries it. Our rejection of false patriotism is, of course, itself a badge of honor. But the positive loss is tragic and I cannot resign myself to it. A man has only one life and if during it he has no great environment, no community, he has been irreparably robbed of a human right.[20]

Goodman's analysis was not only a modern jeremiad, however; it was also a plea for the emergence of a modern unifying concept

which would serve to hold the republic together. The destruction of the old evangelical Protestant consensus and with it the original American civil religion, and the emergence of cultural pluralism based on the American doctrine of religious liberty—and now reinforced by the melting pot myth—all spelled out the need for a new civil religion based on the new facts of American life. Ironically enough, during the very period when Goodman's observations most closely applied, a rejuvenated civil faith was emerging. This new civil religion took shape during the Eisenhower presidency and it was as amiable and ambiguous as Ike. It was now a civil religion which had been enlarged to include not only the three major faiths of the land—Protestant, Catholic, Jew—but virtually anyone who acknowledged a Supreme Being. The national mood of the 1950s was congenial to an outpouring of religiousity, and examples of it abounded: national days of prayer, the addition of "under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag in 1954, the authorization to place "in God we trust" on all currency and coins and the adoption of the same phrase as the national motto in 1956 are a few examples.

Interestingly enough, hard on the heels of the new upsurge of civil religion in the 1950s came a time of great political turmoil and widespread religious renewal in the 1960s. It was in this context that the New Religious Right emerged in the 1970s—galvanized by its hostility to theological and political liberalism alike. In many ways, this New Religious Right resembled the old Puritanism as it began to interact with the American civil religion. Its first order of business was to purify the church and state, to restore old values and old ideals, and, if possible, to put an end to the confusion and tension of the age.

The American Civil Religion in the Hands of the New Religious Right: the Confusion and Tension Heightened

The leaders of the New Religious Right of the 1970s found a civil religion which invested the civil officers of the country with a certain religious mystique; one which linked the social order to a higher and truer realm; one which provided religious motivation and sanction for civil virtue; one which, in short, served the functions of an established religion—and they liked it! It was a public religion which gave the majority of Americans an over-arching common spiritual heritage in which the entire nation supposedly shared. Because it did not appear to contradict their understanding of the American past nor their commitment to Bible Christianity, and because they did not have a profound understanding of civil religion or American history, and, further, because civil religion seemed suited to their goal of restoring America's spiritual and political vigor, New Religious Right leaders embraced the American civil religion as they found it. They did not seem to be aware of or understand one perplexing feature of the American public faith, pointed out by historian Sidney E. Mead and others—namely, that it included a central doctrine of separation of church and state. This concept is, of course, a legacy of the historic American emphasis on religious liberty. As such, it greatly complicates the operation of civil religion in America and provides the public faith with a substantial element of self-contradiction. In any case, the New Religious Right hardly noticed this in the beginning and is often perplexed by those who refuse to go along with such parts of its program as prayer in the public schools—a perfectly logical civil religion activity—because of the principle of religious liberty and its corollary separation of church and state.[21]

But this last point illustrates the fact that the appearance of the New Religious Right in the 1970s has exacerbated the old tensions associated with the two religious components of the American Dream. Most of the adherents of the New Religious Right come from traditions which accept the doctrine of religious liberty, but the movement has wholeheartedly embraced that part of American civil religion which emphasizes America's national mission as God's New Israel. How can a nation that is so culturally diverse speak in terms of a national mission? Unfortunately, the New Religious Right does not seem to acknowledge the reality of that cultural diversity but prefers to think of America as it was throughout most of the nineteenth century—a religiously homogeneous nation.

Moreover, the New Religious Right's millennial vision for America seems inconsistent and confused. Belief in America as a City on a Hill and as God's New Israel requires a postmillenial eschatology—the view that the Kingdom of God is extended through Christian preaching and teaching as a result of which the world will be Christianized and will enjoy a long period of peace and righteousness called the millennium. During the nineteenth century, postmillennial views of the destiny of America played a vital role in justifying national expansion. Although there were other explanations for the nation's growth, the idea of a Christian republic marching toward a golden age appealed to many people. Millennial nationalism was attractive because it harmonized the republic with religious values. Thus, America became the hope of the nations—destined to uphold Christian and democratic principles which eventually would bring spiritual and political freedom to the world.

There are many similarities between the adherents of the Religious Right and the Puritans. Both seem to be movements composed of self-confessed godly people determined to change the moral climate of their day.

This is exactly what the leaders of the New Religious Right, men like TV evangelist Jerry Falwell and best-selling author Tim LaHaye, believe. Falwell declares that the various activities of the Founding Fathers indicate that they "were putting together God's country, God's republic, and for that reason God has blessed her for two glorious centuries."[22] He has written approvingly: "Any diligent student of American history finds that our great nation was founded by godly men upon godly principles to be a Christian nation . . . Our Founding Fathers firmly believed that America had a special destiny in the world."[23] LaHaye proclaims that: "America is the human hope of the world, and Jesus Christ is the hope of America."[24]

The only problem with all of this is that Falwell, LaHaye and many other leaders of the New Religious Right are also premillennialists—adherents of that view of the future which claims that Jesus' return will be followed by a period of peace and righteousness before the last judgment, during which Christ will reign as king in person or through a select group of people. This kingdom will not be established by the conversion of individuals over a long period of time, but suddenly and by overwhelming power. Evil will be held in check during the millennial kingdom by Christ, who will rule with a rod of iron. Further, premillennialists believe that this kingdom will be preceded by a period of steady decline and by certain signs such as great tribulation, apostacy, wars, famines, earthquakes, and the appearance of the antichrist.

By way of contrast, nineteenth-century premillennialists, who then constituted only a minority of American Christians, did not believe that their nation was a recipient of God's special favor but was rather just another Gentile world power. In short, they did not support the view that the United States was God's New Israel. Moreover, premillenialists today still maintain a rather gloomy scenario of the future, including the concept of a time of great decline immediately preceeding the second coming of Christ.[25]

There has always been inconsistency on the part of premillennialists with regard to the interpretation of world events and their desire to be patriotic Americans. This is particularly marked in the New Religious Right.[26] Individuals like Falwell and LaHaye have felt called to enter the social and political arena, but they do not have a consistent eschatological base for such activities. In essence,

they want to support a certain type of postmillennial vision for America while maintaining a premillennial eschatology.

In fact, much of the New Religious Right's program seems to be contradictory and inconsistent. Perhaps this is because of its confused eschatology. A further problem with its millennialism is its encouragement of the new American civil religion with its emphasis on the chosen theme while ignoring the enormous cultural pluralism present in the United States today. There seems to be something bizarre about attempts to advocate any scheme to spread American political, cultural, and religious values to the world when nobody in this country seems certain what those values are anymore. Moreover, much that is proposed by the New Religious Right appears to contradict the historic American Dream of religious liberty—especially in terms of its drive to introduce state prayers into public schools, its advocacy of tax credits for these who send their children to parochial schools, and its insistence upon a large standing, professional army.[27]

Conclusions

There are many similarities between the adherents of the New Religious Right and the Puritans of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Both seem to be movements composed of self-confessed godly people determined to change the moral and religious climate of their day. There also appear to be many of the same tensions in the two respective movements—especially the desire, on the one hand, for heartfelt religion to prevail and the wish, on the other, to impose a certain level of morality on society in general. There is, if you will, a perplexing contradiction in the movement which makes it want to create some kind of national religion (or quasi-state church) of "true believers." As the Puritans discovered, it is impossible to combine the two elements in any meaningful way because true faith cannot be forced, especially in the context of religious freedom. It appears historically impossible to achieve the Puritan goals of an elect society composed entirely of genuine believers while at the same time allowing any sort of religious freedom which, in turn, makes the conversion experience meaningful. That was the Puritan dilemma and it may well be the dilemma of the New Religious Right as well.

What happened to the Puritans when they tried to impose their values—no matter how high-minded and uplifting to mankind they may have been—on a larger society? They met first with frustration, then with disillusionment, and finally with the prospect of either acquiescing to a new regime or going into exile. After three generations of attempting to bring godly government to England and after fighting and winning a civil war, Oxford don and Puritan divine Dr. John Owen in 1652 could only survey the Cromwellian regime and lament:

> Now, those that ponder these things, their spirits are grieved in the midst of their bodies;—the visions of their heads trouble them. They looked for other things from them that professed Christ; but the summer is ended, and the harvest is past, and we are not refreshed.[28]

In the end, what will happen to the New Religious Right if and when its participation in politics comes to naught? What will come of its vision and participation in the American Dream? If the concept of a New Israel and a covenanted community could not be implemented and maintained in a country like seventeenth-century England or a place like colonial New England with their culturally and religiously homogeneous populations, how can anyone expect such an idea to be successfully realized in an increasingly pluralistic society like the United States in the 1980s?

The New Religious Right, like the Puritan movement of old, may have to learn the hard way that the best that Christians can hope for in a largely unconverted world is genuine religious freedom in which to practice the Faith and preach the Gospel. That part of the American Dream is still meaningful, precious, and possible. The live question of this generation is: can it be preserved? Adherents of the New Religious Right are trying to save the American Dream. But how ironic it would be if, in the process, they destroyed it!

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[1] This is a revision of a lecture originally presented at a Conference on the American Dream, the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, Abilene, KS, April 21, 1983.

[2] W. Lloyd Warner. *Social Class in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1960). pp. v–vi.

[3] Christopher F. Mooney, *Religion and the American Dream: The Search for Freedom Under God* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977). This collection of essays focuses on the "power and force of religion in civil affairs" and notes many of the contradictions and tensions in this aspect of the American Dream.

[4] John Winthrop, *Papers*, A. B. Forbes. ed. (5 vols., Boston: The Massachusetts Historical Society, 1929-1947). 2:295; and Roger Williams. *The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience* (London: n.p., 1644). Introduction. Also see Anson Phelps Stokes, *Church and State in the United States* (New York: Harper and Row, 1950): Leo Pfeffer. *Church, State, and Freedom* (Boston: Beacon Press. 1953): Loren Baritz. *City on a Hill: A History of Ideas and Myths in America* (New York: John Wiley, 1964): Ernest L. Tuveson, *Redemmer Nation: The Idea of America's Millennial Role* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968): Conrad Cherry, ed., *God's New Israel: Religious Interpretations of American Destiny* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971): and John F. Wilson. *Public Religion in American Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1979).

[5] Alan Simpson, *Puritanism in Old and New England* (Chicago: University Press, 1955), pp. 19–38.

[6] Jonathan Edwards, *Apocalyptic Writings*, ed. Stephen J. Stein (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).

[7] Nathan O. Hatch, "The Origins of Civil Millennialism in America: New England Clergymen. War with France and the Revolution." *William and Mary Quarterly*, 31 (July 1974): 429. Also see Nathan O. Hatch. *The Sacred Cause of Liberty: Millennial Thought in Revolutionary New England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977): and John F. Berens, *Providence and Patriotism in Early America, 1640-1815* (Charlotesville: University of Virginia Press, 1978). pp. 51–80.

[8] John E. Smylle. "National Ethos and the Church." *Theology Today*, 20 (Oct. 1963): 314: and Berens. *Providence and Patriotism in Early America* pp. 81–111.

[9] Frederick Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History* (New York: Knopf, 1963), pp. 31–32.

[10] Williams, *The Bloudy Tenet of Persecution*, Introduction.

[11] *Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), p. 21.

[12] The basis for this definition of civil religion is found in the following: Robert N. Bellah, "Civil Religion in America." *Daedalus*, No. 96 (Winter 1967): 1–21: D. Elton Trueblood. *The Future of the Christian* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), pp. 83–102: and Will Herberg. "American Civil Religion: What It Is and Whence It Comes." in *American Civil Religion*, ed. Russell E. Richey and Donald G. Jones (New York: Harper and Row, 1974). pp. 76–88. For an evaluation of civil religion from two different but complementary points of view, see Wilson. *Public Religion in American Culture*; and Robert D. Linder and Richard V. Pierard. *Twilight of the Saints: Biblical Christianity and Civil Religion in America* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1978).

[13] Jean-Jacques Rousseau. *The Social Contract and Discourses*, ed. G.D.H. Cole (New York: Dutton, 1950) p. 139; Jean-Jacques Rousseau. *Oeuvres Completes, Du Contrat Social*, ed. Bernard Gagnebin and Marcel Raymond (4 vols., Paris: Gallimard, 1964). 3: 368–375, 468; Ralph H. Gabriel. *The Course of American Democratic Thought*, 2nd ed. (New York: Ronald Press, 1956), pp. 14–25, 23–28: Sidney E. Mead. *The Nation With the Soul of a Church* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), pp. 56–57; and Seymour M. Lipset, *The First New Nation* (New York: Basic Books, 1963). pp. 61–98.

[14] Robert W. Lynn. "Civil Catechetics in Mid-Victorian America: Some Notes About American Civil Religion, Past and Present." *Religious Education*, No. 48 (Jan.-Feb. 1973): 5–27.

[15] *The Christian Advocate*, Jan. 22, 1903. pp. 1–2. Also see Charles S. Olcott, *The Life of William McKinley* (2 vols., New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1916). 2: 109–111.

[16] Ronald W. Reagan, "Acceptance Address: Republican National Convention Presidential Nomination." *Vital Speeches of the Day*, 46, no. 21 (Aug. 15, 1980): 646.

[17] Ronald W. Reagan, "Believe in Her Mission," Landon Lecture at Kansas State University on Sept. 9, 1982, published in full in *The Manhattan Mercury*, Sept. 9, 1982. p. B2.

[18] Text of the Remarks of President Ronald W. Reagan to the Forty-First Annual Convention of the National Association of Evangelicals. March 8, 1983. Sheraton Twin Towers Hotel, Orlando, Florida, released by the Office of the Press Secretary. The White House, p. 1. See the report of the speech in *The New York Times*, March 9, 1983. pp. 1–11.

[19] William G. McLoughlin, ed., *The American Evangelicals, 1800-1900* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 1.

[20] Paul Goodman, *Growing Up Absurd* (New York: Random House, 1960). p. 97.

[21] Mead, *The Nation With the Soul of a Church*, pp. 78–113: and Alfred Balitzer, "Some Thoughts about Civil Religion." *Journal of Church and State*, 16 (Winter 1974): 36–37.

[22] Jerry Falwell, *America Can Be Saved* (Murfreesboro, TN: Sword of the Lord Publishers, 1979), p. 23.

[23] Jerry Falwall, *Listen America!* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1980), p. 29.

[24] Tim LaHaye, *The Bible's Influence on American History* (San Diego: Master Books, 1976), p. 59.

[25] For a discussion of this view, see Ernest R. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenialism, 1800-1930*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970): and Robert G. Clouse, ed., *The Meaning of the Millennium* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1977), pp. 17–40.

[26] For a first-rate examination of this particular problem, see Robert G. Clouse, "The New Christian Right. America, and the Kingdom of God," *Christian Scholar's Review*, 12, No. 1 (1983): 3–16.

[27] For a discussion of the tensions created by this last point, see Robert D. Linder, "Militarism in Nazi Thought and in the American New Religious Right," *Journal of Church and State*, 24 (Spring 1982): 263–279, esp. p. 276, n. 38.

[28] John Owen, "Christ's Kingdom and the Magistrate's Power," sermon published in *The Works of John Owen* (24 vols., Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1850-1853), 8: 381. For the scriptural basis for Owen's allusion, see Jeremiah 8:20.

Evangelical Feminism: Reflections on the State of the "Union" (Part II)

by Harvie Conn

Where Do We Go From Here?

Obviously it is now apparent that evangelicals are divided. They find themselves willing to say to women, Let us be *all* we're meant to be. But they also keep asking, What is it anyway that we are *meant* to be?

A deep part of the reason for this is their struggle over Scripture's meaning. The general focus of most of the materials we have examined remains in this area of discussion. Only recently has the debate begun to be expanded into the sociological arena. And this, in fact, may be part of the reason why we cannot agree on exegetical questions. Socio-cultural predispositions have a heavier influence on the way we look at the Bible than even evangelicals are quick to see. Our commitment to what has been called "objective grammaticohistorical" techniques of study still raises few disclaimers or qualifications about the meaning behind that verbal symbol, "objective."

Which side must we choose, if we decide to choose any? Surely our final decision must begin with a fundamental affirmation, a basic biblical touchstone around which all biblical pericopes orbit. The touchstone? Christ has come not to put women down but to lift them up, to remove the tarnish of sin's subordinationist drive and exalt women their original place as images of God.

Consistently throughout the Scriptures that defense of the full humanity of womanhood is made. Against the background of Babylonian and Assyrian law codes, in which women are basically property, the Bible moves far ahead. For the Egyptians only Pharaohs were living images of the gods. The king was closest of all men to the realm of the gods. But in Israel imagehood belonged to women as well as men, scullery maids as well as Pharaohs (Gen 1:27). In the ancient near east, life was cheap and especially female life. Who but the male could rule? In counterpoint to this, Genesis places rule over the creation at the feet of women as well as men. "And God blessed *them* and God said to *them*, . . . Rule" (Gen 1:28).

In a chauvinist world where honor was due to the male, God said, "Honor thy father and thy mother" (Ex 20:12). In a male world where women waited on their masters in the harem, the writer of Proverbs 31 asks, "An excellent wife, who can find her? For her worth is far above all jewels" (31:10). And then he describes the activities of this "excellent wife"—she is involved in real estate purchasing (16); she moves about in the business world, manufacturing and selling (24); her long hours and careful supervision of the servants bring blessing and honor to her husband and to herself (31:23–31). "Let her works praise her" not in the kitchen and the bedroom but "in the gates" (31:31).

In the first century world of Judaism which apparently classed women with "slaves," "heathen" and "brutish men," Jesus' gospel entourage was filled with women (Lk 8:1–3). Among his "disciples" were women. In a day when rabbis said that women could not study the Torah and debated the existence of their female soul, Jesus commended Mary for staying out of the kitchen and "listening to what he said" (Lk 10:38–42). In a day when women could not function as legal witnesses, it is women who are called upon by the angel at an empty tomb to witness the resurrected Christ (Lk 24:1–10). They stand at the cross with "all his acquaintances" (Lk 23:49).

In a world where synagogues were male gathering places, the Messianic gatherings became places so filled with women talking that Paul feared the non-Christian or Hebrew world might not understand their liberty in Christ. He urged them, for the sake of these outsiders, to exercise their liberty with restraint. He did not take it away. As in other situations, the strong (in this case, the women) ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength (in this case, the men).

Are women second-class citizens of the kingdom for Paul? However we understand some of his difficult writing on the subject, women are never that for him. They are "the glory of man" (I Cor 11:7). That is why they must pray in public worship with "covered head."[20] Their glory is so bright it will distract from the glory of God. The glory of man, woman, must be covered. To possess glory is not to be subordinate. To possess glory is to possess worth, importance, honor. To describe a person as the glory of someone else is to define that person in terms of weight, importance. So woman is the glory of man. Only with him can she really be woman and only with her can he be fully man.

How can this help us in evaluating our alternatives? It provides us with a criterion as we listen to evangelical scholarship. If egalitarianism should slip into a reverse sort of chauvinism, we must cry, "A woman is glory, but glory in mutality with man before God. When hierarchical views slip into subordinationism (a more present danger), we must cry, "Christ restores women as images of God to rule the creation." The pattern of social roles, the pressure of cultural chauvinism, must not be allowed to create any categories, any exegetical judgments, which diminish her personhood before God and with men. All people are created equal and males are not more equal than females. The Bible does commend a basic sociality of the gospel. Interpersonal relationships are constitutive in the life of the new humanity. But they do not flow out of superior and subordinate roles. They flow out of covenant mutuality, man and woman together before God.

In all this, I clearly move toward the egalitarian side of our debate. But I see a danger in it as I do also in the traditional views. "There is a tendency among egalitarians to take a dualistic approach to Scripture, isolating the time-bound from the universal, the human from the divine, the rabbinic from the Christian."[21] It is clearly and harshly present in Mollenkott, clearly and quietly present in Jewett.

The traditional view suffers from a parallel tendency. It spiritualizes the Bible by treating it a-historically. It often allows no time-bound, no situation-bound, context to mediate God-given truth. The egalitarian stumbles over the Bible's humanness; the traditionalist over Scripture's "supercultural," "supernatural" character. The former seems overcome by Scripture's time-relatedness; the latter seeks to deny this time-relatedness any real significance. Neither approaches Scripture as at one and the same time fully and completely God's Word-in-human-words.

I both fear and commend also the effects of the different agendas of the two groups. The egalitarian group seems consistently to be more sensitive to the social dimensions of chauvinism. Its concerns move much more regularly outside of narrow church-centered questions or the evangelical "Brady-bunch" type topics. This is its strength but also its danger. For the Bible is never concerned simply about society or about woman's place in it. Biblical perspectives never deal simply with the sequence of history as creation. The sequence is always creation/fall/redemption.

That is to say, what we have now in society is not what God intended. The picture of male-female mutality drawn in Genesis 1 and 2 has been marred by human sin. And God's curse on that disruption of solidarity, always appropriate to the sin, has been the introduction of the battle of the sexes. We have no intention of introducing the reality of the curse in Genesis 3:18 here as one more divine sanction on female put-down. Put-down remains curse, not blessing, in the Bible.

We are simply trying to remind egalitarians that an essential key to the biblical understanding of female personhood in all its fulness

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is the Christological appeal to the Messiah who levels the pride of the male and lifts up humiliated women. The wide and warm concerns of the egalitarian for society must continue to relate questions of equality or, better yet, interdependence, constantly to what Christ restores, not simply what human cultures do not now display.

And similarly, the traditional group suffers from the reverse problem. Its agenda is heavily oriented to the institutional church and those feminist questions related to that narrowed interest. In Knight and Foh, for example, one senses that feminist issues are not really as crucial or as central to their concerns as is the more restricted issue of inerrancy. We do not mean to minimize the importance of that topic. We simply point out that it seems to have more controlling place in their list of priorities than those of the women's issue on a larger scale.

As a result, traditionalist positions can be more easily perceived by the non-church community as parochial and ultimately self-serving. If the egalitarian stands in danger of minimizing the importance of the fall in redemptive history, the traditionalist stands in danger of maximizing it. To those outside the church, the traditionalist is perceived as commending ecclesiastical sainthood, not humanization. And that sainthood again is seen as restricting female standing in the body of Christ to a "spiritual" role of equality, shorn of any implications for her cultural, economic or social roles. In the name of Galatians 3:28, an "ecclesiastical number" has been done on her. Even the non-Christian perceives "this is just not fair" when he or she sees the disparity between speaking of "spiritual" standing in Christ regarding the male/female pole but not of the Jew/Gentile or the slave/free poles.

Perhaps both groups could find some balance to their studies if they introduced into their work the biblical call for justice on behalf of women. Old Testament legislation shows an abiding awareness of the dangers of the abuse of power. And much of that concern for justice for the oppressed is aware also of the woman as the object of oppression. The widow (Ex 22:22–24), women taken captive in war (Dt 21:10–14), a virgin seduced (Ex 22:16–17), all offer samples of that sensitivity for justice, and compassion for the "sinned against."

There is no indication our Lord minimized those pleas for justice. In fact, He reinforced them on behalf of women. In his judgment against lust, He did not resort to the rabbinic tradition that blamed the presence of a woman. It was the sinful thoughts of the male which could lead to committing adultery (Matt 5:27–28). In the same way, He tightened the growing rabbinic looseness that misused the Mosaic "permission" of divorce (Dt 24:1–4) and sanctioned chauvinist anger at poorly cooked meals or a badly kept house as grounds for female dismissal (Matt 19:3–9). The background of these passages lies rooted in a call for justice or "righteousness." That needs to be more at the center of evangelical discussions.

A Third Evangelical Option

Though the bulk of evangelical writing belongs to the polarities of egalitarian/traditional, there is also evidence of the growth of a third and more centrist option. In fact, this writer suspects with others that, although the literature as a whole does not yet reflect it, the grassroots level of evangelical feminism moves in this centrist area. Its attitude toward the Scripture is more uneasy with Jewett than with Hurley. And its approach to male/female relationships is functionally more egalitarian in slant than traditionalist. But, even here, at the center, there are traditionalists whose agenda concerns and hermeneutical solutions are remarkably close to the egalitarians. Donald Bloesch's *Is the Bible Sexist?* (Westchester, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1982) is an example of this to me. The sub-title of his book sounds in a centrist posture. He seeks to go "beyond feminism and patriarchalism."

Closer to the egalitarian side of the center, but unhappy with an egalitarian viewpoint that resolves the problem through Pauline rationalizations or "contradictions," is that of Patricia Gundry. Her 1977 work, *Woman, Be Free!* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House) sees no need to look for theological schizophrenia in allegedly evolving Pauline perceptions. In a style that focuses more on the existential cash value of the text for the spirit, she aims for a soft-sell exploration of egalitarianism. "Pat is a bridge person," says Letha Scanzoni. "She is not hostile. She truly believes God gave gifts to both women and men."[22] This brief book, and those that have followed it, *Heirs Together* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publ. House, 1980) and *The Complete Woman* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981), place her firmly in a centrist position on Scripture. And closer on the egalitarian side of the continuum to the center than the far left of the scale.

Her 1977 work does not have the academic polish or exegetical sophistication of a Jewett or a Mollenkott. But that, plus her commitment to a position on Scripture identifiable with the vast bulk of evangelicals, may be her greatest asset. What I would call her devotional use of Scripture has always been a part of the evangelical's practical method of hermeneutics. It has always been a way of gaining access to the evangelical's heart. Gundry can speak to evangelicals in a way not possible for Jewett or Mollenkott.

A much more technical work, and more limited in scope, also belongs with Gundry as a representative of this more centrist posture. Richard and Joyce Boldrey re-issued a 1972 essay as a book in 1976. Entitled *Chauvinist or Feminist? Paul's View of Women* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House), the volume was brief but made a solid contribution to the discussion. It flowed out of their concern to demonstrate that "the Bible is not a straight jacket for women. . .Much of the traditional view is half-truth, part pure conjecture, and the rest totally false."[23]

The orientation of the book was around the hermeneutical question of Pauline harmonization. But the Boldreys sought resolution without recourse to an alleged Pauline rationalization. Rather they saw Paul, in his pastoral concerns for women and their new liberty in Christ, as attempting to build a bridge. The bridge sought to cross over the real tension between radical Christian concepts and a Hebrew establishment society. Within the new order brought by Christ, mutual respect and interdependence was seen as characterizing the Pauline view of male-female relationships.[24] And, in those areas where tension rose between the old and the new orders of understanding, the Boldreys saw Paul making pastoral adjustments to a culturally conditioned setting.[25] But never at the expense of the liberty won for women by Christ in the new day. "If he did not seem to go far enough, let it be remembered that he went much farther than society as a whole would then sanction."[26]

The Boldrey study has significance beyond its size. Though limited strictly to Pauline data, it was one of the first book-length works by evangelicals to place the question of "cultural relativity" at the heart of their study. And it did that while refusing to relativize what the authors called "timeless truths" of Christian freedom which they perceived as counter-cultural. And all this on behalf of egalitarianism. Still another feature unique to it was its usage of "the old and new orders" as a key for understanding the Pauline practice. For the first time to my knowledge, evangelicals were using the redemptive-historical categories of "already-not yet" as a foundation for exegesis on this issue.

Donald Bloesch's 1982 title belongs in the center, with a tilt toward the traditionalist side. But he is as far from that end of the spectrum as Gundry and the Boldreys are from theirs. With many egalitarians he supports the ordination of women to the church's teaching office. Yet with many traditionalists, he fears an ideological egalitarianism that obliterates any sense of differentiation in male/female relationships.

Calling his own point of view "covenantalism," he sees the goal of men and of women as more than ensuring the continuity of the family (as in what he calls patriarchy and what we have called hierarchism). Nor does he see it as the realization of human potential (as in egalitarianism). Rather it is "to become a sign and witness of the new age of the kingdom, to be a herald and ambassador of Jesus Christ. . .Christian covenantalism stresses the interdependence of man and woman, as well as their mutual subordination. At the same time, it makes a place for a differentiation of roles, recognizing both the dependency of woman on man and the necessity of woman for man in the orders of creation and redemption.[27]

For Bloesch the biblical alternatives transform both poles of the debate. From the traditional side the principle of superordination and subordination is transformed by our common subordination to God, placing the glory of God before human happiness and the interests of our neighbors before our own. Headship is realized

through service, just as Christ was exalted in his humiliation. From the egalitarian side the principle of feminism sees woman now as the covenant partner of man. Yet the covenantal view seeks not the emancipation of woman (from home and family), but her elevation as a fellow-worker with her husband and her brothers and sisters in Christ in the service of the kingdom.

Bloesch, we suspect, comes very close to expressing a position that most evangelicals practice but do not necessarily preach (aside from his commitment to ordination). Future study may well expand the exegetical basis for a centrist position and enlarge its support base among evangelicals.

A Study Agenda for the Future

To achieve that goal, an evangelical study agenda will have to pay more serious attention to the following questions of hermeneutic. I still do not see them fully or adequately explored in any of the evangelical alternatives we have sketched.

1. How have our culturally formed sexist biases inhibited us from "seeing" the message of the Bible? Jewett argues for a conflict between the Paul of Galatians 3:28 and the Paul of Ephesians 5. Is the problem in the apostle or in Jewett? Is it fair to ask if Jewett's cultural commitment to egalitarianism is stronger than his commitment to analogia fidei? On the other side with a similar problem is George Knight. Rarely does he examine the traditionalist cultural put-down of women. And his strong defense of hierarchism, without this examination, does not keep the reader from assuming the two are really one for him.

2. How can we deal more adequately with what has been called "the horizon of the ancient text"? To understand the Bible, we must go through at least two different worlds of thought, the Bible and our own. How can we best try to reconstruct the situation of the original readers? More specifically, how was the text an answer to *their* problems, a response to *their* needs? When God commanded us not to covet our neighbor's ox or ass or wife (Ex 20:17), was that an affirmation to those first readers of women as an object of male property? Or an attempt, in a chauvinist culture of the ancient near east, to provide a defense of her integrity and worth? This means a deeper exploration of the original context, the *sitz im leben*, the setting, than most (excepting Hurley) are willing to try. The Scripture is not a literary and metaphysical gloss on a literal and systematic structure that it otherwise hides.[28] Its cultural universals come to us imbedded in the occasional, particular character of the Bible.

3. How shall we understand the nature of "creation ordinances" referred to frequently by traditionalists? Knight's exposition gives them a timeless quality. Let us grant, as I think we must, their normativity in providing us with guidelines for understanding relationships.[29] But how may we see them without presupposing also that they favor some subordinationist position and were so understood by Paul? Must we not also explore the pastoral way in which Paul, for example, handles them in his admonition against a woman's "teaching or having authority" over a man in worship (I Timothy 2:12–14)? The Paul who oposed Peter on the issue of circumcision (Gal 2:11–12) on another occasion circumcised his fellow worker to avoid offending a particular set of cultural sensitivities (Acts 16:3). Paul's concern for the perceptions of freedom in Christ by "those outside" (I Cor 11:5, 13–14) makes us ask, "Were creation ordinances 'the one and only' factor in making Christian decisions regarding women?"

4. This suggests still another question. Call it, as does Anthony Thiselton, "the horizon of the original readers."[30] How did Moses or Jesus or Paul seek to communicate "timeless truth" to the original readers in their given culture? Specifically, how was it done in such a way that did not present women's liberation in Christ as the destroyer of their social setting but clearly as its transformer, its "possessor"?[31] How did the woman's liberty keep far enough ahead of a particular time and culture to continue being called "liberation" and yet, not so far ahead that it did not continue to touch and alter that context? I see this as a problem for both options we have studied.

5. There is still a third horizon we need to explore. It is the horizon of our century and, more specifically, its non-Christian eavesdroppers. Understanding comes when we fuse these three horizons into an evangelistic packet, when the twentieth century listener's horizons engage with those of the text.

This we see as the major drawback of almost all the work we have reviewed. The egalitarian position comes closest to perceiving this need. Its presentation does not transform good news for women into bad news for our society nearly as much as the traditionalist perspective. Scanzoni and Hardesty's work remains the shining example in this connection. On the traditionalist side, Hurley is a far-back second place.

Nevertheless, one does not see in any evangelical treatment a large enough agenda to do this properly. This in turn may be related to commonly shared perceptions of "theology" among so many of the evangelical participants. What is the significance of contemporary motivations for our "doing" theology? Theology, many are finding, does not simply begin with exegesis and then consequently move on to questions of application. Hermeneutic is more like an ascending spiral than a linear progression or even a circle. It is motivated by a need to be supplied (application, to use the traditional language) and then engages in exegesis and the like in an effort to respond to that need (principles we traditionally call this step).[32] It is not the reverse, as Foh argues, [33] or even "occasionally" so, as Johnston comments.[34] We cannot easily talk about "unchanging principles" which "consequently apply" to women and men today. Is this why so few titles delve into the cultural backgrounds against which the Bible was written? Is this why we commend Hurley for his intention but wish it were more systematically used throughout his book?

This principle demands we constantly keep before us our evangelistic purpose in writing and speaking of feminism. After all, we are still evangelicals. We cannot reduce the question to an in-house topic of conversation. The "old/new" structure of the Boldreys' book serves this purpose well. Another, using the creation/fall/redemption analogy, is that of James Olthuis' *I Pledge You My Troth* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975).

Traditional language may need re-examination in this regard. Is the biblical concept of male "headship" adequately served by language that is still understood in a chauvinist culture as the verbal symbols of control instead of care, of rule and subordination instead of mutual covenant service? Can the traditionalist find other ways of defending his or her point of view without sounding like a subordinationist? How intimately related is the traditionalist understanding of headship to the prevailing chauvinist cultural understanding? Can the egalitarian find other ways of promoting women's liberation without sounding like an advocate for "biblical" lesbianism or a home-wrecker to the more conservative elements of our society? Or is this a propagandistic stereotype either created or exaggerated by traditionalists to discredit legitimate concerns by appealing to fears and emotions? Bloesch's centrist response might seem to indicate possible light at the end of these tunnels.

Role relationships need the insights of sociology and of cultural anthropology as we examine the biblical data afresh. How does our culture shape our understanding of roles in human interaction? How do roles shape our self-images? Are there not multiple roles each of us play in human society? Where will we find their common core? How can the Bible play its part in distinguishing between this "real" self and our socio-cultural personalities? How does language affect communication between culturally assumed roles? How does the Bible function as corrective here too?[35]

What will our answers sound like for the question, "Would Jesus vote for the ERA?" Will they incorporate fully biblical ideas and still sound like the good news of the gospel to so much of our world that has been oppressed and beaten down? That remains the question.

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[1] Robert K. Johnston, *Evangelicals at an Impasse* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1979), p. 3.
[2] Paul K. Jewett, *Man as Male and Female* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Comp., 1975), p. 14.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 112–113.
[4] Harold Lindsell, *The Battle for the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), p. 119.
[5] Paul Jewett, "A Response from Dr. Jewett," *Theology, News and Notes*, Special Issue (1976), 22.
[6] Susan Foh, *Women and the Word of God. A Response to Biblical Feminism* (Presbyterian and Reformed Publ. Comp., 1980), 19–21, 26,29.
[7] Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, *Women, Men and the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1977), p. 104.

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 107–119.
[9] J. Ramsey Michaels, review of Paul K. Jewett, *The Ordination of Women*, in *Christian Scholar's Review*, Vol. XI, No. 4 (1982), 381.
[10] George W. Knight III, *The New Testament Teaching on the Role Relationship of Men and Women* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977), pp. 10–11.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 10.
[12] *Loc. cit.*
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 39.
[14] Foh, *op. cit.*, pp. 201–209.
[15] *Ibid.*, pp. 188–190.
[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 164–166.
[17] *Ibid.*, p. 44.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 49.
[19] James B. Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective* (London: Inter Varsity Press, 1981), pp. 18–19.
[20] Hurley defends the view that the "covering" mentioned by Paul in I Corinthians 11 was "of long hair" and not that of a veil (*ibid.*, pp. 168–171, 254–271).
[21] Johnston, *op. cit.*, p. 56.
[22] Russ Williams, "Truth. . . .and Consequences," *The Other Side*, No. 109 (October, 1980), 18.
[23] Richard and Joyce Boldrey, *Chauvinist or Feminist? Paul's View of Women* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976), p. 23.
[24] *Ibid.*, pp. 48–53.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 28.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 53.
[27] Donald G. Bloesch, *Is the Bible Sexist?* (Westchester, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1982), pp. 85–86.
[28] Johnston, *op. cit.*, p. 56.
[29] Knight, *op. cit.*, p. 89.
[30] Anthony Thiselton, *The Two Horizons. New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Comp., 1980), pp. 10–17.
[31] J.H. Bavinck, *An Introduction to the Science of Missions* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publ. Comp., 1960), pp. 169–190.
[32] For a full discussion of the background to this suggestion, consult John R.W. Stott and Robert Coote, eds., *Down to Earth. Studies in Christianity and Culture* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Comp., 1980), pp. 63–94, 316–318.
[33] Foh, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
[34] Johnston, *op. cit.*, p. 154.
[35] Compare Jacob Loewen, *Culture and Human Values: Christian Intervention in Anthropological Perspective* (South Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1975), pp. 412–427.

ETHICS

Diversity and Injunction in New Testament Ethics

by Stephen Charles Mott

Ethical social stances far-reaching in their implications for contemporary life are presented in two recent works on New Testament ethics by Evangelical scholars. Their writings stimulate theoretical consideration of the place of synthesis and the significance of concrete moral injunction in New Testament ethics.

The Great Reversal (Eerdmans, 1984), the title of Allen Verhey's study refers to the transformation of values brought about by the Reign of God. "The present order, including its conventional rules of prestige and protocol, pomp and privilege, is called into question" (Verhey, p. 15).

Richard N. Longenecker no doubt would allow "great reversal" to describe the principle of the gospel which makes relevant, in the words of his title, *New Testament Social Ethics for Today* (Eerdmans, 1984). The cultural mandate of the gospel, "neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female" (Gal. 3.28), "lays on Christians the obligation to measure every attitude and action toward others in terms of the impartiality and love God expressed in Jesus Christ, and to express such attitudes and actions as would break down barriers of prejudice and walls of inequality, without setting aside the distinctive characteristics of people" (Longenecker, p. 34).

Verhey does not present the great reversal as a component of a unified New Testament ethic. Masterfully using all the tools of New Testament historical research, yet (with Longenecker) respecting its authority and defending the integrity of its ethics against critics, he describes the ethics of the various literary layers and forms of the New Testament so thoroughly that his work should stand as *the* introduction to the ethics of the literary forms and sources of the New Testament. His task is to describe the ethics in their diversity. In this book he seeks to show exegetically that the diverse categories of his hermeneutical model are grounded in the diversity of ethical approaches within the New Testament. The impossibility of presenting from it "one massive, undifferentiated whole" seems to be an extreme which serves for him as an argument against seeking a substantial synthesis of the ethics.

Longenecker, on the other hand, is synthetic in his approach. The fact that the form and order of Galatians 3:28 is found in other passages and in association with baptism leads him to follow Hans Dieter Betz in seeing the phrase to be from a baptismal liturgy of the early church. It thus reflected a general position of the first century Christians. Longenecker shows how common this concern is in the New Testament and how it was put into practice with reference to Jew-Gentile relations, slavery, and women. If Verhey appears to reject synthesis, Longenecker seems not to include enough of the diversity in his. He has indeed chosen the most significant ethical theme of the New Testament, where status is the central social ethical concern; but his theme is not the whole of the New Testament's ethical proclamation. It is not true that the three pairs of Galatians 3:28 represent "all essential relationships of humanity" (Longenecker, p. 34). Ruler and subject, parent and child, rich and poor should not be reduced to any of the three, yet Scriptural ethics deals with them also. There also is too much ellipsis between the New Testament proclamation and the contemporary applications he posits.

The careful and balanced descriptive work done by Verhey is a necessary preliminary for a later stage in New Testament ethics in which the ethicist is more clearly involved with the New Testament material. As seen in his descriptive work, few people have the combined mastery of the disciplines Verhey has to do that further step. But as it stands now, the value for normative ethics of his careful discrimination by sources is frequently not obvious. For example, what ethical difference is there between watchfulness because God's Reign is at hand in the time of Jesus or watchfulness because the Parousia is at hand in the time of the church?

Some synthetic work is needed. The contemporary disciple and ethicist need more than the separate ethics of a score of New Testament books and literary sources. A base is provided in Longenecker's cultural mandate and also Verhey's use of coherence with the eschatological power and purpose discerned in the resurrection of Christ as authorization for the right use of Scripture. Norman Gottwald has recently written that we need to "question both the intellectually dismembered Bible and the spiritually unified Bible that scholarship and church now respectively present us" (Introduction, to *"The Bible and Liberation"*, ed. Gottwald [Orbis, 1983²], p. 4). The spiritually unified Bible reflected our proper theological presupposition that the Bible is a revelation for hearers of all ages of the will of God for human conduct. There is a unity of divine purpose behind it. Scholarship rightly protested the arbitrary superimposition of external truth to the particularity of the documents. The first lesson that all of us had in biblical methodology was respect for its diversity, but resting in diversity can subtly be assumption of merely an historian's role and participation in the embourgeoisement of New Testament scholarship in the fear of asserting universal truth.

Much of the diversity of New Testament ethics is one of diverse situations rather than of diverse principle or ethical consciousness. The behavior called for in the lists of vices and virtues, for example, is no doubt demanded of all Christians and not problematic for any of the authors (cf. Wolfgang Schrage, "Korreferat zu 'Ethischer Pluralismus im Neuen Testament,'" *Evangelische Theologie* 35 [1975], 402-407). Generality can be discovered through tracing biblical categories themselves, such as Longenecker's inclusion theme or Verhey's great reversal, or the Reign of God. But using external categories of ethics or social sciences with critical awareness of their exegetical appropriateness will help disclose further shared perspectives. Our authors already have found benefit in using such external categories as the contrast of "force" to "personal appeal", "living the story", and "cultural mandate." The description of the

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great reversal quoted above has echoes of other contexts and historical struggles. More extensive and intentional use of contemporary studies of status would strengthen Longenecker's study. Neither author uses justice as a category. What concept of justice is assumed in the great reversal or in the inclusiveness in Christ? Verhey urges in application a consistency of Scripture with the secular concept of justice, yet this examination has not been done with attention to the Scriptures' own view, or views, of justice.

Verhey urges for interpretation dialogue between Scripture and natural morality. This is important, but first there must be a dialogue among the teachings within Scripture itself. There is indeed risk of distorting particular truth in achieving greater generality and summary for New Testament ethics, but that risk is already operative when one generalizes about the ethic within any one author or source.

Further, a generally agreed upon tenet of the communities from which the New Testament came was the fact that the Old Testament was their Scripture—even if they did not always have to insist upon it and even if they differed on the continued normativeness of ceremonial and separatistic materials. By neglecting this moral authority in the early church (e.g., 2 Tim. 3:16), both authors miss an available unifying factor. If we believe in a canon of sixty-six books, Longenecker is incomplete when he states it was twenty-seven books which were the authoritative expression of the Christian religion in the early church—then New Testament ethics must be informed by and inform a greater biblical ethics.

The hermeneutics of New Testament ethics is a central concern of both books. Longenecker presents with great cogency the problem encountered in many conservative constituencies: "It will not do simply to ask, Does the New Testament say anything explicit concerning this or that social issue? With the intent being to repeat that answer if it does and to remain silent if it doesn't" (Longenecker, p. 27). The excellent categories which Verhey used elsewhere to examine Walter Rauschenbusch's use of the Bible provide superior clarity in understanding the assumptions made by a given approach. One such assumption concerns what Scripture really is about. His own position is that the resurrection is central to its message. Movement from Scripture to moral claims today must be coherent with the transforming message "that God has already made his eschatological power and purpose felt in the resurrection" (Verhey, p. 183). Longenecker also holds that we must begin our ethical interpretation with "the gospel as proclaimed by the apostles and the principles derived therefrom" (Longenecker, p. 84). Verhey's categories are helpful in understanding Longenecker. Longenecker is not identifying a canon within the canon in his reference to "the Gospel." Rather, the assumption about the message of the New Testament identifies which principles belong to the newness of the message. They exist in tension with circumstantial regulations of order. I agree that recognizing this tension is essential for understanding New Testament ethics. In what Longenecker calls "a developmental hermeneutic," the way the proclamation and its principles were put into practice in the first century serves as signposts to guide us for our reapplication in our day.

In presenting such valuable criteria for discernment, the authors make statements about the concrete injunctions of Scripture which require close scrutiny to avoid misunderstanding their intent. They both repeatedly reject the presence of a code of conduct or a set of rules in the New Testament. Verhey states that it is inappropriate to ask ethical questions of the Bible at the moral-rule level. The concrete commands were not for all times and places. Our concrete decisions come rather, he holds, indirectly through guidance from what the New Testament provides regarding our ideals, loyalties and perceptions and fundamental dispositions and intentions. The initial impression that the commands of the New Testament are not prescriptive for present conduct is reinforced by a pattern in Verhey's book of posing a choice between a moral rule and a disposition. For example, he presents Jesus' statement on divorce as not a new moral rule but the formation of a disposition not to divorce even when the law allows it. Similarly, he states that the New Testament is not a systematic set of rules but rather the power of God transforming identities. In both types of cases we ask if there is not an excluded middle containing more objective moral obligation.

An initial impression regarding a weakness on concrete obligation is reinforced by the authors' presentation of the Law. Longenecker states that "Christians. . .have ceased to regard their relationship with God in terms of law at all," even as an expression of their relationship with God (Longenecker, p. 12). Verhey finds Mark the most ill-disposed to rules and most ambiguous about the Law. But his examples have to do with aspects of the law that tied God's people to a nationalistic base. It would seem that in the divorce question Jesus contrasted one part of the Law (creation) to another, rather than putting it aside. In the matter of inner versus external purity, Mark could well have considered the vice list as being from the Law, and the logic is that the root is important precisely because of the agreed upon importance of its fruit. Is the Law replaced as the norm any more in the loyalty to Jesus' words in Mark 8:38 ("whoever is ashamed of me and my words") than in his words as the foundation of life in Matthew 7:24 ("everyone who hears these words of mine")? Verhey argues for the Law being replaced in the former but not in the latter. Verhey significantly states that for Mark the commandment of God is "not identical with any manipulable code or casuistry, even one based on the law" (Verhey, p. 79, cf. p. 43 where the Torah is associated with casuistry). Both authors view any role of discernment or exception as evidence that the matter at hand is not law, whether it is Jesus' injunction regarding possessions in Luke or the use of Jesus' words in the Pauline church. They thus miss the paradigmatic nature of the Hebrew Law and other ancient Near Eastern laws. The Law is not identical with an exceptionless code. The hermeneutic that the two authors are advocating is much closer in nature to the Law than they indicate. Biblical law is not the same as Verhey's moral-rule level as exceptionless codes, yet it calls forth behavior more concrete and substantive than his alternatives. Yet in its paragdigmatic character it tends toward principles.

Verhey in fact approves appeals to the perspective and principles that stand behind the concrete admonitions of the New Testament. The concrete injunctions thus are bearers of ethical authority. What he and Longenecker resist is taking them as a timeless code that would command unthinking obedience. For Verhey, to examine them in light of broader purposes and with a view to their historical context is to function on the ethical rather than the moral level. His definition of the ethical level as identifying *which* rules are good (rather than what is the good *in* the rules) makes it more exclusionary in definition than it really is in function for him. The Chalcedonian image that Verhey suggests for the nature of Scripture would indicate that every Scriptural passage is both divine and human. Even of those injunctions addressed to a situation so distinct from ours that they cannot be directly applied, we must seek what was the divine word and ponder its meaning for us.

Verhey does seem to overestimate the difference between our situation and the first century. I would suggest, as one unifying factor, that primary groups are common to all of life and are molded only in part by special traditions. The sentiments and impulses that are related to them do not belong to any particular time, which is why the modern person can feel at home in the literature of the most remote and varied phases of life (cf. Charles H. Cooley, "Primary Groups," in *Theories of Society*, ed. Talcott Parsons et al. [Free, 1961], 1.316-18). Injunctions that govern primary group behavior will have more direct application in another culture than those which relate to more complex relations. Verhey's argument that we are not Matthew's community of "Jewish-Christians recently exiled from the synagogue" may or may not render that Gospel's rules inappropriate for us. But the burden of proof is to demonstrate that they are not.

My concern has been to indicate how further work may build upon the careful studies of Verhey and Longenecker and to caution against misunderstandings of their arguments. Because of their exegetical insight, their concern for context and for perspective and principles, the social reversal of the Gospel and its inclusiveness will be better appropriated in our time.

Evangelical Scholars Discuss Women and the Bible

Thirty-six evangelical scholars, sixteen women and twenty men representing eighteen different church bodies, met recently to challenge traditionalist views of women and the Bible.

The three-day colloquium, held October 9-11 at St. Francis Retreat House at Mayslake in Oak Brook, Illinois, grew out of concerns shared by Catherine Kroeger, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Minnesota; Stan Gundry, executive editor for academic books at Zondervan Publishers; and David Scholer, academic dean and professor of New Testament at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary.

For too long, the conveners argued, only traditionalist views of women in ministry have got much support from evangelical scholars. In hopes of furthering dialogue on the biblical and hermeneutical issues at stake, the three gathered a group of evangelicals who support women's full participation in ministry. Although several scholars representing traditionalist views were invited to present responses, all of them declined to attend.

The conference began with an impassioned plea from author and lecturer Patricia Gundry to recognize the pain that many women have suffered at the hands of the church. She summed up the issue in this way: "There is but one question in this conflicted issue, and only one. That central and watershed questions: Are women fully human?"

Gretchen Gaibelein Hull, who read Gundry's paper in her absence, added that "Role restrictions on women deny not only their full humanity but their full redemption in Christ."

Subsequent sessions tackled a variety of thorny issues. Key among them was the issue of whether an egalitarian view of women's roles is consistent with biblical authority.

Clark Pinnock, professor of theology at McMaster Divinity College, challenged the prevailing view among colloquium participants, arguing, "The adjective *biblical* clashes with the noun *feminism* in the term biblical feminism. If it is the Bible you want, feminism is in trouble. If it is feminism you desire, the Bible stands in the way." At best, he concluded, evangelicals ought to argue for a "Christianized patriarchalism, one softened and modified by insights from Jesus' attitude toward women."

In contrast, Roger Nicole, professor of theology at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and a strong advocate of biblical inerrancy, argued that "when a suitable understanding of Scripture prevails as well as an appropriate outlook on the role of women in the home, in society, and in the church," feminist aspirations need not be viewed as repudiating biblical authority.

In a paper on the meaning of the word *kephale* ("head") in the New Testament, Berkeley and Alvera Mickelsen amassed evidence that the Greek translators of the Old Testament seldom, if ever, recognized a metaphoric meaning of the word that would suggest superior rank or authority. They thus cast doubt on the assumption that 1 Corinthians 11 and Ephesians 5 intend to teach that husbands have authority over their wives.

David Scholer and Walter Liefeld, in separate papers on 1 Timothy 2 and 1 Corinthians, shared the view that one of Paul's prime concerns in the passages dealing with women is that the gospel not be maligned by violations of contemporary standards of decency. In no case did they find universal principles that would preclude women from any form of ministry today.

Conference participants were challenged to be Christian change agents by Joan Flikkema, executive secretary of the Committee for Women in the Christian Reformed Church. She suggested thirty-four different strategies, ranging in risk from low to high, for changing institutional attitudes and policies toward the use of women's gifts in the church.

At the end of the colloquium, J. I. Packer, professor of historical and systematic theology at Regent College, expressed his conviction that we need a view of the church which stresses "life before order, gifts before office." "Gifts," he argued, "are for use; order is for canonizing their use. Gifts are given to all; gifts are not intended to be thwarted."

Throughout the conference, participants wrestled with a variety of tensions, characterized by Jeannette Scholer as those between "experience and truth, persons and status, egalitarianism and hierarchicalism, the prescriptive and the descriptive, prooftexting and hermeneutical consistency, creation and redemption, the church's function as a critic of society and its effort to be winsome within society."

The conference papers will be published by InterVarsity Press.

BOOK REVIEWS

Miracles and the Critical Mind
by Colin Brown (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1984. 325 pp.) Reviewed by Bernard Ramm, Professor of Christian Theology, American Baptist Seminary of the West.

Colin Brown's book is essentially a historical review of the apologetic interpretation of miracles from the patristic times to the present. Because it is such a substantial historical review it is a source book that will be around for a long time. It is not a dry summary of historical opinion, because Brown always adds his own interpretation to the opinions expressed. Furthermore, the book is extensively documented (in both English and foreign literature) revealing the great amount of research gone into the writing of the book.

It is a book aimed at the theological community, especially at the professorial level, although advanced seminarians may read it with comprehension. Brown does move with ability in philosophical, theological and biblical-critical territory as one must to do justice to the subject of miracles. He rightly adds the word *critical* to his title because a person cannot discuss miracles as if they were purely theological or philosophical problems. One must touch base with current New Testament studies, and Brown does that.

There are four problems which persist in the discussion of miracles and which constantly surface in Brown's discussion: (1) Does a person accept or reject miracles on a prior accepted philosophical or theological position so that the discussion of miracles is really an after-the-fact matter? i.e., are miracles rejected because of their inherent unbelievability, or accepted because of their evident historicity, or is the matter already settled by one's world view? (2) How do we vigorously defend biblical miracles and yet turn around and play the skeptic with miracles in other religious traditions? (3) How do we define a miracle? If we define a miracle as an event contrary to natural law, do we not make faith in a miracle sheer credulity? If we define miracle as a higher or hidden function of the laws of God, do we not undermine the uniqueness of the miracle or the shock of it? (4) How do we apologetically define the function of miracles without getting into a circular argument? Do we believe in the inspiration of Holy Scripture because of miracles? Or do we believe in miracles because they are in the inspired Holy Scripture?

When Brown comes to express his own opinions I find them marked by great common sense. Having reviewed the history of miracles in theology he knows the options and the pitfalls. In the final analysis, Brown accepts the biblical miracles because they fit into the total Christian schema one enters by faith in Jesus Christ and illumination of the Holy Spirit. Brown does not accept the evidentialists view of miracles because all historical "facts" (miracles included) are accepted or rejected by historians as they fit into the schema the historian works within. No historical event is a hard, factual datum, let alone miracles. Brown also has no sympathy with those who wish to explain miracles away by psychiatric explanations or other means to reduce them to natural events or to mythical stories originating in the early Christian communities.

Alan Richardson was Brown's first mentor in graduate work, and Brown treats Richardson's opinions on miracles with great respect. When Brown discusses evangelicals and miracles he is hard put to come up with scholars of academic weight.

My critical remarks are of a very secondary order. Somewhere in these deeply researched pages one will find every objection to the biblical miracles and every apologetic defense of the miracles. I would liked to have seen a reference to James Orr's book on David Hume (*David Hume: The World Epochs Makers*) for they are fellow Scots and Orr must both praise and damn his fellow Scot. A reference to J. A. Passmore would have also been appropriate; his evaluation was that Hume was the greatest of the

philosophers. I think too that Kornelis Miskotte's approach to miracles, (*When the Gods are Silent*) would be radically different than any of the men Brown discusses. Brown's work is such a welcome contrast to current charismatic chatter over miracles that a note on biblical miracles versus current charismatic nonsense about miracles would have been a welcome contemporary touch.

The Holy Spirit
by Alasdair I. C. Heron (Westminster Press, 212pp., $11.95) Reviewed by Kevin V. Dodd, ThM Student, Fuller Theological Seminary.

This is not a book in systematic or dogmatic theology, but rather an examination of the Spirit in the Bible (including the intertestamental period), in the history of Christian theology, and in recent thought. Further, as the author readily admits, it is not meant to be an exhaustive survey; it is a selective and introductory one. Its purpose is to provide the reader with a map of the general terrain, with an overall perspective on what types of approaches have been used, and are being used, in theological reflection upon the Holy Spirit.

In addition, Heron writes as one profoundly influenced by the concerns and directions of "neo-orthodoxy" (especially K. Barth and T. F. Torrance). This is reflected not only in the general structure of the book, but also in his specific comments concerning the various thinkers and approaches. This, of course, does not mean that he agrees with Barth at every point, for he does not, but that he finds the most promising avenues opened by Barth's methodology.

With this in mind, one can enjoy this well-written book without fighting the fact that it is meant only to be a selective and introductory survey of the material. In addition, one can fully appreciate the fidelity with which each position is presented. As in *A Century of Protestant Theology* (also intended as an introduction), Heron is remarkably true to the sources, even in the most elementary of summaries.

The book is divided into three relatively equal parts. The first part deals with the witness to "Spirit" in the Old Testament, the intertestamental period, and in the New Testament. The purpose in this is not to ascertain some unified approach within Scripture, but to demonstrate the development, the diversity, and the richness of its witness. The church, then, faced with questions not expressly addressed therein, had to follow through the implications and seek "to uncover the profound coherence of the realities" of which the Scriptures spoke.

The second part is entitled "Patterns in Pneumatology." After sketching the thought of Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Origen, Heron focuses attention on Cyril of Jerusalem, Athanasius, and the Cappodocians in the context of "the Lord, the Life-Giver" (from the Constantinopolitan Creed). "God's Love, God's Gift, the Soul of the Church" is the title of the next chapter in which western medieval thought is explored (including the *filioque*). Finally, Reformation and Post-Reformation thought is developed under the rubric of the Spirit as enlightener and sanctifier. In all of this, Heron is clear and concise. These patterns also offer some interesting avenues for further exploration (eg., p. 155).

The third part, on current issues, is arranged in three chapters dealing with pentecost and experience; spirit, soul, and world; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In speaking of experience, Heron notes that although it must not be made *the* fundamental category, neither must its importance be denied. Therefore, Liberalism was right in relating Jesus' experience and our own. Pentecostalism also offers a challenge to a Christianity that is not sufficiently open to the movement of the Spirit on non-institutionalized, emotional levels.

Heron then notes various positions with regard to spirit in the human person. He sets up the problem with Kierkegaard and Buber, demonstrates the two alternatives by summarizing Barth and Rahner, and draws attention to Tillich's resolution. He doubts Tillich's success because his resolution depends "on the solidity of its basis in his whole system—about which perhaps few today would be highly confident" (147). This, unfortunately, is much too curt a dismissal (and it is not the only time this occurs). Concerning the Spirit and the world, Heron observes the contributions of Idealism, of Moltmann, and especially (though less explicitly) of T. F. Torrance in overcoming the dualism of spirit and nature. His language becomes increasingly doxological as he describes the victorious presence of the Spirit in space and time.

Finally, current thought on the Trinity is dealt with primarily by examining Lampe, Tillich, and Barth. Heron then offers some concluding reflections on the basis and significance of the doctrine of the Trinity, on the Holy Spirit as the "third person," and on the *filioque*. These reflections take serious account of ecumenical discussions, especially between East and West, and offer some very good suggestions in this regard.

This book is an impressive and helpful introduction. It does not assume any previous knowledge on the part of the reader. All Hebrew and Greek words are transliterated and defined. Nothing is introduced into the discussion without being explained in terms of its meaning and significance. The book is well focused; the style is lucid and engaging. If the book is to be faulted, it is because it shares the problems of any summary—selectivity, brevity, and simplification. But as a summary, it excels.

Christian Theology & Scientific Culture
by Thomas F. Torrance (Christian Journals Limited, 1980 138 pgs., $7.50). Reviewed by J. Terence Morrison, Ph D; director of IVCF Overseas.

It is significant that Albert Einstein steps out in the first sentence of the preface. Torrance's concept of science is largely built on Einstein's work, particularly in the more popular explanations of science that Einstein has published. The book concerns itself with insights from modern science for theology, as well as insights from theology for modern science. As he says, "What is envisioned here is an exersise in conjoint thinking where theological science and natural science have common ground within the rationalities and objectivities of the created order but where they each pursue a different objective.". One could bracket his interplay of science and theology by the unusual linkages of four men of science. In 1642, Galileo died and Isaac Newton was born, and in 1879, Albert Einstein was born and James Clerk Maxwell died. It is the captivity of much of modern theology to the out-of-date science of Galileo and Newton that Torrance decries. It is to release theology from that captivity that Torrence explicated and depends on the thought of Maxwell and Einstein. Two different scientific universes lead to two very different theologies. Unfortunately, Torrance has leaned on Einstein too heavily and uncritically; perhaps not sufficiently aware of the criticisms and disagreements available in the current literature. He talks about a "decisive switch from a totally mechanistic conception of the universe and the imperialistic science that went with it." Unfortunately no such decisive switch has yet occured.

Having faulted him for over optimism, nonetheless I applaud his wide use of these new insights to investigate the history of theology. For instance, the Newtonian dualism which was incorporated into theology, perhaps via Kant, still clouds the air for theological thought even though it is "an anachronistic hangover from the 19th century". The damaging effect of this dualism can be seen where modern theology detaches Christ from God and Christianity from Christ. Thus Jesus Christ is robbed of the central or ultimate place in the Christian faith by those who would place the importance not on the person of Christ, but on the ideas he mediated about God and mankind. Christianity is separated from Christ, attached to the church, and regarded as an ecclesiastical institution which can be shaped according to a consumer dominated market. Torrance is by no means simply a champion of a classical conservative theology. A creationist would be upset by assertions that the Biblical account and the scientific account of origins express different kinds of relations that cannot be combined on one and the same level without confusion and even contradiction. On the other hand, he is a champion of a realist understanding of the resurrection stories. A Bultmanite would be made uncomfortable by his assertion that the empty tomb must be treated under ordinary, rational thought and tied in with the events of the historical Jesus in order to relate it to the real needs we have as human beings for salvation. If the resurrection does not involve the empty tomb, there can be no possibility of coordinating rational thought and speech about it with basic concepts and statements arising out of our ordinary life.

I found chapter three to be an amazing and exciting use of current scientific thought about the nature of light, particularly the Einsteinian insights to light, to give us new "theological" insights. Considering the physics of light leads Torrance to offer praise to God as the Creator of such a structured and ordered and beautiful universe. Flooded by light, yet a created reflection of the uncreated and unlimited Light which God himself is. However, in his enthusiasm for the Einsteinian insight into light, he also bumps up against the problem that Einstein faced in understanding the probablistic nature of microphysics, (i.e., quantemechanics). This illustrates that perhaps his reading has been selective and his training has been in other areas. Torrance also makes this new freedom of thought a tool in grasping the nature of contemporary theology. As an example, he notes that present day Process theology depends on the dominant mathematical physical outlook of what is essentially a Newtonian perspective in the universe and leads to a kind of determinism. In contrast to this determinism, he has seen that there is also a protestant pietism, or, in the opposite direction, the retreat of liberal theology into the fuzzy realm of poetic or oblique truth.

It is interesting to see Torrance's thought grapple with the growing presence of eastern religious thought in western theology. He sees that the break between image and reality, which flows out of this Newtonian scientific world view, is severe in modern man and that this inner split leads to a hunger for wholeness, which drives many to eastern religions, feeling that it is no longer available in Christian thought. Interestingly, Torrance says this struggle is characteristic of the whole of modern western culture, with its split between the sciences and humanities, the disintegration of form in the arts, and modern liberal theology with its revival of mythical thinking.

On his closing page, Torrance quotes with approval Walter Thorsen, a Canadian theoretical chemist, who's been writing quite a bit frequently, both on Michael Polanyi and on the new freedom in theological thought due to contemporary philosophy of science. Thorsen says, "I think that the scientific revolution and the new kind of thinking

it encourages should properly be understood as a new expression of Christian thought, not as a irrelevant and divergent secularism". Torrance has done just that for us in this book, taking a contemporary scientific world view derived from the scientific work and philosophical comment of Einstein and others, a new sturdy realism, he works to bring theological thought into the 20th century out of its captivity to the 19th century closed universe world view. I highly recommend this and other Torrance books to any student of theology.

The Shape of Scriptural Authority
By David L. Bartlett (Fortress Press, 1983, 161 Pgs., $8.95 paper). Reviewed by Donald K. McKim, Assistant Professor of Theology, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary.

David Bartlett has produced an interesting book in which he examines the authority of Scripture in light of the various types of writings found in Scripture. He uses Paul Ricoeur as a base and tries to "suggest the kinds of authority these forms of literature claim—explicitly or implicitly—for themselves, and to suggest how these authoritative claims might be acknowledged, tested, and affirmed in the lives of believers and of believing communities." His six chapters consider then in turn: Authority in the Bible, the authority of Words, Deeds, Wisdom, Witness and then Canon and Community. Each of the central chapters examine the nature of the literature involved—prophetic, historical narrative, wisdom, witness (confessional, such as the confessions of Jeremiah, the testimony of Paul) and then speaks to how these forms function today. Thus the book has many biblical citations and references to biblical scholars, especially those most fully concerned with literary approaches to Scripture. The final chapter of "Canon and Community" is a good overview of current approaches and poses the continuing questions of how the canon provides a fundamental resource for the church's life and practice as well as how the community, the church, provides the context for the interpretation of the canon.

Bartlett is to be applauded for taking seriously the various literary forms of Scripture and for seeking to see how these function in light of the canon of Scripture as a whole and the church community that interprets Scripture. His approach in itself stresses the diversities of Scripture and prefers to center on the question of the "authority" of Scripture rather than its inspiration, since this allows him to look directly at the biblical texts themselves "to see what sort of authoritative claims they make—how they function authoritatively in the life of the community." Bartlett says, "This does not require a doctrine of inspiration, nor, for the most part, does it require a reconstruction of the history lying behind the writing and editing of the texts."

It is this bifurcation of authority and inspiration that may prove to be the most problematic aspect of this volume for evangelical readers. Regardless of internicene struggles over inspiration, those using the evangelical name today would, in the tradition of the Reformation, link Scripture's ultimate authority as God's Word to its nature, purpose and scope. And this content and purpose of Scripture is, theologically, related to claims of "inspiration" (Gr. THEOPNEUSTOS). How inspiration functions through the varieties of biblical writers, texts, interpreters and for us in the present day presents the questions to be explored. But to short-circuit this process by not giving attention to the concept of inspiration, its nature or how it relates to the diverse literary forms of Scripture would seem to leave a very wide gap in one's conclusions about "the shape of Scriptural authority." Bartlett acknowledges that the work of the Holy Spirit is involved in establishing Scriptural authority, but goes on with his approach in order "to anticipate the ways in which the Spirit may work for believers, and to assume some kind of congruity between the literature of the Bible and the experience of contemporary believers."

This is a helpful volume for keeping us honest about the differing forms of Scripture and for reminding us again that Scriptural authority is a functional authority. Scripture is for Christians as Bartlett says, an "authoritative resource" for "faith and action", and the ground for "discussion and decision". But whether discussions of scriptural "authority" can be ultimately convincing apart from some acknowledgement of the theological character of Scripture itself in terms of inspiration, is questionable. Bartlett's book thus opens many doors but also leads us to face many others.

The Old Protestantism and the New: Essays on the Reformation Heritage
by B. A. Gerrish (University of Chicago, 1982, 422 pp., $35.00);
A Prince of the Church: Schleiermacher and the Beginnings of Modern Theology,
by B. A. Gerrish (Fortress, 1984, 79 pp., $4.95). Reviewed by John G. Stackhouse, Jr., Ph.D. student, University of Chicago Divinity School.

Karl Barth once denied that F. D. E. Schleiermacher was a legitimate heir to the Reformation. He wrote that the line running back through Kierkegaard to Luther and Calvin and so to Paul "does *not include Schleiermacher*" (Barth's emphasis). As if anticipating this judgment a century earlier, Schleiermacher himself wrote, "Our lineage can no one take away from us. . . .We are legitimate sons of the Reformation and not bastards."

B. A. Gerrish, professor of historical theology at the University of Chicago, in these two recent books has attempted to refute Barth and to establish a clear link not only between the Reformers and Schleiermacher, but also between the two major forms of Protestantism they represent: classical and liberal, what Ernst Troeltsch called "Old" and "New" Protestantism. In doing so, Gerrish has provided essays which, if they do not convince the reader of his central thesis, will enrich—probably enormously—his or her understanding of the subjects he discusses.

The earlier book comprises fifteen essays written over a twenty-year period. The essays are in three sections: "Martin Luther," "Reformation Principles," and "The Reformation Heritage." An introduction to the thesis, contents, and scheme of the book sets up these essays quite usefully.

Readers of the first two sections will find trenchant discussions of crucial ideas in the thinking of Luther and Calvin: free will, the Word of God and the words of Scripture, faith, priesthood and ministry, eucharist, and the doctrine of God. Students of magisterial Reformation theology will turn often to these well-focused essays: Gerrish has read widely in the works of these two men, and skilfully distills the essence of their thought. In particular, Gerrish's essays deeply enriched my appreciation of the power of Luther's understanding of the gospel and of the beauty of Calvin's view of the Lord's Supper.

The third section explicitly links the "Old Protestantism," as exemplified by Luther and Calvin, with the "New," as represented by Schleiermacher and Troeltsch. And the hinge chapter, in my view, is the twelfth, entitled "Theology Within the Limits of Piety Alone: Schleiermacher and Calvin's Notion of God."

Gerrish here maintains that predestination is very far from the center of Calvin's doctrine of God. Rather, like Schleiermacher, Calvin understands God centrally as Father, one with whom the Christian enjoys a relationship of filial piety. And it is this common notion of piety as the proper governing principle of theological construction that Gerrish sees as the crucial link between the Old Protestantism and the New. Both Calvin and Schleiermacher deplore speculation as the basis for dogmatics; both recognize a "hiddenness" to God's being; both appreciate that we know God only through his dealings with us, not directly as he is in himself. Gerrish is certainly correct here, for Calvin and Schleiermacher clearly recognized this epistemological limitation to which many modern theologians—orthodox and unorthodox—seem oblivious in their self-confident pronouncements about the nature of God.

But it is also here that Gerrish, honest expositor of Calvin as he tries to be, exposes the crucial difference between classical and liberal theology. Calvin, he acknowledges, offers a theology that is not only governed by piety, but founded upon scriptural exegesis. Calvin believes that God has revealed and does reveal himself uniquely in Scripture, and that its propositions function as norms from which any proper theology must arise and by which any theological formulation must be adjudicated. Schleiermacher, on the other hand, sees the Scriptures—and all other "confessions of faith" (for that is how he regards the Scriptures)—"not as external authorities, but as indexes to the evangelical religious consciousness" (Gerrish's phrase, p. 202).

Gerrish himself outlines this difference in discussing the two theologians' views of the Trinity. Essentially, Schleiermacher dismisses it as something which "could never emerge" in the religious consciousness, for, as Gerrish puts it, "it makes no difference to our living fellowship with Christ" (p. 205). Calvin, on the other hand, preserves the doctrine because, again in Gerrish's words, "he has no doubt at all that, albeit God speaks sparingly of his essence, the Scriptures do inform us of three hypostases or persons in the divine essence—that is, of an eternal distinction" (p. 206). The critical difference in the understanding of the place of Scriptural exegesis in theological method—which goes back to differences in epistemology itself—separates quite sharply the two theologians and their respective traditions.

After reading this final section, which includes two particularly useful essays on Troeltsch, whom most evangelicals scarcely recognize, let alone understand, my judgment on Gerrish's thesis is a "Yes, but. . . ." Yes, he has established a legitimate connection between Calvin and Schleiermacher in their shared view of piety as a governing idea in theology. But he has made too little of the crucial difference which Barth recognized: Calvin's belief in and dependence upon divine revelation through the Scriptures clearly distinguishes his theological method and conclusions from Schleiermacher's which rest on the interpretation of piety alone. And it is this difference between Old Protestantism and New, as much as any other, which continues to divide contemporary liberal theologies from orthodox and neo-orthodox theologies.

Gerrish's second book ostensibly has a less controversial goal: to introduce the essence of Schleiermacher's theology. Three essays, originally public lectures, discuss three fundamental ideas in Schleiermacher's thought. But Gerrish's concern to link Schleiermacher with Luther and Calvin reappears here too.

The first essay analyzes Schleiermacher's little "Christmas Eve Dialogue," and thereby illumines the heart of his theological method. It introduces Schleiermacher's crucial idea that "theology is nothing other than honest, critical reflection upon piety," that "piety, after all, is the actual object of theological reflection" (p. 31).

The next two essays follow from this, and dis-

cuss the two foci of the ellipse of Schleiermacher's theology: the doctrine of Christ as the only one through whom God is revealed as Redeemer; and the doctrine of God as the one who lives in all and in whom all exist. Thus Schleiermacher recognizes a consciousness of God in other faiths while preserving the uniqueness and supremacy of God's revelation in Christ. And the rest of his huge dogmatics, *The Christian Faith*, revolves around these two poles.

These essays make Schleiermacher more understandable than his own works do, and thus they admirably fulfill their purpose. They furnish guidance for the neophyte Schleiermacher student like nothing else in English (Gerrish recommends the English translation of M. Redeker's *Schleiermacher: Life and Thought* as the next step).

One quibble, however. Gerrish would like to apply to Schleiermacher the old label "liberal evangelical," and so link him not only with evangelical Pietists but also with the "original" evangelicals, Luther and Calvin. Now Schleiermacher was certainly "liberal" in the sense Gerrish means: one who had a "deep conviction that modern habits of thought demand radical theological change, a thorough overhauling of the meanings traditionally ascribed to Christian language" (p. 13). But it is unclear that "evangelical" can denote properly one who shares merely a religious consciousness associated with evangelical Protestants (in this case, German Pietists). It seems to me that "evangelical" always implies a particular message (an *evangel*) which goes hand in hand with a particular experience—indeed, a message which directly influences and does not merely represent that experience. So perhaps we can call Schleiermacher a "liberal Pietist"—he called himself "a Herrnhuter [Pietist] of a higher order"—but we should reserve "evangelical" for those who have "good news" at the heart of their religion.

In sum, B. A. Gerrish has provided essays which will challenge the theologically-minded Christian about issues of great importance in the history of theology, issues which clearly ought to inform current discussions. The price per page looks steep for both books, but these are *reference* books, to be consulted repeatedly with profit, and they are well worth their cost.

Readings in Christian Humanism
ed. J. M. Shaw, R. W. Franklin, H. Kaasa, and C. W. Buzicky (Augsburg, 1984, 685 pp., $19.95). Reviewed by G. W. Bromiley, Senior Professor of Church History and Historical Theology, Fuller Theological Seminary

Four scholars, two Roman Catholic and two Lutheran, have cooperated in compiling this series of readings which they have generally put under the heading of Christian humanism. The work opens with an introduction that defines the term and outlines the purpose of the collection. The readings fall into six main parts covering foundations, emergence, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the post-Reformation period, with an epilogue devoted to the theme of human liberation. Each part has its own historical introduction, and a brief sketch of a page or so fills in the picture regarding individual authors. There are over fifty of these, and they cover a wide span, beginning with Plato and ending with Gilkey. The selections vary, for creeds, hymns, and order find a place along with Canto I of Dante's *Paradiso* and Book IV of Milton's *Paradise Regained*.

The problem with a selection, of course, is the selecting. Roman Catholic and Lutheran collaboration has ensured a reasonable cross-section, but even so, doubts arise as to the truly representative nature of the readers. Thus, the post-Reformation period claims no fewer than 328 of 635 pages of actual readings. Has humanism really enjoyed such a bountiful harvest in the modern era, or is it just that the age of printing has multiplied the available output? Again, certain works seem to claim an inordinate amount of space. Do we really need so much of *The City of God*, or so many chapters of the Benedictine Rule, or such a lengthy extract from Erasmus' *Enchiridion*, or all that material from Walker Percy?

The problem of longer or more dubious extracts, of course, is especially important because of some obvious omissions. The Greek fathers, for instance, might never have existed. The Reformation receives scant treatment. Indeed, the so-called humanist reformer (Zwingli) fails to secure an entry. In the modern era the Puritan contribution to science might have merited some attention and the development of the broader implications of Reformed teaching by the Kuyper school surely call for fleeting mention. More recently the failure to include C. S. Lewis will raise some evangelical eyebrows, and Karl Barth has many passages that demand consideration, such as his balanced discussion of eros or his remarkable evaluation of Mozart. Obviously, no selection can satisfy everyone, but this particular offering might have benefited from more representative editorial direction.

The introductory essays raise some contentious issues. Thus it seems to be assumed that *de iure* as well as *de facto* Christianity synthesized "the religious outlook of the Hebrew people" with "the philosophical outlook of classical antiquity." But might not this have produced a highly debatable hybrid rather than an authentically Christian humanism? More important, perhaps, is the contention underlying the general introduction that humanism is in itself a neutral thing which receives its meaning from such qualifying adjectives as secular, scientific, or Christian. The editors may well be right when they advise us not to accept the claims of secularists to a monopoly of humanism nor to join with ultraconservatives in constantly campaigning against humanism as though the secularists were right. Yet the polemic against the Christian Right is not wholly on the mark, for some of its goals might well be regarded as in line with an authentic humanism, and those who contend for Christian humanism often favor a liberal version of the faith which weights the element of humanism strongly at the expense of the Christian component.

On balance, however, one is inclined to think that the general thesis of the essay is convincing. A proper focus on God establishes true humanity rather than reducing it. Humanism, then, can take legitimate as well as illegitimate forms. Christians should support the former as well as opposing the latter, as they have constantly done in their various educational and cultural ventures. Indeed, in the last analysis only Christianity can produce a truly authentic humanism. In so far as these readings help toward the attainment of that goal, they deserve both a warm welcome and wide circulation.

Evil and the Morality of God
by Harold M. Schulweis (Hebrew Union College Press, 1984, 145 pp). Reviewed by Steven S. Sittig, Ph.D. candidate, Claremont Graduate School.

Schulweis is concerned to prevent theodicy from denying the legitimacy of humanity's complaint about the suffering of the innocents and the prospering of the wicked, and from so redefining godliness that belief in the divine ends up at odds with our human moral sensibilities. Two related theological errors place theodicy in this hard place: First, presuppositions of divine perfection err by limiting one's ability to ascribe to God sympathy, pain, suffering, change, community, *etc.*, depending on the theology in question. Aquinas and other scholastics, for example, so elevate the perfection of God's knowledge and wisdom that a consideration that there could be a lessening of perceived evil is ruled out as inconsistent with God's metaphysical design. Hartshorne, Wieman, and Tillich are included as metaphysical theodicians with analogous shortcomings to their approaches.

Secondly, Schulweis defines personalistic theodicies as those which presume a moral Subject as creator of the universe, in a special relation to humanity apart from the relation to nature. But this Subject-as-person becomes morally unintelligible to us at critical times, as when Barth refers to *das Nichtige* as that sinister nothingness which only the divine can comprehend and engage, or as when Kierkegaard portrays the teleological suspension of the ethical. Buber and John Hick are included in this approach, and Schulweis finds all falling into appeals to the mystery of the divine morality just when human moral sensibilities would conclude the divine morality is inept or faulty.

The common failure of the two theodical strands Schulweis finds to be in their falling prey to the subject-predicate grammar in which the respective theologies are formulated. The presumption of a divine Subject is a natural one, given traditional locutions about the divine; but a proposal for a subjectless predicate theology is Schulweis's positive thesis. If the theological task is transformed from proof of the existence of the subject, to proof of the reality of the divine predicates, then contending that the humanly comprehensible qualities of goodness, love, intelligence, and creativity are worthy becomes the task. The search becomes one for godliness, not God.

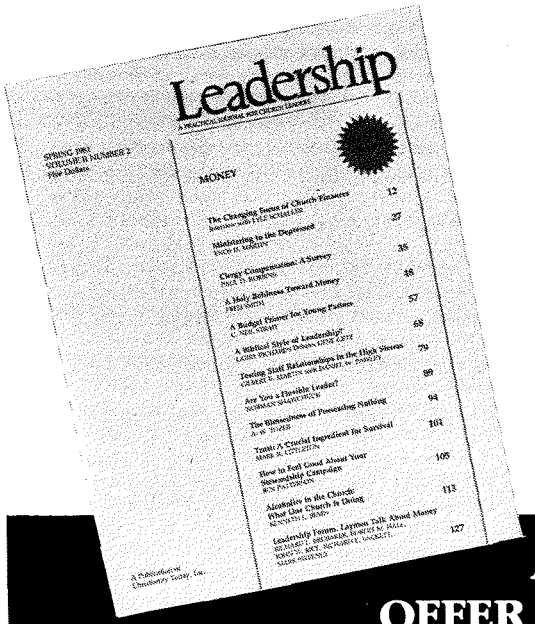
This work has much to commend it, both to students of "technical" theodicy and pastoral theology. Several objections to the thesis are anticipated, but dealt with too briefly in the final chapter. The author argues with rigor, and with a clear sensitivity to the practical end of the topic, which is to my mind the central issue of faith in this, the century of Holocaust. His criticisms of the figures cited above are not without overstatement, but his thesis is worthy of attention. "Complaint theology", in which one admits to God one's sense of offense at the way things are going, is a rich OT and rabbinical tradition. Schulweis draws on this and other Jewish sources which are too infrequently brought to bear on a topic often made one of logic. A brief foreword by Chaim Potok will endear this book to his admirers.

Omnipotence and other Theological Mistakes
by Charles Hartshorne. (State University of New York Press, 1984, 144 pp + xi, $9.95 paper) Reviewed by Alan Padgett, Pastor, San Jacinto (Cal.) United Methodist Church.

In this brief, inexpensive paperback, Hartshorne has written one of his best books. It is not his most profound work, but it is an excellent introduction to his thought, and to process theology. This book will communicate to the educated lay person and is bound to find its way into college and seminary classrooms. The book is well written: the writing is clean and in good style, and the ideas and arguments are admirably clear. I highly recommend it for those interested in Hartshorne or in process theology.

Since the work is bound to be widely read, I should like to respond to it. The very nature of this task makes it, unfortunately, a mostly negative one. The criticisms that follow should be read in the light of my overall praise for this work.

My central criticism is the book's arrogant tone,



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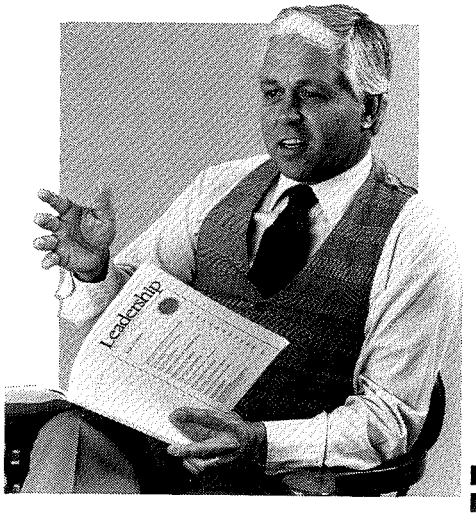

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and its caricatures of other theological options. The major foil is "classic theism", which turns out to be Catholic Scholasticism and Protestant Orthodoxy—hardly what I would call "classic" today. These views are dated, rationalistic aberrations from true biblical Christianity. Hartshorne can easily overthrow this straw man, making room for his more sophisticated position, his "new" theism. Yet the idea of a finite deity who feels for his/her children but can't overcome the evil in the world is hardly new. It is at least as old as Zoroaster, Plato, and Norse mythology.

The first chapter is the longest and most important. It centers on six so-called mistakes concerning deity: perfection, omnipotence, timelessness, impassability, immutability, and revelation. There are many points where I agree with Hartshorne over against Scholasticism; for example, in his rejection of an abstract, absolute perfection in God.

The section on omnipotence has its good points, but the definition of omnipotence as perfect power is one of the more inferior. From the fact that God has all possible power it does not follow that (1) God causes everything to happen, nor that (2) God decides exactly what will happen in the world. Classical biblical Christianity has always affirmed human freedom and dignity as *Imago Dei*, since God creates *ad extra*. If God has *infinite* power, giving independence to humans in no way limits him. Omnipotence means God can bring any possible event about, not that he is the only agent, or the only being with power.

Hartshorne seems to think his finite deity solves the problem of evil, since his God can point to human choice and nature as thwarting the divine will. But this problem can be modified to fit Hartshorne, too. Since he believes that (4) God irresistably lures creatures to his will, as much as possible given their level of freedom, and that (5) there is an *infinite* past relationship between creation and Creator, it seems to follow that (6) if God's lure is stronger than Evil's, the present must conform to the will of God, or (7) if Evil's lure is stronger than God's, the present must be maximally evil, or (8) there is in the long run a balance between God and Evil. Both (6) and (7) seem absurd, so (8) seems the logical choice. But this is hardly consistent with Hartshorne's process view. Moreover, since in the infinite past God has not conquered Evil, "She-He" (Hartshorne's term) *never* will. This hardly solves the problem of evil! The discussion of the free will defense is weak, since Hartshorne only complains that it does not deal with natural evils (yet free will defenders like Austin Farrer and C. S. Lewis have dealt with it!).

On timelessness, Hartshorne does very well. He quite rightly points to the superior notion of eternity as everlastingness. His critique of God's impassibility is equally correct. Certainly Scripture affirms that God relates to us emotionally, and suffers when we sin (especially on the Cross!).

The next topic is not as well done. His discussion of immortality rests on equivocation. Hartshorne has, let us call it, an "artistic" concept of immortality, i.e., that our work lives on after us and other minds remember us. Yet even if God's "enjoyment" of us is perfect, that is *not* what theologians and others mean by immortal. The Biblical view of the resurrection of the body (a quite different view from immortality) is not even discussed. Hartshorne should abandon the word immortality in defining his view.

The discussion of the "mistake" of revelation may be the worst part of the book. Once again, Hartshorne sets up a false dichotomy between his view and a naive concept of Biblical inerrancy which he identifies as "classic." Of course his view is better than the one he attributes to Christianity! Has he read nothing on this subject written since the Second Helvetic Confession? Perhaps he thinks Gordon H. Clark represents all of Christendom!

Chapter two is a rather straightforward discussion of dualism and monism, with Hartshorne opting for panpsychism. The only major problem is his caricature of the biblical view, equating it with magic ("Let there be light"="Abracadabra"!). No serious criticism is made of creation *ex nihilo*.

Chapter three presents a criticism of creationism, and an argument for a theistic evolution. Such a view was also put forth by "classic" Christian biologists in Darwin's day, like Asa Gray and Aubrey Moore. The idea that evolution is based on "chance" according to modern science, is incorrect. Most scientists only admit random happenings at the sub-atomic level; some not even there. Also, most scientists accept the Big Bang theory of cosmic origin (i.e., they reject the idea of an infinite past for matter). For one who complains so loudly about how Christians are ignorant of modern science, these are interesting errors.

The final chapter centers on the love of God, and general questions. Hartshorne argues for a model of God in which the world is to God as I am to my body. A cell in my body is related to me, as I am related to God. As a panpsychist, Hartshorne believes that even a cell has some feelings and some freedom. Of course, this freedom is limited. I find this model very curious for a theology that lifts up personal freedom. After all, even if my cells have some freedom, in the end I am in control of my body. A modern Biblical Christianity offers a model of *greater* freedom than Hartshorne's process view, by emphasizing creation *ad extra*, wherein God gives us autonomous power and freedom apart from his own.

In sum, I recommend this book. It is well written, and contains many good points. Many will find this a good introduction to process theology, and to Hartshorne himself. Its greatest weakness is the many false dilemmas that result from the author choosing to identify Christianity with a rationalistic orthodoxy of a bygone era. His criticisms and ultimate rejection of biblical Christianity would have carried more weight if he had chosen to dialogue with a more modern, sophisticated version of Christianity (e.g., Richard Swinburne). Of course, his own views look more attractive next to Protestant Orthodoxy; I doubt it would be as tempting next to modern evangelical thought. But this central weakness is outweighed by the book's strengths and utility. Let's hope that the work does not delude many people into thinking that the view he rejects has anything to do with Christianity today!

Justification and Sanctification
by Peter Toon (Crossway, 1983, 162 pp., $6.95). Reviewed by Richard A. Muller, Associate Professor of Historical Theology, Fuller Theological Seminary.

Peter Toon deserves commendation for this remarkably lucid little book and for the series in which it appears, *Foundations for Faith*, of which he is the general editor. The intention of the series is to provide introductory surveys of important Christian doctrines for college students and concerned laity. The success of this volume and of the others in the series is notable, particularly in terms of the balance of presentation between scriptural, exegetical study, historical survey and contemporary statement. Toon's *Justification and Sanctification* is particularly strong in its presentation of the biblical materials, the Reformed side of the Reformation and of the issues in post-Reformation and modern theology.

The weakness of the volume—at least in part explained by constraints in size—lies in its highly selective approach to patristic and medieval theology. Toon, for example, notes briefly that justification and sanctification were not separate in the theology of Aquinas, but he does not investigate the issue. As a result he does not point clearly to the way in which the essentially forensic view of justification, propounded by the Reformers (Calvin in particular) led to the distinction between justification and sanctification propounded by their successors; and, in Protestant orthodoxy, to the delineation of an *ordo salutis* or order of salvation. Much of the difference between contemporary Roman Catholic doctrine and orthodox Protestantism can be accounted for by the continuity of the Roman Catholic view with much patristic and medieval theology in its assumption that justification is not purely forensic.

Toon's exposition of Wesley's teaching is felicitous, as are his discussions of Tillich and Berkouwer. The omission of Barth is somewhat regrettable, though Toon's reasons for doing so are sound and, in addition, the comparison of Tillich and Berkouwer provides a clearer sense of the breadth of the spectrum of Protestant views. Catholics, however, may wonder at the choice of Newman's preconversion lectures on justification as a representation of the Catholic position, even though the subsequent impact of Newman on Roman Catholic thought was considerable. On the other hand, Toon's consideration of Schmaus' theology will be of great value both to Roman Catholic readers and to ecumenical discussion. What is most apparent here is the fairness of Toon's presentation and his desire to provide the historical and contemporary material as a basis for and an approach to theological formulation.

In summary, the book succeeds both descriptively and substantively in introducing the doctrines of justification and sanctification to college and also to beginning seminary students. There are a few lacks in the book, as noted above, but these can easily be overcome in class by a perceptive instructor or by an energetic student willing to engage Toon's ample bibliography.

In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins
by Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (Crossroad, 1983, 357pp.) Reviewed by Linda Mercadante, Ph.D. Candidate in Theology/History of Doctrine, Princeton Theological Seminary

In this meeting of biblical interpretation and feminist theology, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza intends not only to restore the stories of women to early Christian history, but to demonstrate this as the history of both men and women. Fiorenza fully believes and intends to demonstrate that the biblical canon and tradition is androcentric. Yet she also demonstrates the possibility of maintaining an allegiance to the Christian faith and Scripture without at the same time supporting the subordination of women.

This is not, however, simply an apologetic for the Bible, as Fiorenza claims that so much of Christian feminist theology has been. Rather, *In Memory of Her* is a forthright reappraisal of the biblical text in light of a "hermeneutics of suspicion". As theologian, biblical scholar and Christian, Fiorenza has a personal interest in helping to vindicate the Christian faith from the accusation that since the Bible has largely been written, translated, canonized, and interpreted by males, the core of the faith is male-centered.

Yet as a woman, and a feminist scholar, she also has determined to take seriously the above accusation and honestly reflect on it using, with considerable expertise, the skills she possesses as an experienced biblical scholar. The fact that she

places herself as an interface between traditional biblical scholarship and feminist theology makes this at times a very uncomfortable book to read, but also a very exhilarating experience. For in her imaginative reconstruction (and this has always been the function of history), women emerge as if from the shadows and stand out in the open upon the stage of early Christian history.

In making this reconstruction, Fiorenza realizes that even with the best of scholarly work and a carefully comprehensive approach, she will be accused of "special interest" and run the risk of not having her work taken as seriously as it warrants.

> Biblical scholars. . .do not perceive the question [i.e., the hiddenness of women] as a serious historical problem of great significance for the reconstruction of early Christian history and theology. . . .Seen as a 'woman's problem' the issue belongs to books and symposia on 'woman' but not in the program of exegetical conferences or in the pages of an exegetical *Festschrift*. . . .The tacit assumption underlying such expressed or unexpressed reservations is that scholars who do not reflect or articulate their political allegiences are 'objective,' free from bias, nonpartisan and scientific. Yet, anyone even slightly familiar with the problems raised by the sociology of knowledge or by critical theory will have difficulty asserting such scholarly objectivity on scientific grounds. (p.xvi)

Fiorenza refutes the usual objections to feminist theology by arguing that

> If scholars employ philosophical, sociological or psychological analyses for reconstructing new interpretive models of early Christian development, nothing should prevent us from utilizing feminist heuristic concepts as well, in order to reconstruct an early Christian history in which women are not hidden and invisible. (p.xvi)

In fact, of course, she does use such concepts and with them brings to light some very challenging insights about early Christian history. For instance, she argues that Mary Magdalene and Peter held comparable positions of honor as leaders of the prophetic renewal movement begun by Jesus in Palestine. She also demonstrates that because of the key significance and centrality of house churches in the missionary movement, women occupied positions of leadership in early Christianity, and that the gradual patriarchalizing of the church came about partly as a move to shift leadership away from women and slaves so that the church would blend in more effectively with the surrounding Greco-Roman culture.

For those readers who find exegetically-based issues like the above a more accessible entry into this subject, Fiorenza urges that they skip the first section of the book and instead begin with the exegetical material, returning to the hermeneutical issues in Part One later. But I found Part One to be the most stimulating and incisive part of the book since it brings together the whole range of approaches to the gender issue in biblical interpretation today and analyzes each with discernment.

Fiorenza is bold in this section, saying things that will surely make persons in each camp cringe. Mary Daly's method is laid bare to a Sartrean existentialist base and defined as androcentric. In saying this, Fiorenza is fully aware that Daly's model has claimed just the opposite for itself, by calling the margins of social reality, where women have always lived, in fact the true center. But Fiorenza insists that

> Although Mary Daly maintains that this model is gynocentric, one must not overlook the fact that it does not have the power to break the androcentric patriarchal model, which situates women on the margins and boundaries but does not allow them to claim the center of patriarchal culture and religion. (p.38,n.50)

Rosemary Ruether and Letty Russell are both put into the category of neo-orthodoxy, a method which is highly untenable, Fiorenza argues, because it attempts to 'save' the Scriptures by divorcing their content from their form.

> How can one distinguish between Script and Scripture, if the formal element is the culturally conditioned historical text, while the posited 'Archimedean point' is an abstract theological principle and transhistorical symbol expressed in historically contingent and thus variable language? (p.16)

Fiorenza puts Ruether, along with other more conservative Christian feminists, in a sort of "defenders of the faith" category, whether they take the neo-orthodoxy form vs. content approach, or outrightly defend Paul as a "liberationist" and blame the church's historically poor treatment of women on misinterpretation of Scripture. This approach is inadequate, she says, for it fails to take the feminist critique with the seriousness which it warrants and, ironically, could instead be used to "rescue biblical religion from its feminist critics". (p.19) While this rescue mission might seem, on the surface, to be of great value, one gets the decided impression, after reading Fiorenza, that it would be akin to rescuing Pharisaism from the message of Jesus. Al-

though Fiorenza is a Roman Catholic, her work's ultimate concern supports the Protestant principle of *reformata semper reformanda.*

For Fiorenza wants no less than to reclaim the liberating power of the gospel while reclaiming the powerful stories of women in early Christianity.

> As the root model of Christian life and community the Bible reflects biblical women's strength as well as their victimization. Therefore, the Bible is source for women's religious power as well as for their religious oppression throughout the history of Christianity to the present. A Christian feminist theology of liberation must cease its attempts to rescue the Bible from its feminist critics and assert that the source of our power is also the source of our oppression. (p.35)

This last statement is a crucial one for understanding Fiorenza's "hermeneutic of suspicion" and is the key to her approach to Scripture. By taking the Bible as source of both liberation and oppression, Fiorenza has deftly combined the most salient messages of both sides of the debate over gender. By recognizing that Scripture reflects the gradual patriarchalizing of Christianity, she recognizes the serious validity of the "post-Christian" feminist critique, and indeed even grants validity to those who insist that the Bible teaches male super-ordination.

But by also recognizing the liberating power inherent in the Christian message, she explains the appeal of Christianity to women throughout the ages. In order to effect this reconciliation, however, Fiorenza cannot hold onto a static or monolithic view of biblical authority or canonicity. In fact, she asks that we allow her to "bracket" the question of biblical authority while she develops her argument, and she also insists on the necessity of using extra-canonical sources to help examine the canon. These methodological principles will no doubt prove problematic to many readers, yet few will disallow the strong points of her exegetical and historical arguments.

Although much more could be said about these exegetical and historical findings, it is the hermeneutical issues which must be considered first, as Fiorenza challenges readers to a new awareness of the complexity of the issue of androcentrism in Scripture.

BOOK COMMENTS

The First Day of the New Creation: The Resurrection and the Christian Faith
by Veselin Kesich (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1982, 206pp., $7.95).

The resurrection of Jesus, his ascension, and the resurrection of the believer are the major subjects of this well-written and edifying book. Each is reviewed from the vantage point of careful exegesis, current critical discussion, and the theological traditions of the church. The result is a fairly comprehensive—though not always highly original—discussion of what the New Testament has to say about resurrection. The principal reason, however, for taking special notice of this book lies not in its inclusive treatment of the issues but rather in its author's identity. Veselin Kesich is Professor of New Testament at St. Vladimir's Seminary and a member of the Eastern Orthodox Church. To find such a one discussing the writings of Rudolf Bultmann, Vincent Taylor, John A. T. Robinson, and Willie Marxsen is surprising. The theologians of the eastern church are not exactly known for paying keen attention to western biblical scholarship. Perhaps, then, *The First Day of the New Creation* augurs a change in the ecumenical climate, one in which Orthodox thinkers will enter into earnest exchanges with historians and theologians outside their rich tradition—or so one dares to hope. In any event, Orthodox Christians—and others—should find Kesich's work a useful introduction to a theme fundamental to all Christian faith.

—Dale C. Allison

Breaking Boundaries: Male/Female Friendship in Early Christian Communities,
by Rosemary Rader (Paulist Press, 1983; 117pp.; $6.95).

Among the questions often asked by those who have studied our experience of friendship, one has become difficult to discuss honestly and objectively in our day: Is friendship possible between men and women? Many of the classical writers on friendship were persuaded that it was not. The reasons are fairly obvious: Erotic love may enter into friendship and transform it into something quite different. (For example, eros will always resent the presence of a third party, whereas friends will normally welcome another who shares their interests.) Moreover, many have thought that friendship was most easily established between those who were, at least roughly, equal; perhaps, therefore, friendship between men and women has been difficult to sustain in many different times and places.

Rader's study suggests that one exception to this general rule can be found in early Christian (3rd to 5th century) celibate communities. Devotion to the celibate ideal minimized the dangers of sexual attraction. The equality of likes and dislikes that friendship required was provided by mutual commitment to a celibate life. And the reciprocity and support which celibates needed made heterosexual friendships important.

There is much information of historical importance and interest in this little book and much food for thought about friendship. Yet, one is left with a serious question: If mutual commitment to celibacy was the factor which made possible the circumstances in which friendships between men and women flourished, what does that say about its possibility in the lives of most of us? Were the classical theorists nearer the truth than we like to imagine?

—Gilbert Meilaender

Our Search for Identity
by Marianne H. Micks (Fortress Press, 1982, 167 pp., $8.95).

In her exploration of what it means to be created "in the image of God," Marianne Micks states that her major purposes are "to rethink Christian anthropology in dialogue with contemporary thought" and at the same time "to remain in active dialogue with biblical and historical anthropology". Her thought-provoking list of chapters in itself makes a worthy contribution to the first of these goals. The second is less well achieved by her use of a different group of thinkers around which to focus the discussion in each chapter. This technique, along with Micks's accessible style, makes for easy and interesting reading; but it sacrifices precision, scope and depth. Theologians and even the Bible itself lose their complexity and ambiguity when tailored to fit Micks's seductively clear categories. To say, for example, that Jesus used words "to include, not to exclude people" requires one to exclude, not to include, rather a lot of problematic texts.

Such questionable assertions, plus uncritical assumption of the results of modern critical scholarship, plus an identification of "human wholeness" with salvation, push the whole effort inevitably in the direction of loss of the transcendent dimension, occasional assertions to the contrary notwithstanding. Even when Micks makes good affirmations that touch the moderate, rational intellect, they somehow fail to stir the soul. This attempt to pour old wine into new wineskins shows the skins—though useful—to be in the end too small.

—Marguerite Shuster

In Search of Humanity
by John Macquarrie (Crossroad, 1983, 261 pp, $16.95)

In the Preface of his latest book, John Maquarrie states that the "best approach to many of the problems of theology and philosophy is through the study of our own humanity." Thus, *In Search of Humanity* explores what it means to be human, discussing the topics of: Becoming, Freedom, Transcendence, Egoity, Embodiedness, Cognition, Having, Sociality, Language, Alienation, Conscience, Commitment, Belief, Love, Art, Religion, Suffering, Death, Hope and Being. In an effort to move away from "archaic" and "emotionally loaded" terms, Macquarrie has purged his theological anthropology of jargon and adapted new words for traditional concepts which are still valid. Prof. Macquarrie, a Canon of Christ Church Cathedral at Oxford, writes from squarely within the Christian tradition. However, he dialogues not only with Christian theology, but also deals with philosophers (primarily Continental), scientists, sociologists, psychologists and other religions as well.

Macquarrie understands that we live in an age where, for most people, "God has become an indistinct blur, the total disappearance of which would make little difference." Therefore, he believes that our best hope for redirecting humanity towards the transcendence of God is by unveiling the transcendence in human existence and demonstrating their relationship.

Macquarrie's perspective and methodology will not sit well with many within the evangelical tradition, but that does not detract from the significant effort he has made in this work. It is a book that should be read by anyone attempting to come to grips with the questions and issues raised in developing a meaningful theological anthropology for today.

—Rev. J. Mark Hendricks

International Politics and the Demand for Global Justice
by James Skillen (G.R. Welch Co., Ltd and Dordt College Press, 1981, 143 pp, $7.95).

While the dispute between moral skepticism and idealism in international affairs is nothing new, James Skillen has added an important and timely dimension to the debate. Joining the ranks of many evangelicals who are disillusioned with both the naivete of the idealists and the ethical cynicism of the political realists, Skillen attempts to chart an alternate course that recognizes both the human condition and the biblical demand for justice.

Skillen is quick to remind his readers that the "legitimacy" of power in the world today is determined both in the East and West by its ability to achieve economic or political prosperity. Ethical norms, particularly those based upon a universal concept of rights are at best, sporadically employed. Such behavior is consistent with traditional political realism which declares that in the absence

of a common judge to adjudicate over international disputes, there can be no place for morality. Instead, the "realists" argue that *self-interest* ought to be the only author of foreign policy. For this reason, one cannot be a political realist (in the traditional sense) without also being a moral relativist. In reminding his readers of this critical fact, Skillen has skillfully driven a wedge between the authority of the biblical notion of justice and the predominant political theory of our age.

In concluding his work, Dr. Skillen declares that in a world of interdependent States, there can hardly be peace or stability apart from a pursuit of justice. Ironically, the traditional maxim is inversed. Morality is not determined by self-interest, but self-interest by morality.

–Kirby A. Kautz

Justification: An Ecumenical Study
by George H. Tavard (Paulist Press, 1983, 114 pp. plus notes and index, $7.95).

A needed resource for theological study is historical work on the significant doctrines of Christianity that follow the doctrine throughout the history of the church. In *Justification: An Ecumenical Study*, George Tavard presents a short study of the doctrine of justification which fills a part of the need on this particular doctrine. The book gives only minimal attention to biblical material and no attention to the Fathers outside of Augustine. In the Medieval period the Carolingians, Anselm, Bonaventure, Aquinas, and Scotus receive the major attention. The center of the book is the study of Luther and reactions to Luther in the Council of Trent, John Wesley, and contemporary Catholicism.

The most important section of the book is Tavard's discussion of contemporary Catholic approaches to Luther's doctrine of justification, surveying the more irenic approaches such as his own and that of Rahner and Küng. After pointing to the progress of Lutheran-Catholic dialogue on specific points, Tavard raises the question whether, if justification is not merely one doctrine among many but the center of all doctrine, these dialogues have really been speaking to the main point of contention at all. One would hate to see the Lutherans give up their most unique and crucial contribution to the church as part of the dialogue process.

Evangelicals would do well to contemplate this question, especially in light of the distinction Tavard draws between Luther and Wesley. Have Evangelicals as well as Catholics failed to understand Luther and his *theologia crucis*? If Tavard's assessment of Wesley is correct, this could be true.

–Robert A. Kelly

The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age
by George A. Lindbeck (Westminster Pr., 1984. 144 pp, $9.95).

Lindbeck, professor of Historical Theology at Yale, has written a brief, provocative, and programmatic essay about the nature and truth of religious language. He develops a typology of three approaches to the truth of religious language: the cognitive (propositional truth), the experiential-expressive (symbolic truth), and the cultural-linguistic (regulative and practical truth).

According to Lindbeck, the cognitive approach to religion is old, narrow, and unfruitful for inter-religious dialogue. Lindbeck also has some solid criticism of the symbolic approach typical of comparative religions and liberal theology today. He rightly insists that religious experience is *not* the same 'at bottom,' and that religions are quite different in their world-views. He opts for the 'cultural-linguistic' view (or what I call the ethical-functional view). Religion is a learned way of life, and doctrines are not so much cognitive descriptions as rules for living.

Perhaps I am too much of a Hegelian, but I would like to see a *synthesis* that preserves the truths in each of these three approaches rather than the antithesis that Lindbeck develops. For example, the cognitive approach in many sections is a whipping boy or straw man; its best proponents such as T. F. Torrance are not mentioned. Against Lindbeck's section on truth in religion, the adoption of *just* an ethical-functional approach to religious language short-circuits the basic question of truth in religion, and leads in the end to religious relativism. Criticism aside, I recommend this work as a clear and forceful presentation which theologians should carefully consider.

–Alan Padgett

The Religious Imagination
by Andrew M. Greeley (William H. Sadlier, Inc., 1981; 242 pages; $18.00)

Andrew Greeley hypothesizes that one's religious imagination—the images one has of Jesus, God, heaven, and Mary—have a more powerful influence on one's religious attitudes and behavior than do propositions and dogma. He thereby beckons a shift in sociological thinking and research, which up to now has focused on more overt measures of religious commitment.

After setting out his theory concerning the origin and role of the religious imagination, Greeley presents research findings which show how such factors as religious experience, nature, family and friends, Catholic education, and the parish influence the development of the religious imagination. He then goes on to show the relationship of a well-developed religious imagination to social concern and involvement, sexual ethics, marital satisfaction, feminism, and other variables.

Major trends noted by Greeley are the importance of relationships, sermons, and the parish priest in developing the religious imagination; the role a well-developed religious imagination plays in increasing marital satisfaction and social involvement; a rising religious consciousness among teenagers; liberalizing sexual ethics among Catholic laity; and continued stability of Catholic families.

Greeley's failure to adequately describe his survey sample weakens the book. We are informed only that they are young adult Catholics and former Catholics—a narrow enough sample to limit the applicability of Greeley's findings. A major strength is the direction given to researchers and religious leaders in considering the dynamic role of the unseen elements of religious conviction.

–Esther Byle Bruland

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An Evangelical Approach to Scripture

by Stephen Reid

Evangelical theology and the exegesis from which it springs is based on a number of premises; prime among them is the affirmation that exegesis is not merely historical reconstruction. The goals of exegesis are social and personal transformation. Exegesis without personal transformation loses its sense of spirituality; exegesis without social transformation loses its sense of mission.

Approaches such as canon, canonical and canonical-contextual criticism present important tools for the evangelical exegetical process. The recent work on the materialist reading of Scripture also has much to commend it for evangelical exegesis. Both of these pay attention to issues of personal and social transformation. Rightly used, both can be valuable assets to those working in contemporary evangelical theology.

The argument here begins with the set of problems presented by traditional form critical and tradition history approaches. This discussion of the impetus is followed by an analysis of the theoretical presuppositions of the canon/canonical approach to Scripture as well as the materialist reading of the Bible. The next step is to begin to envision the exegetical process as part of the process of believing communities. Finally we will pay some attention to issues of method of an evangelical approach to Scripture.

Impetus For An Alternative Approach

It is important that we not think of canon/canonical criticism as a new creation. It has roots in the form critical and the tradition history style of investigation as well as in the exegetical style of the Reformation.

From the very beginning of the form critical movement in biblical criticism there was an awareness of a relationship between the stories which come from texts, in this case Scripture, and the communities that they spring from. These communities of faith are a reflection of the personal and social transformation that comes from God's encounter with them. Canon/canonical critics agree that the documents of Hebrew and Christian Scriptures are integrally related to the believing communities.

The term used by these form critics to talk about this relationship was *Sitz im Leben*. While one could argue that this term in the work of Herman Gunkel is not sufficiently sociologically nuanced to be helpful, it nevertheless shows that Gunkel understood the role of believing communities.[1]

The second generation of form criticism-tradition historical analysis was heir to this sensibility about the text. Here we find the roots of the canon-contextual approach. "Canon criticism clearly has roots in tradition criticism especially as articulated by Gerhard von Rad."[2]

The third generation of scholars trained in form criticism and tradition criticism in dialogue with the believing communities began to notice some limitation to the movement of biblical studies, dominated by the form and tradition critical methods of exegesis. James A. Sanders has argued that there are eight factors that contributed to the rise of canon-contextual analysis: 1) There is an awareness of the growing irrelevance of biblical research in the churches. 2) At the same time there is an awareness of the theological diversity in Judaism and Christianity of the biblical period; we might add, the contemporary scene as well. 3) This approach takes seriously the issue of acceptable diversity within communities of faith. As such it represents an excellent model for ecumenical theology, which has consistently been a hallmark of evangelical theology. 4) Further, we have new perceptions of the ancient tradents. It is fairly clear that the tradents had their own hermeneutics that shaped the text. 5) These tradents have finally begun to be respected by biblical researchers as creative theologians rather than religious hack writers. 6) There is an increased awareness that the texts have been transmitted through believing communities with particular sociological and historical contexts—Sitz im Leben, if you like. 7) It has become clear that the pluralism of the Scriptures is not going to go away. 8) Further, there is a commitment to Scripture such that the evangelical refuses to leave behind either biblical authority or intellectual honesty.

In the work of Brevard Childs, among others, this has meant fighting the imperialism of the historical critical method which Brueggemann notes has a tendency to relativize the text.[3] At the same time there is a sense that the historical critical method is not sufficiently self-conscious about the social location of its practitioners. Hence Childs is concerned that exegesis not be a handmaiden to any philosophy. "What is clear is that Childs wishes to develop an approach to Scripture which is completely text-centered, in which no constructs of an existential or historical sort become an additional step intervening."[4] While this is the tendency of the discipline, I will argue that we can still be in dialogue with philosophy, and in particular the symbolic interactionism of American Pragmatism as well as the Critical theory of the "Frankfurt school," as theoretical building blocks in the hermeneutics of canon-contextual analysis as well as a materialist reading of the Bible.

Just as the canon/canonical approach is a response or corrective of a certain type of biblical exegesis, a materialist reading of the Bible is a response and corrective of "idealist exegesis." The situation outlined above presented a malaise for many believing communities and those biblical students who wanted to work with believing communities. A materialist reading of Scripture is a natural outgrowth of the hermeneutics of the Confessing Church and of Rudolf Bultmann, outlined in his attempt to combat the misinterpretation of Scripture at the hands of the Nazis.[5]

"Idealist exegesis" is an aberration of the hermeneutics of one of the high points of the church's history. The blasphemy of "idealist exegesis" is that it maintains that despite the plurality of methods there is an orthodoxy of right interpretation. This orthodoxy of right interpretation is based on the credentials of those who do it. They become "reading experts." "Their exegesis has thus become in large measure a legitimating science, and authentic exegesis has been distorted into an ideology."[6]

Community

The form critical movement and the tradition critical work of von Rad begin the process of approaching the presuppositions of canon-contextual analysis. "Canon and community must be thought of as belonging togeher both in antiquity and today."[7] This becomes the basic affirmation of the canon-contextual approach. Its theological translation is that God has spoken to the community of faith who were the earliest tradents and continues to talk to the community of faith through the traditions of earlier communities of faith. This is the hermeneutics of the Holy Spirit at work in the Body of Christ that we call the Church.

The connection between canon and community is a point of consensus for these scholars; hence it is not accidental nor surprising that the title of James Sanders' new volume on canonical criticism should be Canon and Community.[8] The persons who find a materialist reading of the Bible helpful likewise affirm the connection between canon and community. A materialist reading affirms that the past community of Scripture can and should be a contemporary conversation partner to the believing community today.[9]

One place where much is left to be done is the relationship between a materialist reading or a canon/canonical approach to Scripture and the material culture of Palestine and early Christianity. One of the questions for this approach is: how did these people live who wrote the text? This is the truly new frontier for what has been in the past called biblical archeology.

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Pluralism

There is an affirmation of the pluralism within the Bible as a whole. Coupled with this is a sense that biblical texts are on the whole multivalent; hence there is no one proper interpretation of a text. This would explain to some degree the proliferation of interpretations, or "meanings," if we want to use the language of symbolic interactionism. This makes the text adaptable for the changing contexts of a given community of faith as well as the pluralism of the range of communities of faith that share the Scripture. At the same time, there is inherent in the text restraints that inhibit the abuse of Scripture, as demonstrated in allegorical interpretation.

One of the gains from Childs' canon critical approach is the recovery of the pre-critical tradition. "Perhaps the Reformation cry sola scriptura has unwittingly provided for subsequent Protestant exegesis an excuse for depreciating the history of Christian interpretation. Once the normative religious content is defined along the axis of a canonical shape rather than a peculiarly modern prerequisite of historical writing, then the theological wealth of not only the Reformation, but of the pre-Reformation commentators and of the Apostolic Fathers can no longer be passed by."[10] However, the inclusion of the pre-critical material of an earlier period should remind us of the non-critical material of the believing communities that do not write commentaries. Once we have moved in the way that Childs et al have proposed, namely, to take as serious conversation partners the pre-critical exegesis of Judaism and pre-Reformation Christianity, then feminist, Hispanic and black pre-critical (in the methodological, not the historical sense) biblical interpretation can not be dismissed as it has been for so many years. This means that canon/canonical criticism enables the biblical student to listen to those who have been traditionally underrepresented in the resources we check in our Bible study.

The repetition of a given tradition is the first step toward canonization; therefore we search and pay special attention to repetition. We are thus able to discern the contours of pluralism in Hebrew religion and Judaism. It is the place in which the theological position of a given tradition or text becomes part of the "taken-for-granted-world" of the believing community. As such it becomes a keystone, the perception of the world for that community. However, at the same time that repetition is important for its part in the stability of the life of a given community of faith, the resignification of symbols and traditions is also a mark that is scrutinized in the canon-contextual approach. How has the community changed to warrant a change in the perception of a major symbol or tradition? Finally, we presuppose that the ancient texts have their own principles of interpretation (hermeneutics). Thus part of the task in analysis is to uncover the principles of interpretation at every level of interpretation from the most ancient to the most recent.

Sanders has properly seen what advantages this has for evangelical theology. "The perspective of canonical criticism on biblical pluralism is that it provides a built-in corrective apparatus so that we do not absolutize any one agenda, or think that we have boxed God into a set of propositions."[11]

Scripture and the Communion of Saints

A symbolic interactionist hermeneutic fits well into the canon-contextual analysis and a materialist reading of the Bible. The pluralism and community are not things that existed only or even primarily in the past. Both the American Pragmatist philosopher George Herbert Mead and social theorist Jurgen Habermas hold that the social self is a result of life in a communicating community. Responsible exegesis enables the member of the community of faith to take seriously the perspective of the communities of faith. It is this taking on the perspective of the other that represents the possibility for personal transformation. The communities were able to reread the Scriptures anew in each age. This is the process of resignification that makes Scripture possible and adaptable for human experience. The past was for them the interpretation of the present, communicating community.[12]

In summary, there are three presuppositions. First is that canon (or texts) is related, even if in only a mysterious way, to communities. One might imagine that this means that we must ask questions about how they are related and how they shape and are shaped by their communities. This includes such mundane or exciting things as biblical archeology. Second, there is the assumption of pluralism that gives us the multivalent text which we affirm as Scripture. However, this plurality indicates that there were probably coalitions as well as some conflict which we must attend to in our exegesis. Third, each new generation participates in some resignification of Scripture, but often this is, if only subconsciously, related to previous significations.

Community and Exegetical Process

The concepts that human reality is primarily social and social reality is perspectival and relative[13] are not as earth shattering as they were in the period of George Herbert Mead's work in the 1930s. These affirmations have become part and parcel of exegetical practice. However, Mead maintains that persons can take on the role or perspective of another. It is in the role taking that one comes

Canon/Canonical Criticism

These scholars, while not agreeing on every aspect of exegesis, do form a consensus: that form critical exegesis on the whole has taken the historical critical method too far. As the form critical style of historical criticism has occupied itself with the literary prehistory of the text, several theological points have been lost. 1) Prime among these is the issue of canon itself. The Church has never affirmed as canon the hypothetical reconstruction of the pre-literary stage of the biblical text. 2) Further, the method has meant that Scripture became available only to scholars and not to the pre-critical Christians such as Luther and Calvin as well as the people in the modern congregation. In order to correct these excesses, scholars such as Blenkinsopp, Brueggemann, Childs, Sanders, and Sheppard have made two affirmations: 1) The text should be taken first and foremost in its received form. 2) Scripture is a part of the believing community and should be read as the Church works to articulate faith in the history of interpretation of Scripture.

J. Blenkinsopp, *Prophecy and Canon* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1977).

W. Brueggemann, *The Creative Word: Canon as a Model for Biblical Education* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982).

B. Childs, *Biblical Theology in Crisis* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970).

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G.T. Sheppard, *Wisdom as Hermeneutical Construct*, BZAW 151 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1980).

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closer to the truth or health. Hence, good exegesis is that which facilitates role taking.

Scripture is important in this process not only because the community of faith has said it is. Scripture and tradition, that is to say the history of interpretation of Scripture, are a reservoir of meaning from which the church and the synagogue have drank in their process of roletaking and socialization. Therefore it is appropriate that we begin there in the exegetical process.

In order that this exegetical process have power to work with instead of against the Holy Spirit it must begin in a spirit of truth. The truth is that exegesis is always a theology of the present. "The long and short of it is that the past (or the meaningful structure of the past) is as hypothetical as the future."[14] There is a sense in which the past can never be so fully reconstructed that we have it before us as a totality.

For the purposes of personal and social transformation, categories such as past, present, and future are not helpful. A useful alternative is to take seriously the idea that the present is past and present combined in the emerging event.[15] The roletaking that can take place in the process of exegesis in the midst of the emerging event opens up to the community of faith the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

The method must ask a number of questions given the presuppositions and process laid forth thus far: 1) What is the community behind each interpretation of the text and how did they live as well as believe? 2) What are the communities that have shaped the subsequent development of the text and how do they relate to the other pluralities in Scripture? By so doing the method is paying attention to the biblical pluralism as well as the multivalent nature of many biblical texts. In answering these two questions we will pay close attention to the repetitions in a given text or trajectory of texts. 3) What perspective(s) are embodied in the texts? 4) How did those perspectives shape the community and how do they continue to shape and challenge us?

Method

There is no consensus on what canon/canonical criticism or a materialist reading of the Bible must do. Nevertheless, some rudimentary steps can be discerned. I want to point out that good theological exegesis is informed by steps but does not slavishly follow them. One should note that there is a new appreciation of certain aspects of methods that have been used previously but not in quite the same way.

Good exegesis is like good Chinese cooking. It is not so much the steps in the process as it is the issues addressed. Issues in Chinese cooking are the way certain vegetables complement each other in taste and appearance. Likewise the method here orients the student of the Bible to certain issues, not pedantically moving from step to step.

Materialists Approaches to the Bible

One of the assumptions of the materialists' readings of Scripture is that the text has to do with daily (i.e., material) life today as well as daily/material life in antiquity. As such, Scripture is tied to issues of struggle of the community of faith in antiquity and today. This approach is really several different approaches that share this hermeneutic. It first came to prominence with the work of Ferdinand Belo in 1974, *Lecture materialiste de l'evangile de Marc* [later translated into English *A Materialist Reading of the Gospel of Mark*]. It has found support among many European scholars such as Kuno Fussel and Michel Clevenot.

Ferdinand Belo, *A Materialist Reading of the Gospel of Mark* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1981).

Georges Casalis, *Correct Ideas Don't Fall from the Sky* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1984).

Michel Clevenot, *Materialist Approaches to the Bible* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1984).

Kuno Fussel, "Materialist Readings of the Bible: Report on an Alternative Approach to Biblical Texts," in *God of the Lowly: Socio-Historical Interpretations of the Bible* eds. Schottroff and Stegeman (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1984).

First, we should ask about the theopoetic structures of the text. These texts are the remnant of the contact between God and a believing community, and in that respect they are theopoetic. At the same time, they have structures and literary conventions. Materialist reading of the Bible as represented by F. Belo, M. Clevenot and K. Fussel has some intellectual dependence on structuralism, and because of this their writings stress issues of structure. Nevertheless, one does not have to be a structuralist to ponder profitably about the structures of a given text as the structure tells the audience something.[16] The canon/canonical critics likewise pay attention to issues of structure. They discuss this in terms of repetition as we have noted earlier in this essay.

Second, we should pay attention to the pluralities of the community of faith in the interpretation of the passage and in the creation of the passage. Such will often lead us to issues of religious conflict as well as the resignification of particular themes and texts by different communities of faith in the broader world of Hebrew religion and Judaism and later Christianity.

Finally, we ask, how did these people live? This means we pay attention not only to the ideas of the text but also the material culture. More to the point, what did these people eat? How did these people work? How did these things affect the way they gave witness to God's action in their midst?

Each of these issues or questions must be pressed at every level of the history of Judaism and Christianity. I shall propose six levels of Judaism and Christianity. I hope that you will refine these as you feel is appropriate.

1. We begin chronologically with the tradition history of the text as well as the inner biblical exegesis of the passage; that is, how later biblical authors make use of the passage. 2. We look at the passage in midrash, both Jewish and Christian. This midrash includes that which we find in the New Testament. 3. We examine the use of the passage in Jewish and Christian mysticism. 4. We look at the work of the reformers such as Luther and Calvin. 5. We bring in the interpretation of our passage by a marginal group, whether Hispanic, Asian, African or feminist. 6. In order to balance this we pay attention to the way dominant European culture, contemporary and older, has made use of the passage.

This seems like an awesome task. The answer is twofold. First, exercise some prudence. Don't try to read all the reformers; pick one or two. The same is true at every level of the history of interpretation: pick one or two representative persons. Sometimes you will not find all the information you would like for your pasage in a particular period, but do not be dismayed. Second, good exegesis is tied to prayer as a guide for the interpretation of Scripture.

The advantage of this evangelical approach to Scripture is threefold: 1) It brings in the underrepresented communities of faith in

The Frankfurt School

On February 3, 1923, the Institute for Social Research was founded as part of the University of Frankfurt. From its beginning it represented a different type of Marxism. During the years 1933-1950 the members of the Institute were forced into exile for the Neo-Hegelian philosophy. These were such men as Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm, Thomas Adorno. They tried to provide a critical theory that could stand outside of both capitalism and Marxism as understood by the Eastern block nations. A major assumption was that contemporary societies, both Marxist and capitalist, are shaped by a bureaucracy which determines what is "acceptable" culture and behavior. Hence, for these men, theology as well as philosophy is political. The most prominent member of the Frankfurt School is Jurgen Habermas.

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our examination of Scripture. 2) It puts some order to the archeological information that we have but do not know what to do with at the present time. It gives new life to biblical archeology for the person interpreting particular passages. 3) This evangelical approach to Scripture is a combination of orientations that strives to make the exegetical task more wholistic.

Nevertheless, we barter not for exegetical methods on the open market. On the contrary, exegesis has as its goal personal and social transformation; its test is in that arena. Only you can administer the test and vouch for the results.

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[15] Mead, Philosophy of the Present, 23.
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Epistemological Foundations For Science and Theology

by Paul Hiebert

Christian theologies, like other systems of human thought, emerge in different historical and cultural contexts. To be sure, Christians seek to root their theologies in the revelation by God of Himself in history, particularly as this is recorded in the Bible. But this does not preclude the fact that they are deeply influenced by the cultures in which they live.

It should not surprise us, therefore, that theologians of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were influenced by modern science which had captured western thought with its obvious successes. Many, in fact, came to see theology as a kind of science. For example, Alexander (1888:1:1) defined systematic theology as "the science of God." Wiley, Pipe, Wakefield, Hovey, Shedd and Hodge did the same (Wiley 1960:1:14-15, Shedd 1889, Hodge 1928:15-17). Chafer (1947:v) noted that "Systematic Theology, the greatest of the sciences, has fallen upon evil days." Strong defined theology as "the science of God and of the relationships between God and the universe." He added,

> If the universe were God, theology would be the only science. Since the universe is but a manifestation of God and is distinct from God, there are sciences of nature and of the mind. Theology is 'the science of the sciences,' not in the sense of including all these sciences, but in the sense of using their results and of showing their underlying ground (1972:1)

More recently, Griffiths (1980:169-173) has sought to show that theology is indeed a science.

Often this definition of theology as a kind of science meant no more than that theology was an orderly and systematic pursuit of knowledge. Theologians have long emulated philosophers in this. But in many instances there was an attempt to build theology on the apparently solid epistemological foundations that seem to make science so certain and trustworthy. In any case, however, we as Christians use the term "science," its definition and nature is largely controlled by the modern natural scientists.

In the past decades a radical change has been taking place in the epistemological foundations of science, a change in the way science itself is perceived. This change has profound implications for those seeking to integrate science and theology, and, indeed, for theology itself, for the epistemological crisis in the sciences raises questions about the epistemological foundations of theology and about the relationship of science and theology.

The crisis has not yet been resolved in the sciences. Because of this, and because I am not a trained philosopher, this article is more a set of questions than of answers. It is easier for us to stay within the fields of our specialization, but this limits us to narrow questions and to piecemeal answers. We dare not avoid the big questions for fear of being wrong. The consequences of the current epistemological crisis are far reaching, and will affect us as Christians whether we examine them or not.

A word about my assumptions: I am committed to the full authority of the Scriptures, and to an evangelical anabaptist understanding of Christian theology. I am also an anthropologist and missionary seeking to understand our modern, pluralistic world, and to make Christ known within it.

The Crisis

In its early stages, science was based largely on an uncritical form of realism. While most philosophers and theologians argued from positions of idealism, scientists, with a few exceptions, "assumed that scientific theories were accurate descriptions of the world as it is in itself" (Barbour 1974:34). Scientific knowledge was seen as a photograph of reality, a complete and accurate picture of what is really real. In its positivistic forms it rejected metaphysics and transempirical realities. Consequently there was little room for theology or integration. This stance seemed justified in view of the great strides made by science in its examination of nature.

The certainty of scientific knowledge, and the optimism that marked its early years were undermined from within. There were three major attacks on the epistemological foundations of naive realism, all reflecting the growing study by scientists of the scientific process itself.

First, in the physical sciences, Einstein in relativity, Bohr in quantum mechanics and others showed that the personal factor of the scientist inevitably enters into scientific knowledge. There is no such thing as totally objective knowledge. Second, social scientists began to study the psychological, social and cultural factors involved in the scientific endeavor, and demonstrated that there are no unbiased theories. Science is built on the cultural assumptions of the west, and is deeply influenced by social and psychological processes. Third, historians and philosophers of science such as Polanyi (1958), Kuhn (1970) and Laudin (1977) found that science is not cumulative and exhaustive. It is a sequence of competing paradigms or models of reality. But if theories taken as fact today are replaced by others tomorrow, what is the nature of scientific knowledge? Clearly we can no longer equate scientific knowledge about reality with reality itself. The old assumption that scientific theories have a one-to-one correspondence with reality has been shattered. We cannot have science without metaphysics. We must understand it within its historical, sociocultural and psychological settings. Whatever it is, science is not a photograph of reality.

Where To?

Forced to leave the comfortable certainty of naive realism, scientists are now looking for a new epistemological foundation. What are their options?

To answer this question, we need a taxonomy of epistemological systems, a meta-epistemological grid by which we can compare and contrast various epistemological options. There are dangers, of

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course, in creating such a grid. Any taxonomy imposes biases on the field, and overlooks the fine nuances of the various positions. Moreover, it assumes that epistemological paradigms are not incommensurable (contrary to Kuhn 1970), and that some measure of mutual understanding and comparison between them is possible (cf. Hofstadter 1980).

There are, however, greater dangers in looking at various epistemological positions in isolation, or of assuming that they are incommensurable. If comparison between epistemological alternatives is impossible, rationality is undermined, and with it science and philosophy.

The taxonomy suggested here (Table 1) is overly simple, but it may help us understand the current crisis in epistemology and some of the possible solutions. In the last column the various epistemological answers are illustrated by a parable. Several umpires stood talking after a baseball game one day when a player asked them, "Why do you call a particular pitch a 'strike'?" Each of them gave a different response based on his epistemological position.

Idealism. Forced to abandon naive realism, scientists are looking for a new epistemological foundation. Some, particularly in psychology and anthropology, are advocating some form of idealism. Few, however, go so far as Vedantic Hindus who deny the existence of an external world. Science, after all, began as an investigation of the world around us. Critical idealists argue that there may be external realities, but what really matters is the world we create within us. The order we perceive in the world is an order we impose on it by our categories and theories.

Most scientists, however, argue that to deny that the order we perceive does exist in nature itself, and to abandon empirical observation as a method alters the scientific endeavor beyond recognition.

Determinism and Instrumentalism. Most scientists are too busy studying the world around them to give much thought to epistemology. And most use deterministic models to explain their observations. Curiously, they assume that their own theories are based on rational choice. Only recently has science become self-reflective enough to call this inconsistency into question.

In response to the current crisis in epistemology, a number of philosophers of science believe that we have no alternative but to accept some form of determinism. Kuhn and Feyerabend, for example, sought to found science on solid empirical and rational grounds, but came to the conclusion that scientific decisions are based on politics and propaganda in which prestige, power, age and polemics determine a choice between competing theories. They argue "not merely that certain decisions between theories in science *have been irrational*, but that choices between competing scientific theories, in the nature of the case, *must be irrational* (Laudin 1977:3. italics in original). Carried to its logical conclusion, determinism renders human knowledge, including science, irrational and meaningless (cf Lewis 1970:129-146).

Other philosophers of science, including Laudin, argue for an instrumentalist epistemology. They see science as a "useful" way of looking at the world because it helps us solve problems. They affirm a real world, and make a distinction between systems of

TABLE 1
A Taxonomy of Epistemological Positions

Position	Nature of Knowledge	Relationship between Systems of Knowledge	The Umpire's Response
ABSOLUTE IDEALISM	Reality exists in the mind. The external world is illusory. Eg. Vedantic and Advaita Hinduism.	Each system is an island to itself. Systems are incommensurable. Unity is possible only as everyone joins in the same system.	"My calling it makes it a strike. The game is in my mind."
CRITICAL IDEALISM	Reality exists in the mind. The external world is unknowable. Order is imposed on sense experience by the mind.	Each system is an island to itself. Systems are incommensurable. A common ground is found in human rationality which is assumed to be the same for all humans.	"My calling it makes it a strike. My mind imposes order on the world."
NAIVE IDEALISM/ NAIVE REALISM	The external world is real. The mind can know it exactly, exhaustively and without bias. Science is a photograph of reality. Because knowledge and reality are related 1:1 this is naive idealism or naive realism.	Because knowledge is exact and potentially exhaustive, there can be only one unified theory. Various theories must be reduced to one. This leads to reductionism such as physical reductionism, psychological reductionism or sociocultural reductionism.	"I call it the way it is. If it is a strike I call it a strike. If it is a ball I call it a ball."
CRITICAL REALISM	The external world is real. Our knowledge of it is partial but can be true. Science is a map or model. It is made up of successive paradigms which bring us to closer approximations of reality and absolute truth.	Each field in science presents a different blueprint of reality. These are complimentary to one another. Integration is achieved, not by reducing them all to one model, but to see them all in their relationships to one another. Each gives us partial insights into reality.	"I call it the way I see it, but there is a real pitch and an objective standard against which I must judge it. I can be shown to be right or wrong.
INSTRUMENTALISM (Pragmatism)	The external world is real. We cannot know if our knowledge if it is true, but if it "does the job" we can use it. Science is a Rorschach response that makes no ontological claims to truth.	Because we make no truth claims for our theories or models, there can be no ontological contradictions between them. We can use apparently controdictory models in different situations so long as they work.	"I call it the way I see it, but there is no way to know if I am right or wrong."
DETERMINISM	The external world is real. We and our knowledge are determined by material causes, hence knowledge can lay no claim to truth (or to meaning).	There is no problem with integration for all systems of knowledge are determined by external, nonrational factors such as infant experiences, emotional drives and thought conditioning.	"I call it the way I am programmed to."

knowledge and external realities. But they deny that science gives us a "true" picture of those realities. The criterion for evaluating science is pragmatism—does it work, not is it true. We must, therefore, live with scientific (and cultural) relativism. Sukenick writes,

> All versions of "reality" are of the nature of fiction. There's your story and my story, there's the journalist's story and the historian's story, there's the philosopher's story and the scientist's story . . . Our common world is only a description . . . reality is imagined (Sukenick 1976:113).

But, as Marvin Harris notes, relativism destroys science as science (1980:45). And Peter Berger points out that relativism denies any concept of truth, and in the end relativizes relativity itself, rendering it meaningless (1970:40-42).

A rejection of instrumentalism does not preclude scientists from creating and using models that they know to be useful fictions. All scientists recognize that at times it is useful to develop models for which no claims of truthfulness are made. Those in the applied sciences, in particular, often use models simply because they work. The question is not whether all mental models depict reality, but whether *any* do.

Critical Realism. A number of scientists now argue for a critical realist approach to science. Harold Schilling writes,

> The interpretation I shall offer will be developed from the point of view of critical realism, as I believe it to be espoused by most scientists . . . According to this view science actually investigates nature itself, not just its own ideas. It achieves much reliable knowledge about it. This knowledge is communicated through systems of theoretical models . . . Science's descriptions of [nature] are . . . to be taken as "true," though not literalistically so in detail (1973:99).

Ian Barbour adds,

> . . . the critical realist takes theories to be representations of the world. He holds that valid theories are true as well as useful (1974:37).

Like instrumentalism, critical realism makes a distinction between reality and our knowledge of it, but like naive realism, it claims that knowledge can be true. In it theories are not photographs of reality. They are maps or blueprints. Just as it takes many blueprints to understand a building, so it takes many theories to comprehend reality.

Truth in a map is different from truth in a photograph. Some is literal and some is symbolic. For example, a road map shows this road leading to the airport—a fact we can empirically verify. But the fact that the road on the map is colored red does not mean that the road itself is red. Nor is the city yellow.

Naive realism has no room for metaphysics. Mental images are uninterpreted photographs of reality. Determinism and instrumentalism accept metaphysics, but divorce mental images from external realities. Critical realism, as Laudin points out (1977), restores metaphysics to a central place in science, and postulates a complex dialectical relationship between external realities and mental images.

Finally, to be useful, a map must be selective. A road map must leave out information about underground pipes, overhead wires, buildings, trees, sidewalks, lawns and the like. To put everything in one map clutters it and renders it useless. The choice of what to include and what to exclude depends on the purpose for which the map is to be used, for maps are not only maps of reality, but also maps for choosing a course of action (Geertz 1972:168-169).

Critical realism is increasingly being accepted as a new epistemological base by the scientists. With the exception of a few social scientists, none are idealists. And with the exception of applied scientists, few are instrumentalists. Most are still convinced that they are in search of truth, and that their theories are more than useful fictions.

Epistemological Foundations For Theology

The epistemological crisis in the sciences raises important questions for theology, particularly where it has tried to be a science. What are its epistemological foundations, and what is its relationship to science? These questions must be distinguished from questions regarding the content of theology which must be dealt with on another level of discourse. We will limit ourselves here to the question of the relationship between theology as a system of thought and the Bible as a historical document.

Theology as Naive Realism. Most Christians, like most scientists, do not examine their epistemological foundations. They assume that they understand clearly and without bias what Scripture has to say. Just as naive realist scientists assume there is a one-to-one correlation between theories and a real world outside, they assume that their theology has a one-to-one correlation with the Bible. They reject the notion that their interpretations of Scripture are colored by their history and culture, their personal experiences, or even the language they speak. They are, in other words, naive realists. Or naive idealists. It is, in fact, hard to distinguish between the two, for both claim a one-to-one correspondence between knowledge and reality. Only when they are forced to leave a naive realist/idealist position is the difference apparent. Naive realists, in the end, move to some other forms of realism. Naive idealists, on the other hand, become critical or absolute idealists.

Because naive realist/idealist Christians hold to an exact correspondence between their theology and Scripture, they claim for the former the absolutes and certainty that they affirm for the latter. This raises problems when disagreements arise. Each claims for his or her own theology full and certain truth. But then those who disagree must be wrong. The result is a rejection of one another that leads to divisions. Unity is possible only on the basis of complete theological agreement. But this is achieved only if people share the same historical and cultural contexts, or if they are willing to be followers of a single theological authority. There is little room for ordinary Christians to read and interpret the Scriptures for themselves. In the past naive realism/idealism provided us with the security of both a real world and certain knowledge, but it is no longer a tenable epistemological position.

Science has convincingly shown us that there is a human element in all knowledge (Coulson 1955:84-120). Anthropologists have found that all languages have within them implicit cultural and theological biases in which are expressed the categories they form, and the world view they assume. They have also shown us that all human knowledge is molded in part by the cultural and historical context within which it is found (Hymes 1964). Sociologists have shown that knowledge belongs to a community, and is influenced by the dynamics of that community (Berger and Luckmann 1966). Psychologists have demonstrated that even so simple a task as reading and interpreting a page of written materials involves a complex hermeneutical process that varies according to the level of mental development (Piaget 1960), the knowledge and the attitudes of the reader. There is, in fact, no knowledge in which the subjective dimension does not enter in some way or other.

The growing awareness of these findings has forced scientists to realize that science itself must be understood within its cultural and historical settings. If this is true of science, what about theology? Can we claim that no subjective factors enter our reading of Scriptures? Certainly the Holy Spirit works in us helping us to understand them, and to interpret them for our particular needs. But does He totally override our human thought processes?

But if all knowledge has a subjective dimension to it, where is truth? What is a foundation we can trust? Where are absolutes? The answers we give to these questions will depend largely on the epistemological stance we take in theology.

Theology as Idealism. Forced to choose between human knowledge and the external world as the independent variable, as the source from which the other is derived, many theologians opt for some form of idealism. In this, human thought is seen as foundational and empirical realities as contingent. The advantage of this, of course, is that we can have objective knowledge which is certain in every detail.

Idealists argue that this certainty rests on Biblical revelation and on reason. The former, however, is a written document and a part of the external world which we can know only through hearing and reading. But this again raises questions about the subjectivity of Biblical knowledge. In the end, therefore, idealists must appeal to human reason as the final arbiter of truth.

An idealist approach to theology does provide a viable way of looking at reality. There are too many idealists in philosophy and theology to write it off lightly. But it leaves several questions unanswered.

First, it assumes one uniform system of reason for all humans. This assumption, however, is being increasingly challenged in the social sciences. Certainly, at the most fundamental level, all human minds work in the same way. They all learn languages, and seem to generate these on the basis of common processes. They are able to communicate and to understand one another even though they belong to different cultures.

But there are different types of formal logic. Mathematicians have shown that we can construct any number of non-Euclidian geometries, each of which is internally consistent. More recently they have shown that fuzzy sets, "fuzzy algebra" and "fuzzy logic" provide us with a system of reason in which the western notions of either-or-ness and the law of the excluded middle do not hold (Zadeh 1965). If there are mental universals, and there certainly are, they are at a deeper level of thought than we formerly thought to be true. Anthropologists have also shown that there are differences in the systems of logic used in different societies (Luria 1976).

Second, an idealist theology has difficulty in accounting for communication. We cannot know another person's mind directly. All communication is mediated through external events. But if the meaning of these events is what we make them to be, communication breaks down. In extreme idealism, as in Vedantic Hinduism, we are left as islands of certainty within ourselves, with no real knowledge of one another apart from a mystical experience of oneness.

Third, an idealist theology leaves uncertain the question of discerning the work of the Holy Spirit. As Christians we hold that the Holy Spirit is at work in the hearts and minds of his people, helping them to understand the truth. But how can we test whether our understanding has come from God, or from our spirit or some other spirit? We cannot appeal to Scripture, for each person can claim to have had a divine revelation regarding its interpretation. We all face the danger of molding Scripture to fit our thoughts.

Fourth, an idealist theology faces problems with disagreements. Because the final appeal is internal, there is no external reference point that can serve as an arbiter between different theological positions. The result is a combative stance that leads to divisiveness. The only real resolution lies in the conversion of one side to the position of the other. In the end, we are in danger of worshipping human reason. *We* are the final arbiters of truth, and those who disagree with us are wrong.

Fifth, an idealist theology undervalues the importance of history as the framework within which divine revelation takes place. It tends to be ahistorical and acultural. It has problems with taking seriously the changing historical and cultural contexts of the Scriptures and of our times. In the extreme it leads to a Vedantic view in which the external world is *maya* or illusion, and history has no meaning. But as Mircea Eliade, Stanley Jones and others have argued, the Judeo-Christian tradition is different from tribal and eastern religions precisely because it has a strong doctrine of creation of a real world apart from but contingent on God, and a strong sense of history as the arena within which God is carrying out His work. And it is the realist epistemologies that take the external world seriously.

Sixth, it is well nigh impossible to integrate an idealist theology and a realist science. The two see knowledge in a different light. Consequently, in the end we are forced to choose between one or the other as our ultimate frame of reference.

Finally, as we will see in the next article, there is a missiological question. How does an idealist Christian theology relate to non-Christian religions, particularly to the great idealist religions of Hinduism and Buddhism, and how does it affect evangelism?

Theology as Determinism or Instrumentalism. A deterministic approach to theology, like a deterministic approach to science, renders it meaningless. A few theologians may argue for a total divine determinism, but like scientists using deterministic models, they tend to exclude their own theologies from the picture.

Others, particularly social scientists such as Durkheim, argue that theology is instrumental. It is a useful way of looking at things, whether true or false. It serves important functions in the society such as giving it a sense of identity, and encoding its values. As evangelicals we must reject an instrumentalist theology, because it rejects the concept of truth. In the end it leads to theological and religious relativism.

Theology as Critical Realism. How would evangelical theology look in a critical realist mode? In the first place it would differentiate between theology and Biblical revelation, and ascribe final and full authority to the latter as the inspired record of God acting in human history. The Bible would then be the source and rule for Christian faith and life, and the final criterion against which we measure theological truth. We would see in it the definitive record of the person and work of Jesus Christ who is our Lord.

Theology in a critical realist mode is our human understanding and interpretation of the Scriptures. Technically, we should speak of theologies, for each theology is an understanding of divine revelation within a particular historical and cultural context. Thus we would speak of the theology of Calvin, or of Luther, or of evangelicalism.

A critical realist approach to theology affirms the priesthood of all believers, and recognizes that they must and will take the universal message of the Bible and apply it to their own lives and settings. It holds that the Holy Spirit is at work in all believers, leading them, when they are humbly open to His guidance, through the Scriptures and the Christian community into a growing understanding not only of theological truth in general, but also of the meaning of that truth for their lives.

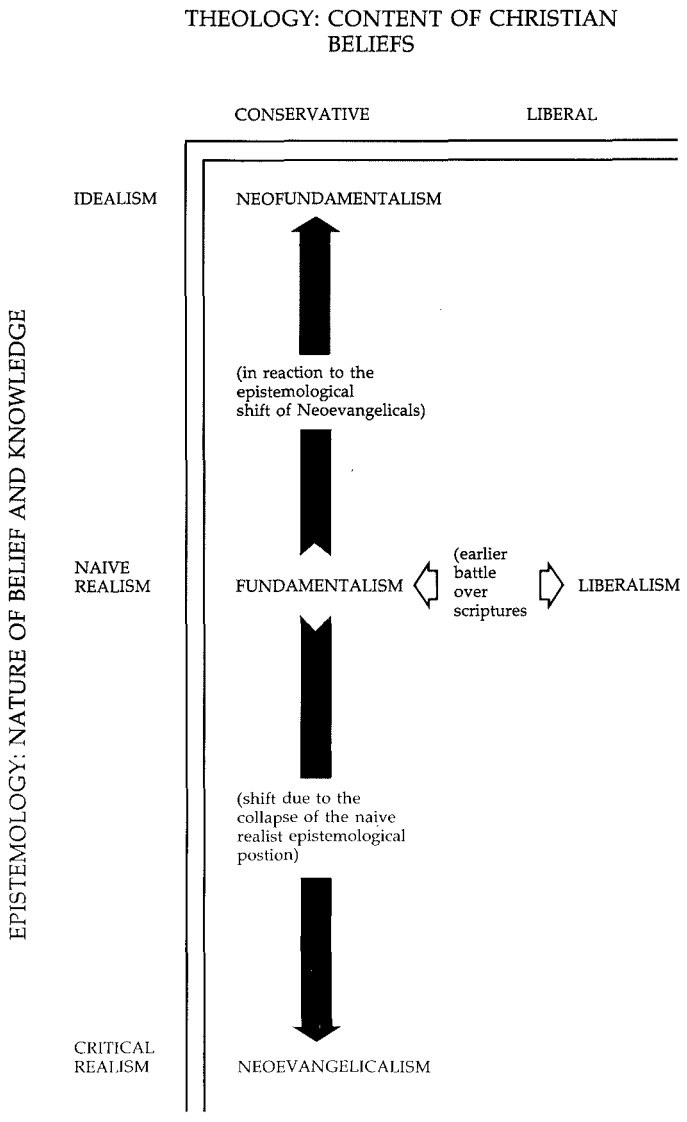

FIGURE 1
TYPES OF CONFLICT ON THE EVANGELICAL SCENE

This means, however, that all theologies are partial and culturally biased, that truth in the Scriptures is greater than our understanding of it. There is room, therefore, for growth in our theologies, but this means we must constantly test our theologies against the Scriptures and be willing to change them when we gain new understandings. Historical realities do not change, but our understandings of them do.

Does this not lead us into a morass of theological pluralism? Yes and no. It recognizes that different people ask different questions when they go to the Scriptures, and that their cultural and historical frameworks will color their interpretations. But, as Norman Kraus points out, Paul makes it clear that the interpretation of the Gospel is ultimately not the task of individuals, or even of leaders. It is the task of the church as a hermeneutical or "discerning community."

> Thus the Scripture can find its proper meaning as witness only within a *community of interpretation.* Principles of interpretation are important, but secondary. There needs to be an authentic correspondence between gospel announced and a "new order" embodied in community for Scripture to play its proper role as a part of the original witness. The authentic community is the hermeneutical community. It determines the actual enculturated meaning of Scripture (Kraus 1979:71).

Similarly, the cultural biases of local churches must be checked by the international community of churches drawn from many cultures.

There are three checks against theological error. First, all theology must be rooted in the Scriptures. Second, the Holy Spirit is at work in the hearts of God's people revealing the meaning of the Scriptures to individuals and churches in their particular settings. Third, believers and congregations must help one another discern the leadings of the Holy Spirit. They must test one another's theology, and themselves be open to critique. Just as others see our sins more clearly than we, so they see our theological errors more clearly than we see our own. The interpretation of Scriptures within a hermeneutical community must, therefore, be carried out in a spirit of humility to speak and willingness to learn.

Does this approach not lead to us to instrumentalism and a consequent theological relativism? No. Historical and experiential facts remain the same in all times and cultures. And while our interpretation of history introduces a subjective dimension, the facts of history force on us a large measure of objectivity. Critical realist theology like critical realist science affirms that while we see in part, we do see. We can speak of theological truth in an absolute sense. We see clearly the great outlines of theology—creation, fall, and redemption. In the study of Scriptures we see enough to lead us into faith and a growing discipleship. Too often it is not a lack of truth that holds us back, but our unwillingness to obey the truth we do have.

Epistemology and the Current Evangelical Scene

An understanding of the various epistemological positions can help us untangle some of the current debates in evangelical circles, debates that often seem to lead to confusion rather than to clarity. Clearly, we must distinguish between debates over the epistemological foundations of theology and those over the content of theology (see figure 1). Because we take our epistemological assumptions for granted, we do not debate them openly. Consequently our disagreements on this level surface in debates over the contents of theology and confuse the issues.

As I see it, many young evangelicals aware of the shifts now taking place in western epistemology have moved from the old position of naive realism to that of critical realism while remaining evangelical in their *theological content.* Confusing this move as a shift towards liberalism, other theologians have reacted by asserting the certainty of theology as a comprehensive, complete system of thought (not to be confused with trustworthiness of the Scriptures as historical revelation). But in doing so they have been forced into an idealist epistemology that absolutizes ideas over historical realities (see figure 1).

To be sure, the old debate over the content of theology between conservatives and liberals continues, and we must examine it with utmost seriousness. It is here that we seek the content of truth. But this debate must not be confused with the debate over epistemology—over the nature of our understanding of the truth. There are naive realist liberals who are just as dogmatic in declaring that they have a full knowledge of the truth as the are naive realist evangelicals. There are also idealist liberals and idealist evangelicals, and critical realist liberals and critical realist evangelicals. Some Christians have moved from a conservative-naive realist position to a more liberal-critical realist position. But they must not be equated with those who have moved to a conservative-critical realist position.

One area in which the failure to distinguish between the epistemological nature and the content of theology has created a great deal of confusion is that of Biblical authority. For those who see human knowledge as a photograph of reality—having a one-to-one correspondence with it—all knowledge is in a sense factual and literal, and any difference between knowledge and reality is an error. For those who see knowledge as a map, some information may not have a literal correspondence with the visible reality, but *may communicate another level of truth.* It is, therefore, not an "error." For example, freeways on a road map may be colored red, and surface streets black. This does not mean the two are, in fact, red and black. It does mean that the roads are different in character and belong to different systems. Moreover, a map is not faulty if nonessential information is lacking. It is fully trustworthy and accurate if it serves fully the purposes for which it is intended.

A second area in which the confusion of epistemology with content has wreaked havoc has to do with focus. Idealism (naive or critical) focuses on the ultimate unchanging structures of truth. Idealist theologians, therefore, emphasize systematic theologies (theologies of the balcony). Consequently they tend to be ahistorical and acultural. Realism looks at events in the real historical world within which we live and focuses on the nature of truth in specific situations. Realist theologians, therefore, emphasize Biblical theologies that look at God's acts and self revelation in specific historical and cultural situations (theologies of the road). As we shall see in the next article, we all need both. As we read the historical record of God's revelation in the Bible we all formulate implicit systematic theologies. The difference is that realists place greater emphasis on Biblical theologies that focus on historical revelation and less on systematic theologies that look at the structures of reality.

Finally, the current confusion over epistemological foundations has lead to a breakdown in communication. When evangelical critical realist theologians and idealist theologians converse, they speak of the same things, but they have an uneasy feeling that something is amiss. The idealists accuse the realists of lack of certainty for the latter differentiate their theology from the Scriptures. They tend to preface their remarks with "I believe . . .", or "As I see it . . .". Critical realists, on the other hand, are upset at the dogmatic certainty idealists claim for their knowledge, knowing that all human knowledge occurs in the contexts of culture and history. They may, in fact, agree on the contents of theological truth, but disagree on the epistemological nature of theology.

The breakdown of communication is most evident when there are disagreements. Idealists require agreement for there to be harmony. Consequently, they tend to be conversionist and polemical in their approach to those holding other theological positions. And they must break with and attack those who refuse to accept their positions. Critical realists, on the other hand, recognize that Christians will disagree in their understandings of Scriptures, and that unity lies in a commitment to the same Lord and to an obedience to the same Scriptures. They tend to be confessional and irenic in their approach to those who disagree. Moreover, they are committed by their epistemological stance to continue discussions with those who disagree with them.

When two idealists or two critical realists disagree, both sides know what is going on. Communication of some sort goes on, whether in mutual attack or mutual dialogue, because both sides are playing by the same rules. But when an idealist and a critical realist disagree, confusion sets in because one is playing chess and the other checkers on the same board.

As evangelicals we need to differentiate epistemological issues from theological ones so that we do not waste our energies and can work toward a resolution of our differences, and so we do not attack

a brother or sister falsely. We need to guard against heresy. We need also carry out the mission Christ has given us in this lost and broken world.

How do the various epistemological positions in theology relate to the integration of theology and science, and to missions and our relationship to non-Christian religions? These are questions we will explore in the next article.

To be continued in May/June TSF Bulletin.

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ETHICS

Onesimus: A Study In Ethics

by Vernard Eller

I think I understand why so many Christians find some sort of arky-faith* as essential to their creed. The logic, heard on every side, runs thus: If the good people (we Christians, of course) don't organize (as holy power-blocs) to bestow (read: "impose") our goodness upon the world, no improvement will ever take place and society will simply continue its slide into hell. The argument assumes there is only one possible way social good can happen.

It may come as a surprise to hear that I am quick to agree that this is the correct and, indeed, inevitable conclusion—if we are supposing that *political reality* (i.e., that of human probabilities and possibilities) is the only reality there is; that ours is not a God who takes it upon himself to intervene in humanity's public affairs. If God is left out (or edged out) of the picture, then it undoubtedly is correct that our one and only hope of social salvation is for good people with their messianic arkys to bring down the forces of evil and install a new and just regime.

If such is indeed the very fact of the matter, then, of course, we have no option but to skin the cat this way, doing it as well as we can manage. Even so, we ought to be honest enough to recognize just how forlorn a hope this is. From a theological-biblical perspective, Karl Barth (perhaps better than anyone else) has shown us how presumptuous and wrongheaded it is for any crowd of human beings to claim they have such master of, and facility with, "the good" that they can power it into place as the society of peace and justice.

Also, we have seen that the idea of "just revolution directed by the saints of God" is by no means an invention of the late 20th-century but has been tried time and time and time again. And yet, whether such revolution succeeds or fails, more often than not the social gain is zilch—or less! The direct-action method of messianic arkys is hardly recommended by its track record.

Finally, we have heard the personal testimony of Jacques Ellul—a saint as qualified as any, both as a biblical theologian on the one hand and a socio-political scientist on the other—who labored for years in different attempts at the Christian transformation of society and came away with the opinion that the method is unrealistic and unworkable.

Nevertheless, if this be the only possible way of getting the cat skinned, we will have to go with it—no matter what. Yet honesty would compel us to admit that our hope, now, is little better than no hope at all.

I have been trying to bust us out of this closed, constricted, no-option system that says, "There is only one way; if it's going to be done, we are the ones who will have to do it out of our own resources." Hear then the gospel, the liberating word of God: "There *is* more than one way to skin a cat" (I'm certain it's in there somewhere, but my concordance must be faulty).

Politics is not the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. There is also *theology* that can speak of actual, socio-political differences made by the presence of God. There is a *modus operandi* of history different from that of the human-bound method of triumph—that, of course, being resurrection made possible by the grace and power of one who is Wholly-Other-Than-Human.

So, in this article, I want to describe how "Another Way" can and did work in a matter of radical, broad-scale structural social-change usually thought of as being the special province of revo-

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* In his book, Dr. Eller uses "arky" as an anglicizing of the NT Greek word translated "principalities." "Anarchy" (un-arkyness), then, is essentially skepticism regarding how much good can ever be expected from arkys (power-blocs), namely, any and all human ideologies, parties, systems, or schemes claiming "principal" value in the reform or governance of society. "Arky faith," on the one hand, is, then, the common assumption of both secularists and Christians that good (God-sponsored) arkys are precisely the means by which the good of society (God's will for it) is to come to accomplishment. And "Christian Anarchy," on the other hand, is argued to be the truly biblical stance that puts its faith totally in the Arky (Kingdom) of God, consequently viewing all other arkys (and particularly "holy" ones) with dire suspicion.

lution and the class-struggle.

We already have heard but need again to be reminded that Christians can do and have done a great deal of good in the way of social service and action—and that without at all forming political power-blocs, without taking an adversarial stance toward any government or social institution, without presuming to condemn or fight anybody. Modern liberationists are wrong in sneering at these efforts as being insignificant compared to their big push to turn the world right-side-up.

In fact, althought the results are neither quick nor spectacular, it may be that *social service* has a better record in effecting even structural change than has *revolutionism*. Not through pressure and imposition, but simply through *modeling*, the service-presence cannot but have some ameliorative effect upon the social structures around it. Would it be correct to say that—no matter how bad off some of these nations may be at present—there is no country into which Christian missionaries and service workers have gone that is not now better off in the way of social justice than would be their case if that Christian presence had never been there? Revolutionary liberationism is *not* the only method of effecting helpful social change. There *is* more than one way . . . However, the case study here presented speaks of a way that is much more of a "direct action" than simply "Christian modeling."

In my book *Towering Babble* (pp. 169-79) I developed what I called "voluntary self-subordination" as being the uniquely Christian way—not necesasrily for skinning cats but for accomplishing many other good ends. And just the verbal contrast between this phrase and "arky-contest" is, of course, conspicuous. But as the rubric of this concept—its most fundamental and essential statement—I cited Jesus' solemn decree from Mark 8:34-35:

> "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel will save it."

And although we haven't time to say more here, that book develops the idea in depth and demonstrates that it does indeed characterize the whole New Testament.

Now it is my observation that a goodly number of modern Christians are willing at least to consider voluntary self-subordination as a method of operation for their *personal, one-to-one relationships with other individuals*. However, when it comes to political reform, radical social change, human liberation, the accomplishment of social justice, or whatever you call it, they don't see the method as having relevance or applicability at all. No, on this level, "justice" can only be spelled "political contention for equity."

In this regard, then, Jesus and the New Testament become something of an embarrassment to liberationists. According to their view, Jesus (and the New Testament believers proceeding from him) *should* appear in the role of modern-day reformers out demanding and contesting for the just society. The trouble is they don't fit the mold and can't convincingly be made to do so.

The embarrassment becomes acute, then, with the realization that the early church lived in a society where the terrible injustice of human slavery was common practice. Yet, rather than fighting or even protesting this evil, the church apparently condoned it—and that not only in the life of the large society but even within its own circles. And it follows that Paul's little letter to Philemon may represent the greatest embarrassment of all. Here, circumstances as much as force the Apostle into a direct confrontation with the institution of slavery—and he poops out completely. He makes no move to protest the injustice of the practice, speaks not one word in condemnation of Philemon's being a slaveowner, makes not a hint of a witness to social justice and human rights.

However, I read Philemon quite differently. So I now undertake to establish this miniscule missive as the very model of social justice accomplished through distinctively Christian self-subordination. It is a picture of liberation and social change so radical that the proponents of arky-justice haven't had a glimmer of what it's all about.

Philemon is a most frustrating book—a brief personal note that doesn't begin to tell us what we need to know in order to understand it. As much as we do know is this: Paul is writing to his friend Philemon regarding Philemon's slave, Onesimus. Yet, although he belongs to Philemon, Onesimus has just spent some time with Paul and is now carrying the letter from Paul to his master.

Philemon lives at Colossae and is a leader in the church there. Whether there or somewhere else (the book of Acts never places Paul at Colossae), Paul had apparently converted Philemon and become his close Christian brother. There seems little doubt that Colossians—Paul's letter to the *church* at Colossae—and this note to *a private individual* in Colossae belong together. Most likely, Tychicus, one of Paul's lieutenants, delivered the letter to the church, while Onesimus delivered the note to his master (Col 4:7-9).

At the time of his writing, Paul is in prison—although he isn't thoughtful enough to tell us where. Because the matter has something to do with the rest of the story, we are going to guess "-Ephesus." (Acts never has Paul *in prison* in Ephesus; but it does have him spending enough time in the city that an imprisonment would not be incredible. It is not like Paul to stay out of jail for two years in a row.) But what makes Ephesus a good guess is that it is the major metropolitan (and Pauline) center nearest the little town of Colossae, about a hundred miles off. It is, accordingly, by far the likeliest spot for a Colossian slave to try to lose himself—as well as have a chance of coming upon Paul. Then too, it is the most likely spot from which Paul would write that he hopes soon to be released and would Philemon have a guest room ready for him (vs. 22).

Onesimus, we know, is Philemon's slaveboy ("my child, whose father I have become," Paul calls him in vs. 10, which could make Onesimus as young as a teen-ager). The name "Onesimus," by the way, is based on the Greek root meaning "beneficial," "of benefit," or "useful." It is a name an owner might well give to a slave in the hope of its influencing his character. Paul does word play with the name in both verses 11 and 20.

Onesimus is Philemon's slave. Yet he has just been with Paul in Ephesus rather than Philemon in Colossae. Paul opines that he has been "useless" rather than living up to his name "useful" (vs. 11). And Onesimus' returning to Philemon raises questions as to how he will be received. Only this much the letter actually tells us. But it can hardly add up to anything other than "runaway." We don't know whether Onesimus knew (or knew about) Paul and so sought him out through the Ephesian church or whether he just happened to be thrown into the same jail cell with him. But in either case, he is now not only a spiritual son but even a working colleague of the Apostle.

In the note Onesimus delivers, Paul is probably asking three things of Philemon: (1) At the very least, he is asking that Onesimus be received with kindness and forgiveness rather than what would be customary for a runaway slave—which, legally, could include anything up through torture and death. (2) Surely, he is also asking that Onesimus be released from slavery ("no longer as a slave but more than a slave, as a beloved brother"—vs. 16). And (3) there are strong hints that Paul wants Onesimus released to come back and serve with Paul at Ephesus ("I want some benefit [some 'Onesimus'] from you"—vs. 13 & vs. 20).

This is as much as the epistle itself can tell us. So let me now try an interpretation.

In running away from his master, the slave Onesimus was doing precisely what modern revolutionism says he should do. He was moving to effect his own liberation—get out from under terrible oppression and claim the equity of being a freeman alongside Philemon. Although it was a slave revolt of only one person, it was an entirely praiseworthy one—a blow against gross injustice and a move toward a truly just society. This is liberation theology—and a model of what all slaves should do. So, far from feeling any sort of guilt, Onesimus should have been proud of what he did.

Of course, I don't know how Onesimus *did* feel; but let's assume he felt good about his thrust toward freedom. Yet the evidence would indicate that, particularly after he became a Christian and began to learn from Paul, he started to have second thoughts. His way of getting liberated did not have things as "freed up" as he expected they would be. "Running away," he must now have sensed, left something to be desired as a "freeing" action. Being a runaway slave is neither as secure nor as relaxed a position as one might hope. To have always to be looking over your shoulder to see who

is coming to get you can hardly be the truest sort of freedom. And I wonder whether anyone can ever run away, or lie, or cheat, or kill—even in the name of freedom—without feeling pangs of remorse and guilt in the process.

But more, as a Christian, Onesimus must have realized that his act of "freeing" himself had to have had a reverse effect on Philemon. Onesimus' grab for equity would inevitably have created an adversary alignment and made Philemon "the enemy," who now had been put down, cheated, robbed of a valuable possession he undoubtedly had acquired in all honesty. No, there were all sorts of things about Onesimus' new freedom which just could not be right.

So, with Paul's help (although certainly not at his *demand*), Onesimus *freely* chose another method of liberation—that of voluntary, Christian self-subordination. He decided to *go back*, to exercise his freedom by giving it up, to save his life by losing it.

And just think what this action had to mean for Onesimus. Here was a runaway slave—guilty from every legal standpoint—offering to put himself at the mercy of his offended master. His only defense is a scrap of paper signed with what he hopes is the magic name "Paul." It is hardly likely that Onesimus stood afar off and sent Tychicus in with the note, awaiting Philemon's response before deciding which way to move. Hardly. Onesimus must have himself handed that note to Philemon, putting not just his hard-won freedom but his very life into jeopardy, ready to accept whatever might result—fully convinced, whatever that result might be, that this was the only way to true freedom.

Consider, then, that Onesimus' original running away had not been a truly *free* action—it was too much motivated by self-interest, a being driven by one's own self-serving needs and desires. No, it was rather his going back, his *voluntary* subordination, his willingness to lose his life for Christ's sake and the gospel—only this was "free" in a way no other action could be.

And Onesimus' earlier running away had not been a "freeing" action, either. We already have conjectured what must have been the side-effects that led him to want to undo that one. But, precisely the opposite, we can be certain that his going back *did* create all sorts of freedom. And we can say that even without knowing how Philemon responded. And bear in mind that we don't know. All we have is the note; and Scripture gives us not one word as to how it was received. And this is how it should be. Onesimus' action was *right*, no matter what the consequences. My belief is that Onesimus would have *wanted* to go back—would have felt himself freed in going back—even if he had known ahead of time that he would be returning to slavery, torture, and execution. Yet, even at that extremity, consider the freedoms that would have ensued.

Through his act of repentance, reconciliation, restitution, and asking forgiveness, Onesimus would have freed himself from the guilt of his previous action. He would have freed his relationship to Philemon of all its animosity, ill will, and adversarial conflict. And although it does not figure into our customary calculations, don't assume that a *dead* slave is for that reason *unfree*. No, just because he had acted as a child of God, Onesimus had guaranteed for himself the coming revelation of what his sponsor Paul called "the glorious liberty of the children of God." And what Paul wrote to the Galatians he could as well have addressed to his Philemon-bound friend: "For freedom *Christ* has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery [slavery to what the world calls 'freedom']." And most certainly, Onesimus is included when Paul says, "For he who was called in the Lord as a slave is a freeman of the Lord." We have all sorts of arky-liberated people running around who don't begin to know the sort of freedom experienced by the Christian slaveboy who may voluntarily have gone to his death.

Because the success of voluntary self-subordination is not measured by its outward results, the story of Onesimus is right—is the very model of Christian action—even though we don't know what consequences there may have been. Yet this, of course, is not to suggest that the outcome had to be that of enslavement and death. Indeed, the probability is quite otherwise. Paul, apparently, was a rather good judge of character; and if he was reading his pal Philemon at all right, then Onesimus likely was soon on his way back to Ephesus with Tychicus. Again, it would take a pretty tough nut to resist the blandishments and loving arguments of Paul's most crucial effort in salesmanship. I don't think there's a chance in the world that Philemon could have held out against this one. Finally—and to my mind most conclusive—is the fact that the letter has survived.

Think about it: if anything had happened to Onesimus other than his being freed and sent on his way to Paul, who would have wanted to save the letter? It was saved, obviously. So who would have wanted it? Well, it belonged to Philemon, and he undoubtedly valued it. Yet my guess is that (except for his Christian inhibitions) Onesimus would have knocked him down and taken it, if Philemon had shown reluctance about giving it up. After all, to Philemon it was a nice letter from a friend; but to Onesimus, it was his reprieve from death and charter of freedom. What they probably did is make a xerox copy so that both could have copies. In any case, that note was preserved for some period of years until it could be incorporated as a one-of-a-kind entry in the New Testament.

"And is that the story?" Well, maybe so and maybe not. New Testament scholar John Knox is the one who ferreted out what may be its continuation. We have to go clear beyond the New Testament now; but there is more.

Fifty to sixty years after the most probable time of Paul's writing, there was, in Syria, a Bishop Ignatius who was apprehended by the Romans and escorted overland to Rome, where, eventually, he was tried and executed. Because Ignatius was a prominent figure in the church, as his party came to (or even close to) any Christian locales, the congregations sent out representatives to visit and offer him hospitality. After he arrived in Rome, then, Ignatius sent "thank you notes" to a number of the churches that had hosted him. These letters—dated about A.D. 110—have been preserved (not in the New Testament, obviously, but as some of the earliest Christian literature outside the New Testament). One of them is addressed to the church at Ephesus (EPHESUS, note!); and therein Ignatius waxes eloquent about the welcome he had received from the Ephesian delegation headed by their Bishop Onesimus.

Hold on! Don't go jumping to conclusions until I say. When I tell you, we can all jump to the conclusion at once. There is nothing in the way of positive proof; and "Onesimus" is not a completely rare name. Yet the place and timing are right. If our slaveboy went back to help Paul in Ephesus, he could have worked his way up in the congregation and been a seventy-some-year-old bishop at the time Ignatius came through.

More, in the first six paragraphs of his letter, Ignatius names Bishop Onesimus three times and refers to him eleven other times. And it is in this same section of the letter (and not elsewhere) that scholars also pick up subtle echoes of the language of Paul's letter to Philemon—including one play on the word "benefit" that is almost identical to Paul's. Apparently, Ignatius knows the Philemon letter and is teasing its language into his compliments of Bishop Onesimus. You can decide how conclusive that is in proving that Ignatius knows which Onesimus the Ephesian bishop is; but I am ready to jump. Now!

Here, we must move beyond Ignatius; but the plot continues to thicken. Scholars are pretty well convinced that the letters of Paul did not come into the New Testament one by one, from here and there. The greater likelihood is that, beforehand, someone had become interested in Paul and made inquiries among the congregations as to whether they had any of his letters and would be willing to share copies (xerox copies, of course). It would have been this earlier Pauline collection, then, that was introduced into the New Testament as a unit.

Now where would such collecting most likely have taken place? Among the Pauline congregations, Ephesus is as well situated and thus as good a guess as any. And who is most likely to have been the moving spirit behind such a project? Why not Bishop Onesimus? He has as good a reason for remembering and loving Paul as anybody (and a whole lot better reason than most). And, with this suggestion, we get a really nice answer to one of the most troublesome questions regarding the epistle to Philemon. Within the Bible, it is a unique specimen—a brief personal note addressed to a private individual on a matter involving neither the life of a congregation nor the teaching of the faith. So why should it be in the New Testament? And how did it get there in the first place?

Without recourse to "Bishop Onesimus," I don't see that those questions are answerable. With "Bishop Onesimus," they become easy. If Onesimus is the collector of the Pauline *corpus*, he would, of course, be eager that "his" letter be part of it. Likewise, the Ephesian congregation would very much want *this* letter included, as a gesture of respect and gratitude—and a matter of record—regarding their own slaveboy bishop. Yes, the very presence of the letter within the New Testament canon may be the strongest proof that the Ephesian bishop of A.D. 110 is indeed the very same person as Philemon's slave.

Earlier—under the possibility that Onesimus actually was returned to slavery and executed—we portrayed the *minimum* of freedom, liberation and justice that might have resulted from his going back. Now—whether or not it is the *maximum*—we have portrayed just how incredibly far God may have taken that slaveboy's Christ-like decision to take up his cross and go back. And Onesimus' personal rise in equity from slave to bishop is only a starter. The Ephesian congregation seems to have received the godly leadership that not only made it a strong church but may even have spelled its survival into the second century (it is not evident that all Paul's congregations lasted so long). But most of all, it may be that God used Onesimus' going-back to give us the Pauline one-fourth of our New Testament and so preserve an understanding of the faith that has been of untold value in the life and history of the church to the present day. When God is in the picture, who's to say how "useful" one "Onesimus" can be?

But more! I am ready to say that—in a proleptic, representative way—the example of Onesimus marks the truer freeing of more slaves than all the Emancipation Proclamations ever proclaimed and all the class-warfare ever warred. In this one, indeed, God sounds the death knell of slavery (all sorts of slavery) for the whole of creation for all time. There is not the slightest doubt that the Christian church—the Onesmian church—went on to become the greatest force for freeing slaves that the world has ever seen. And it strikes me that the Onesmian method of ending slavery is the only sure method of doing so. The secular way of "revolutionary arky-contest" may be quicker and more spectacular; but it is also far less dependable, carrying all sorts of negative side-effects. Emancipation Proclamations and Civil Wars may create a degree of justice and eliminate some aspects of slavery. But they also create all sorts of animosities and hatreds, leave battlefields strewn with corpses, and take us out of slavery only to put us into Jim Crow.

The Onesmian approach is much more powerful. It may take a while, but no slaveholder can forever hold out against the loving persuasions of a Paul, the loving self-sacrifice of an Onesimus, or the loving Spirit of an Almighty God. That owner actually has a much better chance of resisting political pressure and the violence of class warfare. Moreover, the Onesmian way, rather than demanding the denunciation and destruction of the moral dignity of the slaveholder, offers him a gracious way out. Onesimus was liberated without Philemon's having to be demeaned in the process. And best of all, of course, to go Onesmian leaves everyone involved—slave, owners, and apostle—as brothers in Christ. The side-effects are all positive, without a trace of contention's negativity.

Yet the most essential distinction, I suggest, is this: The political struggle for liberation is posited wholly on human wisdom, idealism, and moral ability. It thinks there is only one way . . . It operates in a closed system that neither seeks nor expects anything more than its human methodology can be calculated to achieve—though seldom do the final results come to even that much. Human beings (and especially well-intended doers of good) are noted for overestimating the power of their own piety.

But with Onesimus, things are quite otherwise. Because his was a theological action taken at the behest of *God*, in the service of *God*, through the Spirit of *God*, with the enablement of *God*, and to the glory of *God*—this action invited God in and urged him to make of it what he would. And the results? Completely incalculable—even to the preserving of the Pauline gospel for the ages. There is absolutely no telling how much good, how much social change, how much freeing of slaves, how much gospel, how much kingdom, might follow from an Onesmian laying down of one's life for God.

Finally, then, consider how totally Onesimus' was "Another Way"—an anarchical way bearing no likeness at all to the accepted arky-method of skinning cats. Not one of the characteristics of arky-faith is to be found.

To be sure, slaves are freed and the classless society is formed. Yet, throughout, each of the principals (slave, owner, and attendant theologian of liberation) acts and is acted toward simply as the human individual he is—brothers three, only that and nothing more. No one (least of all the theologian directing the action) tries to use Onesimus as symbol of "the oppressed but righteous poor" whose consciousness of injustice must be raised to the point that he will joint the class-struggle. Paul, rather, convinces him to quit "fighting it" and go back—even into slavery. No one (least of all the theologian directing the action) tries, conversely, to use Philemon as symbol of "the evil, oppressing, slaveholding class," exposing his injustice as a means of recruiting class-warriors to fight against him. No one (least of all the theologian directing the action) has any interest in anybody's fighting anybody, in even seeing the matter as an adversary alignment.

The problem of human slavery is, of course, a *political* one. But our "theologian of liberation," being truly a *theologian*, says, "There just has to be more than the one *political* way of skinning this cat (i.e., the way that is limited to human probabilities and possibilities). Let us act *theologically* (i.e., in a way that both obeys God and, at the same time, invites him into the action). Let's try it that way—and see where God chooses to take it."

So they did. And so He did. And just see how far it went. You know, it's true: There actually is more than one way . . .

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Meditative Prayer

by Richard J. Foster

Jesus Christ is alive and here to teach his people himself. His voice is not hard to hear; his vocabulary is not hard to understand. But we must learn how to hear his voice and to obey his word. It is this ability to hear and obey that is the heart and soul of Christian meditation. In this article we will seek to understand the biblical basis and the purpose of meditative prayer. We will discover how the imagination can aid us in our task and consider the three major steps into meditative prayer. We will see how learning to read with the heart can draw us into the love and life of God, and, finally, we will consider seven common problems in the practice of meditative prayer.

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The Biblical Basis for Meditative Prayer

The biblical basis for meditation is discovered in the great reality of the speaking, teaching, acting God which lies at the heart of the scriptural witness. God brought the universe crashing into existence by the word of his command. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve talked with God and God talked with them—they were in communion. Then came the Fall, and in an important sense there was a rupture of the sense of perpetual communion, for Adam and Eve hid from God. But God continued to reach out to his rebellious children, and in stories of such individuals as Cain, Abel, Noah and Abraham we see God speaking and acting, teaching and guiding.

Moses learned, albeit with many vacillations and detours, how to hear God's voice and obey his word. In fact, Scripture witnesses that God spoke to Moses "face to face, as a man speaks to his

friend" (Ex 33:11). There was a sense of intimate relationship, of communion. As a people, however, the Israelites were not prepared for such intimacy. Once they learned a little about God, they realized that being in his presence was risky business and told Moses so: "You speak to us, and we will hear; but let not God speak to us, lest we die" (Ex 20:19). In this way they could maintain religious respectability without the attendant risks. This was the beginning of the great line of the prophets and the judges, Moses being the first. But it was a step away from the sense of immediacy, the sense of the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night.

Under Samuel the people clamored for a king. This disturbed Samuel greatly, but God told him not to be discouraged, "for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them" (1 Sam 8:7). Under Moses they rejected God's immediacy; under Samuel they rejected God's theocratic rule. "Give us a prophet, give us a king, give us a go-between, so we do not have to come into God's presence ourselves." And we do not have to look at religion in America very deeply before we see that it is saturated with the dogma of the mediator. "Give us a pastor, give us a priest, give us someone who will do it for us, so that we can avoid intimacy with God ourselves and still reap the benefits."

In the fullness of time Jesus came and taught the reality of the kingdom of God and demonstrated what life could be like in that kingdom. He showed us God's yearning for the gathering of an all-inclusive community of loving persons, with himself as its prime sustainer and most glorious inhabitant. He established a living fellowship that would know him as Redeemer and King, listening to him in all things and obeying him at all times. In his intimate relationship with the Father, Jesus modeled for us the reality of that life of hearing and obeying. "The Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever he does, that the Son does likewise" (Jn 5:19). "I can do nothing on my own authority; as I hear, I judge" (Jn 5:30). "The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority; but the Father who dwells in me does his works" (Jn 14:10). When Jesus told his disciples to abide in him, they could understand what he meant for he was abiding in the Father. He declared that he was the good Shepherd and that his sheep know his voice (Jn 10:4). He told us that the Comforter would come, the Spirit of truth, who would guide us into all truth (Jn 16:13).

Luke in his second volume clearly implies that following the resurrection and the ascension Jesus continued "to do and teach" even if people could not see him with the naked eye (Acts 1:1). Both Peter and Stephen pointed to Jesus as the fulfillment of the prophecy in Deuteronomy 18:15 of the prophet like Moses who is to speak and whom the people are to hear and obey (Acts 3:22; 7:37. See also Deut 18:15-18; Mt 17:5; Jn 1:21; 4:19-25; 6:14; 7:37-40; Heb 1:1-13; 3:7-8; 12:25). In the book of Acts we see the resurrected and reigning Christ, through the Holy Spirit, teaching and guiding his children: leading Philip to new unreached cultures (Acts 8), revealing his messiahship to Paul (Acts 9), teaching Peter about his racism (Acts 10), guiding the church out of its cultural captivity (Acts 15).

This, in brief, forms the biblical foundation for meditation, and the wonderful news is that Jesus has not stopped acting and speaking. He is resurrected and at work in our world. He is not idle, nor has he developed laryngitis. He is alive and among us as our Priest to forgive us, our Prophet to teach us, our King to rule us, our Shepherd to guide us.

All the saints throughout the ages have witnessed to this reality. How sad that contemporary Christians are so ignorant of the vast sea of literature on Christian meditation by faithful believers throughout the centuries! And their testimony to the joyful life of perpetual communion is amazingly uniform. From Catholic to Protestant, from Eastern Orthodox to Western Free Church, we are urged to "live in his presence in uninterrupted fellowship." The Russian mystic Theophan the Recluse said, "To pray is to descend with the mind into the heart, and there to stand before the face of the Lord, ever-present, all seeing, within you." The Anglican divine Jeremy Taylor declared, "Meditation is the tongue of the soul and the language of our spirit." And in our day Lutheran martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer, when asked why he meditated, replied, "Because I am a Christian." The witness of Scripture and the witness of the devotional masters are so rich, so alive with the presence of God that we would be foolish to neglect such a gracious invitation to experience, in the words of Madame Guyon, "the depths of Jesus Christ."

The Purpose of Meditative Prayer

In meditative prayer we are growing into what Thomas à Kempis called "a familiar friendship with Jesus." We are sinking down into the light and life of Christ and becoming comfortable in that posture. The omnipresence of the Lord moves from a theological dogma into a radiant reality. "He walks with me and he talks with me" ceases to be pious jargon and instead becomes a straightforward description of daily life.

Please understand me: I am not speaking of some mushy, giddy, buddy-buddy relationship. All such insipid sentimentality only betrays how little we know, how distant we are from the Lord high and lifted up who is revealed to us in Scripture. John tells us in his Apocalypse that when he saw the reigning Christ he fell at his feet as though dead, and so should we (Rev 1:17). No, I am speaking of a reality more akin to what the disciples felt in the upper room when they experienced both intense intimacy and awful reverence.

What happens in meditative prayer is that we create the emotional and spiritual space which allows Christ to construct an inner sanctuary in the heart. The wonderful verse "I stand at the door and knock . . ." was originally penned for believers, not unbelievers (Rev 3:20). We who have turned our lives over to Christ need to know how very much he longs to eat with us, to commune with us. He desires a perpetual Eucharistic feast in the inner sanctuary of the heart. Meditative prayer opens the door and, although we are engaging in specific meditation exercises at specific times, the aim is to bring this living reality into all of life. It is a portable sanctuary which is brought into all we are and do.

Inward fellowship of this kind does two things. First, it transforms the inner personality. We cannot "burn the eternal flame of the inner sanctuary" and remain the same, for the Divine Fire will consume everything that is impure. Our ever-present Teacher will always be leading us into "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (rom 14:17). Everything that is foreign to his way we will have to let go. No, not "have to" but "want to," for our desires and aspirations will be more and more conformed to his way. Increasingly, everything within us will swing like a needle to the pole star of the Spirit.

Second, meditation will send us into our ordinary world with greater perspective and balance. As we learn to listen to the Lord, we gain new practical handles on life's ordinary problems. William Penn observed, "True godliness does not turn men out of the world, but enables them to live better in it and excites their endeavors to mend it." Somehow we have new eyes to see and new ears to hear. We develop a truer sense of proportion so that we are able to distinguish the significant from the trivial. We discover a new serenity, an unshakableness, a firmness of life orientation. We come to live out the demands of our day perpetually bowed in worship and adoration.

Sanctifying the Imagination

We can descend with the mind into the heart most easily through the imagination. Perhaps some rare individuals can meditate in an imageless void, but most of us need to be more deeply rooted in the senses. We must not despise this simpler, more humble route into God's presence. Jesus himself taught in this manner, making constant appeal to the imagination, and many of the devotional masters likewise encourage us in this way. St. Teresa of Avila said, "As I could not make reflection with my understanding I contrived to picture Christ within me. I did many simple things of this kind. I believe my soul gained very much in this way, because I began to practice prayer without knowing what it was." Many of us can identify with her words, for we too have tried a merely cerebral approach and found it too abstract, too detached. Even more, the imagination helps to anchor our thoughts and center our attention. Francis de Sales noted that "by means of the imagination we confine our mind within the mystery on which we meditate, that it may not ramble to and fro, just as we shut up a bird in a cage or tie a hawk by his leash so that he may rest on the hand."

Some have objected to using the imagination out of concern that it is untrustworthy and could even be used by the evil one. There is good reason for concern, for the imagination, like all our faculties, has participated in the Fall. But just as we believe that God can take our reason (fallen as it is) and sanctify it and use it for his good purposes, so he can sanctify the imagination and use *it* for his good purposes. Of course, the imagination can be distorted by Satan, but then so can all our faculties. God created us with an imagination, and as Lord of his creation he can and does redeem it and use it for the work of the kingdom of God.

To believe that God can sanctify and utilize the imagination is simply to take seriously the Christian idea of incarnation. God so accommodates, so enfleshes himself into our world, that he uses the images we know and understand to teach us about the unseen world of which we know so little and which we find so difficult to understand.

As we enter more and more into God's way—thinking his thoughts after him, delighting in his gracious presence—we experience God more and more, utilizing our imagination for his good purposes. If we truly delight in him, our desires will please him, which is why they will come to pass (Ps 37:4). And, in fact, the common experience of those who walk with God is that of being *given* images of what could be, not straining to concoct them. So may I encourage you to allow the Lord to give you many delightful images and pictures. You may well discover, as I did, that it is the first step to believing that it could be so.

Steps into Meditative Prayer

While in biblical times people were well versed in how to meditate, today there is an abysmal ignorance of even the most basic elements. Hence, many of us are helped immensely by a simple description of the three basic steps into meditative prayer.

Centering down. The first step is sometimes called "centering down." Others have used the term *re-collection*; that is, a re-collecting of ourselves until we are unified or whole. The idea is to let go of all competing distractions until we are truly centered, until we are truly present where we are.

Begin by seating yourself comfortably, and then slowly and deliberately let all tension and anxiety drop away. Become aware of God's presence in the room. Perhaps in your imagination you will want to visualize Christ seated in the chair across from you, for he is truly present. If frustrations or distractions arise, you will want to lift them up into the arms of the Father and let him care for them. This is not suppressing our inner turmoil but letting go of it. Suppression implies a pressing down, a keeping in check, whereas in centering down we are giving away, releasing. It is even more than a neutral psychological relaxing. It is an active surrendering, a "self-abandonment to divine providence," to use the phrase of Jean-Pierre de Caussade.

Precisely because the Lord is present with us we can relax and let go of everything, for in his presence nothing really matters, nothing is of importance except attending to him. We allow inner distractions and frustrations to melt away before him as snow before the sun. We allow him to calm the storms which rage within. We allow his great silence to still our noisy heart.

Let me warn you at the outset: this centeredness does not come easily or quickly in the beginning. Most of us live such fractured and fragmented lives that collectedness is a foreign world to us. The moment we genuinely try to be centered we become painfully aware of how distracted we are. Romano Guardini notes, "When we try to compose ourselves, unrest redoubles in intensity, not unlike the manner in which at night, when we try to sleep, cares or desires assail us with a force that they do not possess during the day." But we must not be discouraged at this. We must be prepared to devote all our meditation time to this centeredness without any thought for result or reward. We willingly "waste our time" in this manner as a lavish love offering to the Lord. For God takes what looks like a foolish waste and uses it to nudge us closer into the holy of holies. Perceptively Guardini comments, "If at first we achieve no more than the understanding of how much we lack in inner unity, something will have been gained, for in some way we will have made contact with that center which knows no distraction."

Several things occur in the process of centering down. First, there is a glad surrender to him "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty" (Rev 1:8). We surrender control over our lives and destinies. In an act of deliberate intention we decide to do it not our way but God's. We might even want to visualize our bodies being lifted into the intense light of God's presence that he may do with us as it pleases him.

We surrender our possessiveness and invite him to possess us in such a way that we are truly crucified with Christ and yet truly alive through his life (Gal 2:20). We relinquish into his hands our imperialist ambitions to be greater and more admired, to be richer and more powerful, even to be saintlier and more influential.

We surrender our cares and worries. "Cast all your anxieties on him, for he cares about you," said Peter (1 Pet 5:7). And so we can, precisely because we sense his care. We can give up the need to watch out for number one because we have One who is watching out for us. I sometimes like to picture a box in which I place every worry and every care. When it is full I gift wrap it, placing a lovely big bow on top, and give it as a present to the Father. He receives it, and once he does I know I must not take it back, for to take back a gift once given is most discourteous.

We surrender our good intentions and high resolves, for even these can harbor the seeds of pride and arrogance. Mother Teresa of Calcutta said, "Pray for me that I not loosen my grip on the hands of Jesus even under the guise of ministering to the poor." For if we "loosen our grip on the hands of Jesus," we have lost everything. And so we are to surrender all distractions—even good distractions—until we are driven into the Core.

A second thing which occurs within us as we are learning to center down is the rise of a spirit of repentance and confession. Suddenly we become aware—keenly aware—of our shortcomings and many sins. All excuses are stripped away, all self-justifications are silenced. A deep, godly sorrow wells up within for the sins of commission and of omission. Any deed or thought that cannot stand in the searching light of Christ becomes repulsive not only to God but to us as well. Thus humbled under the cross we confess our need and receive his gracious word of forgiveness.

We may want to picture a path littered with many rocks. Some are small pebbles, others are quite large, and still others are almost completely buried so that we cannot know their size. With compunction of heart we invite the Lord to remove each stone, for they do indeed represent the many sins littering our lives. One by one he picks them up, revealing to us their true character and offensiveness. To our eyes some look big and others small, but the Lord helps us to understand that when lifted the smallest pebble has the same weight as the largest boulder. Some rocks need to be dug out of the ground, and while this is painful it also brings healing. When we see the path completely clear we rejoice in this gracious work of the Lord.

A third reality which works its way into our hearts as we are being more and more centered is an acceptance of the ways of God with human beings. We are acutely aware that God's ways are not our ways, that his thoughts are not our thoughts (Is 55:8). And with an inner knowing born out of fellowship, we see that his ways are altogether good. Our impatience, our rebellion, our nonacceptance give way to a gentle receptiveness to divine breathings. This is not a stoic resignation to "the will of God." It is an entering into the rhythm of the Spirit. It is a recognition that his commandments are "for our good always" (Deut 6:24). It is a letting go of our way and a saying yes to God's way, not grudgingly but because we know it is the better way.

We might want to visualize ourselves on a lovely beach somewhere observing the footprints of God in the sand. Slowly we begin to place our feet into the prints. At some places the stride looks far too long for our small frame; at other places it looks so short that it appears childlike. In his infinite wisdom God is stretching us where we need to be on the edge of adventure, restraining us where we need greater attentiveness to him. As we follow his lead we enter more and more into his stride, turning where he turns, accepting his ways and finding them good.

Beholding the Lord. As we learn to center down we begin to move into the second step in meditative prayer, which is "beholding the Lord." What do I mean? I mean the inward steady gaze of the heart upon the divine Center. We bask in the warmth of his pres-

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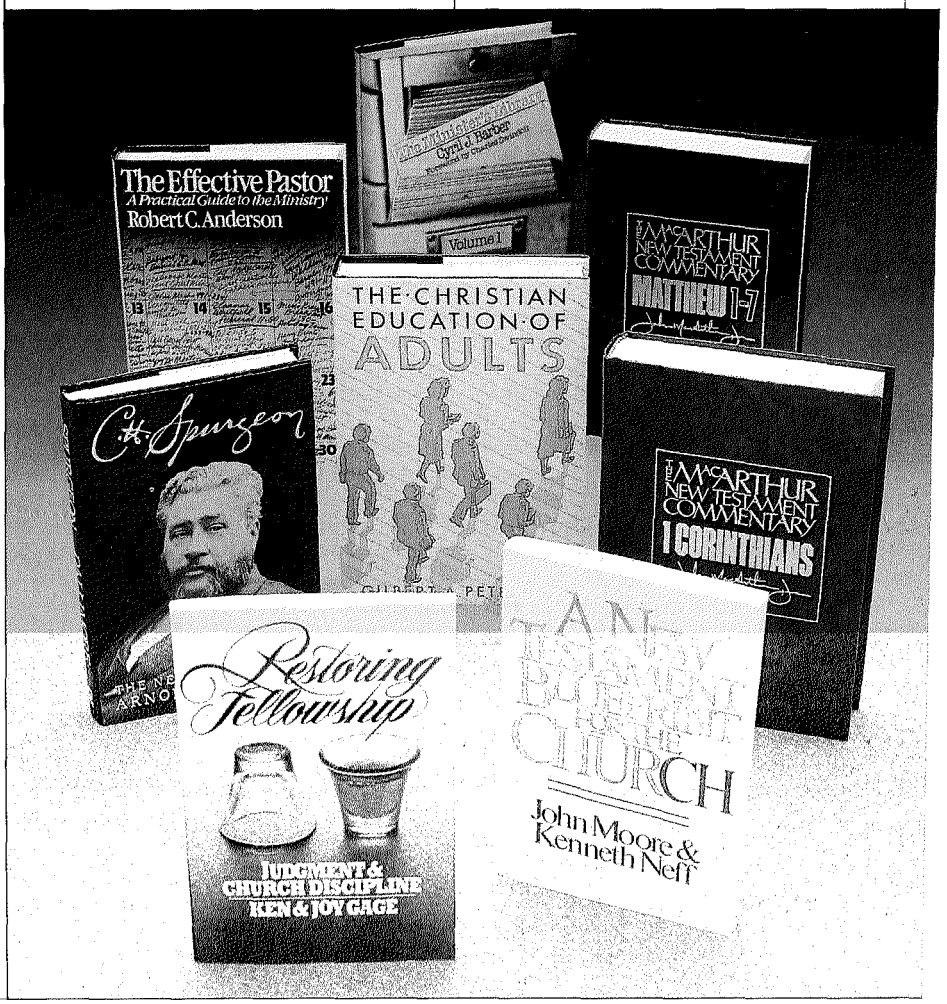

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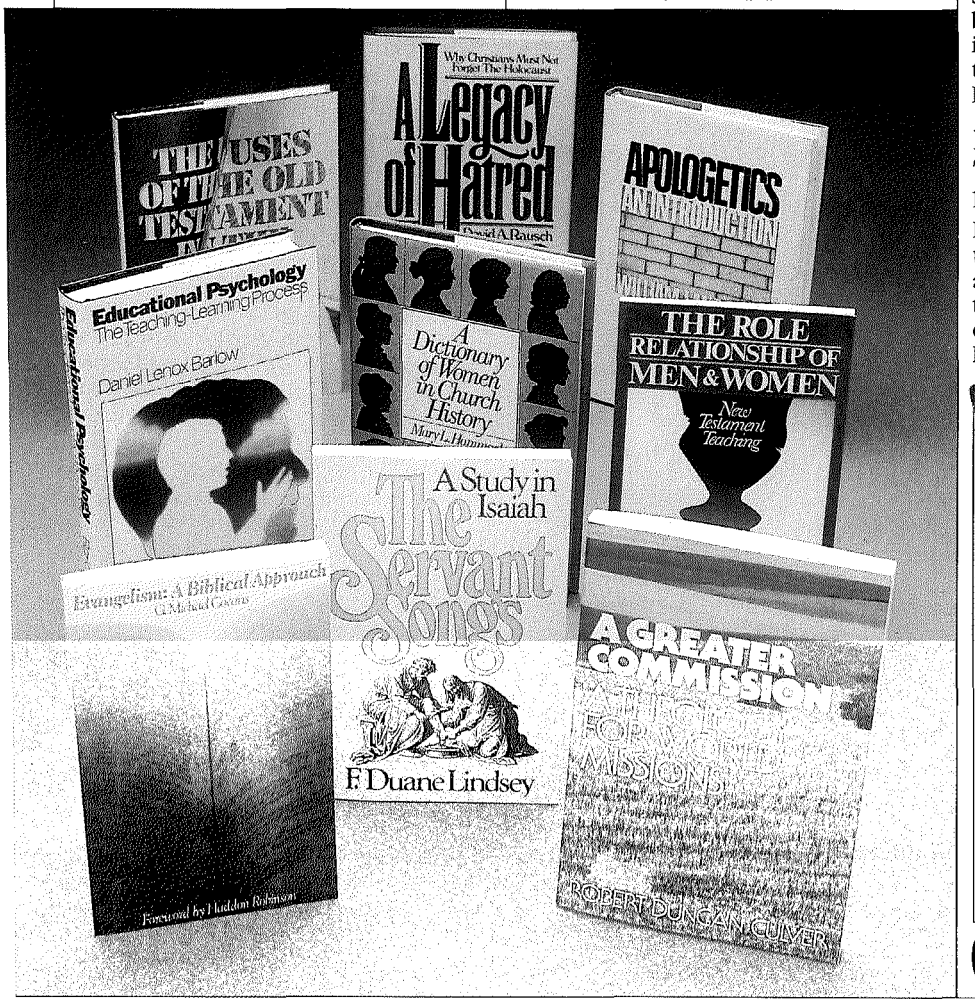

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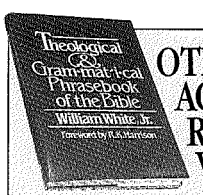

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ence. Worship and adoration, praise and thanksgiving, well up from the inner sanctuary of the soul. The fourteenth-century mystic Richard Rolle witnessed that, as he learned the gaze of the heart, he experienced real warmth around his heart as if it were actually on fire. He was so surprised at this phenomenon that he had to keep feeling his chest to be sure there was no physical reason for it. Instead of fear, as we might expect, this unusual sensation brought him "great and unexpected comfort." Fortunately for all of us, he has recorded the insights of those experiences in *The Fire of Love*.

Few if any of us will have the physical sensations that Rolle experienced, but we all can learn the gaze of the heart. There is a lovely little chorus which is popular these days, the first line of which says, "Set my spirit free that I may worship thee." And that is the yearning of our hearts as we behold the Lord. We love him, we worship him, we adore him. There are inward whisperings of devotion and homage, and perhaps outward shouts of praise and thanksgiving.

Often it seems that music is the language of beholding. "Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart" is the way the apostle Paul described it (Eph 5:19). And who can hinder the spontaneous outbreak of adoration and praise? The great hymns of the church aid us in our beholding, for in an important sense they encapsulate for us the beholding of faithful Christians throughout the centuries. As we sing the great hymns we enter the communion of saints.

Many times we enter experiences of beholding that go deeper than human words can express. St. Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us "with sighs too deep for words" (Rom 8:26). And often there are inward yearnings and aspirations that cannot quite be caught in human language. At times the gift of tongues, or glossolalia, becomes a channel through which the spirit may behold the Holy One of Israel. At other times one experiences what St. Teresa of Avila called "the prayer of quiet," where all words become superfluous. In silence we behold the Lord, for words are not needed for there to be communion.

Often a brief passage of Scripture will aid us in our beholding. We may be drawn to the great vision of the Lord high and lifted up recorded in Isaiah 6:1-8. Or perhaps we will want to meditate on John's vision of the reigning Christ in Revelation 1:12-18 or even in Revelation 19:11-16. We may be directed to behold the Savior cradled in the manger or dying upon the cross.

Most of all, we sense his nearness and his love. Father James Borst said, "He is closer to my true self than I am myself. He knows me better than I know myself. He loves me better than I love myself. He is 'Abba,' Father, to me. *I am* because HE IS."

Does all this lofty talk of communion with God discourage you? Do you feel miles away from such experience? Rather than attempting to scale the heights of spiritual ecstasy, are you just hoping to make it through the week? If so, don't be disheartened. Many times we all fail miserably short of the goal. Often our meditations never seem to get past our frustration over the unwashed dishes in the sink or the philosophy exam next week. But the little we have experienced reminds us that at the heart of God is the desire to give and to forgive, and we are encouraged to go deeper in and higher up.

The prayer of listening. As we experience the unifying grace of centering down and the liberating grace of beholding the Lord, we are ushered into a third step in meditative prayer, which is the prayer of listening. We have put away all obstacles of the heart, all scheming of the mind, all vacillations of the will. Divine graces of love and adoration wash over us like ocean waves. And as this is happening, we experience an inward attentiveness to divine motions. At the center of our being we are hushed. The experience is more profound than mere silence or lack of words. There is stillness to be sure, but it is a listening stillness. We feel more alive, more active, than we ever do when our minds are askew with muchness and manyness. Something deep inside has been awakened and brought to attention. Our spirit is on tiptoe, alert and listening.

On the Mount of Transfiguration the words of the Lord came out of the overshadowing cloud saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him" (Mt 17:5). And so we listen, really listen. We do not do violence to our rational faculties, but we listen with more than the mind. We bring the mind into the heart so that we can listen with the whole being.

François Fénelon said, "Be silent, and listen to God. Let your heart be in such a state of preparation that his Spirit may impress upon you such virtues as will please him. Let all within you listen to him. This silence of all outward and earthly affection and of human thoughts within us is essential if we are to hear his voice." As I have noted before, this listening does indeed involve a hushing of all "outward and earthly affection." St. John of the Cross used the graphic phrase "my house being now all stilled." In that single line he helps us see the importance of quieting all physical, emotional and psychological senses.

As we wait before the Lord, graciously we are given a teachable spirit. I say "graciously" because without a teachable spirit any word of the Lord which may come to guide us into truth will only serve to harden our hearts. We will resist any and all instruction unelss we are docile. But if we are truly willing and obedient, the teaching of the Lord is life and light.

The goal, of course, is to bring this stance of listening prayer into the course of daily experience. Throughout all life's motions—balancing the checkbook, vacuuming the floor, visiting with neighbors or business associates—there can be an inward attentiveness to the divine Whisper. The great masters of the interior life are overwhelmingly uniform in their witness to this reality. This is represented so well in the famous words of Brother Lawrence, "The time of business does not with me differ from the time of prayer; and in the noise and clatter of my kitchen, while several persons are at the same time calling for different things, I possess God in as great tranquillity as if I were upon my knees at the blessed sacrament." We bring the portable sanctuary into daily life.

To describe our movement into meditative prayer as steps may be misleading. The word may imply something a little too clear-cut, as if each step could be sharply distinguished from the others. Such, however, is not the case. All these movements interrelate and often splash over into each other. It is a living experience we are describing and, like all living experiences, cannot be defined too rigidly. The Lord is the Creator of infinite variety, and at times he may turn our little steps into one giant leap or teach us to skip or hop or run or even stand still. In all things and at all times we are to obey him.

Reading with the Heart

One of the chief aids to meditative prayer is what is often called the *lectio divina*, or "divine reading." It is a kind of meditative spiritual reading in which the mind and heart are drawn into the love and goodness of God. Henri Nouwen recently showed me a lovely picture hanging on his apartment wall. It depicted an individual holding an open Bible, but the person's eyes were lifted upward. The idea is that in *lectio divina* we are doing more than reading words, we are listening with our heart to the Holy within. We are pondering all things in our heart as Mary did. We are entering into the reality of which the words speak, rather than merely analyzing them.

It goes without saying that Holy Scripture is the first and purest source of *lectio divina*. Suppose we want to meditate upon Jesus' staggering statement, "My peace I give to you" (Jn 14:27). Normally we would study the context of the statement—who said it, when it was said, the teaching surrounding it. We might try to reconstruct the upper-room scene. We might consider the cost at which our sacrificial Lamb is able to offer us peace. We might even resolve to face a difficult encounter with our employer or with a professor in a peaceful manner. And all these things are good to do, but note how in each case we are scrutinizing rather than entering into the experience.

In *lectio divina*, however, we are initiated into the reality of which the passage speaks. We brood on the truth that he is now filling us with his peace. The heart, the mind and the spirit are awakened to his inflowing peace. We sense all motions of fear stilled and overcome by "power and love and self-control" (2 Tim 1:7). Rather than dissecting peace we are entering into it. We are enveloped, absorbed, gathered into his peace. And the wonderful thing about such an experience is that the self is quite forgotten.

We are no longer worried about how we can make ourselves more at peace, for we are attending to the impregnation of peace in our hearts. No longer do we laboriously think up ways to act peacefully, for acts of peace spring spontaneously from within.

So many passages of Scripture provide a touchstone for meditative prayer: "Abide in my love." "I am the good shepherd." "Rejoice in the Lord always." In each case we are seeking to discover the Lord near us and longing to encounter his presence.

While we always want to affirm the centrality of Scripture, *lectio divina* includes more than the Bible. There are the lives of the saints and the writings which have proceeded from their profound experience of God. Humbly we read these writings because we know that God has spoken in the past. We read Augustine's *Confessions* and A. W. Tozer's *The Pursuit of God*, St. Teresa of Avila's *Interior Castle* and Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *The Cost of Discipleship* because we know that they walked with God, and we can learn from their experience. It is no accident that the rule of St. Benedict made *lectio divina* an integral part of daily life. This prayerful reading, as we might call it, edifies us and strengthens us. Whether we are reading about St. Francis of Assisi or Watchman Nee of China, we are encouraged in the life of faith.

Seven Practical Problems

Over the years I have noticed that several practical concerns always seem to surface when we consider implementing meditation.

By far the most commonly asked question is what to do about a wandering mind. This no doubt reflects the fracturedness of modern society. We are bombarded by so many stimuli and our schedules are piled so high with commitments that the moment we seek to enter the creative silences every demand screams for attention. We have noisy hearts. We begin to deal with a wandering mind by understanding that the inner clatter is telling us something about our own distractedness, and it is not wrong to give the whole duration of our meditation to learning about our inner chaos. Also, I have often found it helpful to keep a things-to-do pad with me and simply jot down the tasks that are vying for my attention until they have all surfaced. Beyond this, we need at times to gently but firmly speak the word of peace to our racing mind and so instruct it into a more disciplined way. Finally, if one particular matter seems to be repeatedly intruding into our meditation, we may want to ask God if he wants to teach us something through the intrusion; that is, befriend the intruder by making *it* the object of our meditation.

A second and closely related question concerns the problem of falling asleep. It is a tragedy that so many of us live with the emotional spring wound so tightly that the moment we begin to relieve the tension, sleep overtakes us. The ultimate answer to this problem is to learn better how to get in touch with our bodies and our emotions. We need to learn that fully alert and fully relaxed are completely compatible states. I find, however, that most of us cannot learn this in an instant. And so I would counsel you that if at times you find yourself falling asleep when you are trying to meditate, rather than chide and condemn yourself you accept the sleep gratefully, for no doubt you need it. And you can invite the Lord to teach you and minister to your spirit while you sleep. In time you will discover that the problem will recede into the background.

A third major concern is the fear of spiritual influences that are not of God. It is a good fear to have, for Scripture is quite clear that there are spiritual forces which wage against our soul. But the fear does not need to paralyze us, for "greater is he who is in you, than he who is in the world" (1 Jn 4:4 KJV). While evil powers are great, Christ's power is greater still. And so before every experience of meditation I pray this simple prayer of protection: "I surround myself with the light of Christ, I cover myself with his blood, and I seal myself with his cross." I know that when I do this no influence can harm me, whether emotional, physical or spiritual, for I am protected by the strong light of Christ.

A fourth common and practical question relates to the place for meditation. To this I would like to make three observations. First, every place is sacred in the Lord, and we need to know that wherever we are *is* holy ground. We are a portable sanctuary and by the power of God sanctify all places. My second observation is, however, a bit antithetical to the first, for most of us find certain places more conducive to meditative prayer than others. We do well to find a place of beauty that is quiet, comfortable and free from emotional and physical distractions. With a little creativity most of us can arrange such a place (and space) with minimal effort. Third, I have discovered that certain activities are particularly conducive to meditative prayer. Swimming and jogging are singularly appropriate for this interior work. A brisk walk is often enhanced by whispering the Jesus Prayer ("Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me") in tune to your stride. Some have found gardening a happy time to know "the LORD, who made heaven and earth" (Ps 124:8). Recently I have been enjoying periods of meditation while riding the bus; while it takes a little practice to disregard the ordinary commotion, it soon becomes a wonderful place of solitude.

A fifth question which often surfaces has to do with the length of a meditation. For the most part this is a matter of one's past experience and internal readiness. Some have lived so frantically that five or ten minutes of quietness stretches them to the limit. But in time thirty to forty minutes should feel comfortable. I would not recommend longer than one hour at any given time. Let your own needs and abilities determine your schedule. It is better to take small portions and digest them fully than to attempt to gorge yourself and get indigestion from it. I have often found it most helpful to have a longer meditation on Monday to begin the week (say thirty to forty minutes), followed by shorter morning meditations for the rest of the week (maybe fifteen to twenty minutes) and sprinkled through with brief centering meditations (no more than five minutes).

A sixth question asks what time is best for meditation. The answer to that varies from person to person and often is different for any individual at different points in his or her life. For example, in my high-school years the morning hour was especially valuable; as a college student a free hour just before lunch met my needs better; in graduate school less frequent but more extended periods were most helpful; and in more recent years the morning time again seems best. You will find your own rhythm. Find the time when your energy level is at its peak and give that, the best of your day, to this sacred work.

The seventh questions ask about posture. Again the answer lies in what fits best for you, with this one qualification. Most of us fail to understand how helpful the body can be in spiritual work. For example, if we feel particularly distracted and out of touch with spiritual things, a consciously chosen posture of kneeling can help call the inner spirit to attention. The hands outstretched or placed on the knees palms up gently nudges the inner mind into a stance of receptivity. Slouching telegraphs inattention; sitting upright telegraphs alertness. I suggest sitting in a comfortable but straight chair with the back correctly positioned and both feet flat on the ground. Richard Rolle said that in "sitting I am most at rest, and my heart most upward."

The Wellspring of Meditation

May I call us all to the adventure of the inner sanctuary of the soul. Our world desperately needs people who have dared to explore the interior depths and can therefore lead us into richer ways of living. The Japanese Christian Toyohiko Kagawa invites each of us to experience deeply the One who offers living water: "Those who draw water from the wellspring of meditation know that God dwells close to their hearts. For those who wish to discover the quietude of old amid the hustle and bustle of today's machine civilization, there is no way save to rediscover this ancient realm of meditation. Since the loss of my eyesight I have been as delighted as if I had found a new wellspring by having arrived at this sacred precinct."

Strategy for Urban Ministry

by Ray Bakke

Broadly speaking, we can classify the over two billion non-Christians of the world in two categories: the geographically distant, unreached peoples, and the culturally distant, unreached peoples.

The *geographically distant* unreached peoples are those who are the legitimate focus of traditional (overseas) missionary efforts. These include the last mountain tribe or jungle village. To reach them requires the bridging of geography. By all accounts, there is still a great need for the traditional foreign mission in todays world. Fortunately, the younger churches of the two-thirds non-western world have picked up this challenge and are organizing their own sending mission agencies. The church and its mission is now a global reality.

The *culturally distant* unreached peoples are those who are not geographically different. They are found in the huge and rapidly growing cities of the world. They live next door to us but remain outside the vision and evangelistic mission of our traditional evangelical churches because they are culturally different from the dominant culture of the congregation. They will not be reached for Jesus Christ unless the existing church becomes multicultural by intention, or unless "user-friendly" churches are started by and for them.

The Demographic Significance of Cities

Most large cities of the world will double in the next 10-15 years. The 240 World Class Cities (over one million population and with international significance) of December, 1982 will become 500 cities by the year 2000. The world net growth produces two Chicagos every month (one which is Asian). The urbanization and Asianization of the world are twin macro-phenomena of our time.

The institutions and infrastructures of cities are aging, but the median age is dropping. In the USA the median age is above 30, but in third world cities it is usually between 15 and 20. Mexico City, with a population of 18 million, has a median age of 14.2 (meaning there are 9 million babies and kids in that one city), which grows at 6.2% per year, 80,000 a month or one million a year, meaning that two San Franciscos a year are produced within Mexico City alone. Who can fail to see the challenges to the urban churches and mission agencies!

The Structural Significance of Cities

We classify cities in typologies that have mission significance. Chicago, Bombay and San Paulo are industrial cities ("smoke-stack" cities). Washington, New Delhi and Brazilia are administrative cities (the products are power and politics). San Francisco, Rio de Janeiro and Paris are cultural cities (the chief products are fashions, trends or ideas). Los Angeles and New York are commercial cities. Soweto, Jerusalem and Berlin are globally symbolic cities, and cities like Lima or Bangkok, where one-fourth to one-half of the country lives in the one city and combines all the above roles and functions, can be called primate cities. Ministry must look very different in them. For these kinds of reasons, it is probably easier to transfer ministry models or strategies from Chicago to Bombay than to San Francisco or Paris.

Urban neighborhoods can also be classified as Integral, Parochial, Diffuse, Stepping Stone, Transitory or Anomic (Warren & Warren) each having very different structures and communication patterns, implicatory for evangelism and church programming.

Cities are pluralistic in every way, thus challenging and threatening (especially insecure) Christians. Nearly all relationships are secondary rather than primary, as in small towns or rural settings, making efficient communication nearly impossible. Actually surviving in the city requires a tuning out of most reality to avoid the emotional bleeding of a million kaleidoscopic relationships. Existential or event-centered personality types will gravitate to charismatic and liturgically exciting meetings. Relational people will look for house or small churches of high commitment that can serve as surrogate or extended family. Directional people will be challenged by high commitment churches with strong missional task orientation. Some congregations will move toward all three and beyond them to embrace other profiles.

In nearly every urban community you will find:

Business	Politicians
Commercial	Night peoples
Public	Commuters
Ethnic	Middle class
Institutionalized	Upper class
Deviant	Lower class
Derelicts	Under class
Theater	Drop outs
Student	Migrants
International	Immigrants
Professional	Elderly

(taken from *New Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*)

Some people will be in several categories, but these profiles include thousands in most cities, each with cultures or subcultures.

The urban mission of the church is almost as vast as the metroplex itself, and this may surprise most American Christians. The Holy Spirit is altering many old (and generating many new) wineskins for urban ministry.

Some Contemporary Urban Church Models

Models cut across denominational lines so that Pentecostals, Baptists or Catholics may have any number of the following observable models of urban churches defined essentially by forms, structures and functions. Comparing them as models is not unlike comparing a wooden spoon to a blender. There are structural differences to be sure, and there are some things each can do better than the other.

Briefly, the following 18 types or models of churches can be identified in every large city in the USA, and in many large cities abroad:

The Cathedral—the highly visible and symbolic center of church authority, the historic regional church.

The Denominational Mission—a new church development usually the intentional result of a planned strategy.

The Ex-Ethnic Church—a third or fourth generation church of side-street Christians, which while they may not function in the language of the 'old country', still retain cultural ethos in times of transition.

The House Church—the New Testament model which takes on many forms in World Class Cities from organized cells within larger parishes to informal groups of one or more families seeking to express faith relationally. This may develop into an intentional community, or may exist only briefly around the influence of a single individual.

The Immigrant Church—a first generation church of port-of-entry internationals where the language, customs and symbols are imported. These churches may be the spiritual 'grandchildren' of missionaries, come home to the countries that sponsored the original mission.

The Intentional Community Church—a contemporary, often single-generational expression of high commitment faith functioning both as a sign of the recovery of an Anabaptist vision, and in psychological response to the hunger of many urban people for a spiritual alternate.

The International Church—serving the temporary expatriot communities.

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The Media Church—where congregations function as 'stage props' for television, radio or educational ministries.

The Migrant Church—this may be a group from the South (within the country) that meets together as aliens in the familiar subculture of back home. Migrant has a double meaning sometimes, in that this church migrates from location to location in the city.

The Multi-Language Cluster Church—often found in transitional neighborhoods, these churches will feature several different language groups meeting separately in one building, or with different levels of interrelationships. Some of these are 'Old Firsts', with huge physical plants and a transcendent ecclesiological vision.

The Old First Church—the historic image church for boulevard Christians of an earlier era, and found at the center of county seat towns as well as major urban centers. These were the 'flagship' congregations for historic denominations.

The New Style Church—the contemporary urban expression of this model might consist of a charismatic, existentially oriented group that stresses a worship style, healing or other experiential expressions of 'body life'. Larger than homes, they may meet in hotel ballrooms, schools, or rented halls.

The Parish Church—the European heritage model of church that functions to minister as chaplain to a neighborhood as much as to the persons within it.

The Sectarian Church—these churches may have some bizarre beliefs or behaviors and are usually urban folk who feel marginalized with or without some justification, both socially and theologically.

The Storefront Church—the rather unique urban expression of a portable congregation which may be a splinter group, the flock of a strong leader or the temporary home of an upwardly mobile congregation.

The Super Church—this is the highly organized, independent, programmatically conglomerate congregation, with strong, usually authoritarian leadership, often competitive, and a compulsive mission desire to grow and reach as many people as possible.

The Task Church—these congregations organize congregational activity into highly sophisticated urban mission projects, and attract activist, usually young professional and well-educated believers with strong commitments to express their faith politically, sociologically, psychologically, liturgically and sometimes vocationally.

The University Chapel—these chapels are the vestigial remains of a medieval curriculum in universities with a religious heritage in which theology functions as the 'given of the sciences' and to integrated (and control) inquiry.

Urban Ministry Strategies

Mission action programs could be called *strategies*, not models. Models are the structures we create to enable strategies to happen. While strategies are often congregational in origin, but equally significant for the city, they may be a specialty of para-church and denominational agencies.

A list of 16 common contemporary urban ministry strategies follows:

Arts Strategies—The ministries of and by the urban artists that use visual, musical and dramatic arts, theatrical or open air events and productions to express and communicate the gospel.

Age Group Strategies—ministries and sometimes specialized organizations that isolate one age group and direct their program expertise to children, youth, or adult sectors, i.e., professional, aged, singles.

Economic Development Strategies—many urban ministry groups that respond to the urban poor go beyond initial relief and disaster programs to develop projects that teach employment skills or provide housing, health, education, food or financial expertise, and respond to ecological or environmental mandates.

Ecumenical Strategies—access to public institutions (jails, schools, hospitals, media) often requires coalitions, as do urban crisis situations where work with local political institutions becomes necessary. Beyond this, many urban ministry groups share evangelism programs, leadership development events, and combined worship at special seasons.

Education Strategies—ministries for alternative child development through universities in church sponsored strategies, and Christian education strategies that are usually church based as well as church sponsored.

Evangelism Strategies—ministries of mass evangelism, student, personal, language or media that presuppose target audiences in the metropolitan area.

Institutional Strategies—ministries that witness to (structurally) and within (interpersonal) hospitals, jails, universities, secondary and professional schools, homes for the aged or other institutionalized groups.

Language Strategies—programs or ministries that reach across culture and language barriers with literature or other media that may be used to create or express the work of new church development also.

Lay Strategies—ministries that seek to identify, equip and empower lay ministries within their vocations and collectively in the city.

Media Strategies—ministries committed to public communication processes in electronic and print media.

New Church Development Strategies—many local churches intentionally plan to multiply new churches, but other churches start by deliberate, para-church development strategies that expand the network of a particular group.

Political Strategies—the city is a political matrix and frequently a corrupt one. Churches often stimulate empowerment models around political issues with religious implications, and sometimes go beyond that to create alternative political structures that are more just.

Recreational Strategies—those ministries that use athletics and athletes in the city.

Relief Strategies—urban disasters are frequent personal and public events. From local church food pantries, clothing banks and shelter care facilities to rather massive church sponsored international caring programs.

Revitalization Strategies—church groups have served as the catalyst for the creation and renewal of neighborhood organizations, but at another level, there are parachurch ministries that exist for the renewal of the church and function prophetically and pastorally to Christians and churches.

Solidarity Strategies—this is a ministry as old as Paul, who took offerings from daughter churches to express solidarity and support for the mother Jerusalem church suffering at the moment. The church is now globally significant and the churches of the city can and do express solidarity on a broad range of concerns with believers in other parts of the world.

As in the discussion of models, this brief delineation of urban church strategies makes no pretense of completeness. Nevertheless, even a cursory glance at the ministries of Christians and churches reveals far more options than most people experience.

The mere existence of models and strategies obviously does not guarantee spiritual health and vitality. Some cities have these models and strategies in place, but are not functioning with vision, compassion, competence, and in the strong name of Jesus Christ. Programs are no substitutes for the Holy Spirit, to be sure, but more than not the signs of the Spirit's presence known by His effects (as per John 3) will be seen in both people and programs.

Which program? Which model or which strategy is right? What is *your* program? Truly, God by His Grace has given us urban ministry resources and pastoral tool kits as large and as significantly diverse as the city itself. Urban ministry involves their discovery and deployment.

Can Evangelicalism Resist Modernity?

by Gary Scott Smith

American Evangelicalism: Conservative Religion and the Quandary of Modernity
by James D. Hunter (Rutgers University Press, 1983, 171 pp., $27.50).

Social scientists have long contended that modernization, the process of economic and social change from a pre-industrial, agrarian society to an industrial, technological society, tends to make traditional religious beliefs less plausible and religious symbols less influential in the social structure and culture. How then, asks James Hunter, can conservative Christianity "survive and even thrive" in modern industrial America? Hunter argues that two factors explain why evangelicals—those who believe the Bible is God's inerrant word, that Christ is divine, and that individuals must accept Jesus as Lord and Savior—have prospered in America in recent years. On the one hand, they have remained relatively isolated from the forces of modernity, and, on the other, they have accommodated their world view, and especially their cultural practices, to modernity. Complaining that evangelicals are frequently stereotyped but rarely understood and that few scholars have seriously studied this movement, Hunter uses the results of the Gallup polls conducted for *Christianity Today* in 1978 and 1979 and recent literature written by evangelicals to analyze this movement.

Hunter insists that the collision of religion and modernity does not simply destroy religion. Rather, out of a sort of bargaining comes "mutual accommodation, mutual permutation, or even symbiotic growth" which occur at both the institutional level and the level of world views. Hunter's analysis, however, frequently contradicts this statement. In *American Evangelicalism* the influence flows only in one direction: from modernity to religion. Religion appears to be an inert substance which reacts and responds but rarely initiates or evokes. Religion is constantly being shaped by, accommodating itself to, modernity but seems to have little effect upon the modern world view or institutional structure.

Drawing upon the work of sociologist Peter Berger, Hunter attempts to show how the processes of rationalization, cultural pluralism and structural pluralism force religious world views to make accommodations. The rationalization process, which rests upon a naturalistic world view, undermines the credibility of religious assumptions about life and the universe and encourages people to see the world in mechanistic terms. Cultural pluralism divides society into subunits with distinct cultural traditions, thus challenging the universality of traditional religious views. Pluralistic societies deprive people of the constant social confirmation they need to sustain their beliefs about ultimate reality. Structural pluralism separates life into public and private spheres. It confines religious symbols and authority to private dimensions of life—church, family, and leisure—while public institutions and structures—politics, economics, education, media, and the like—come to rest upon secular values.

After providing a demographic profile of contemporary evangelicals and assessing their beliefs and practices, Hunter attempts to explain how evangelicals make concessions to rationalization, cultural pluralism, and structural pluralism. Although they have sharply resisted pressures to rationalize their theological doctrines, their world view has become highly formulated and systematized. In Hunter's view, evangelicalism has responded to modernity by "becoming packaged for easy, rapid and strain-free consumption." Both evangelism and spirituality have become highly structured and usually follow very precise methods.

The influence of cultural plurality, Hunter insists, has made contemporary evangelicals more tolerant than their forefathers ever were of conflicting views. Although the doctrinal core of evangelicals' world view remains essentially unchanged, he says, "it has been culturally edited to give it the qualities of sociability and gentility." The more offensive elements of evangelical faith, such as innate evil, sin, the wrath of God and eternal suffering in hell, are not frequently mentioned. Moreover, Hunter contends, most evangelicals today do not defend their faith as superior to other religions on the grounds that it is intellectually more cogent and plausible, but on the grounds that it provides more this-worldly benefits than other religions do.

Structural pluralism has also shaped contemporary evangelical character, Hunter argues. Its pressures to confine religion to the private sphere of life has prompted evangelicals to be more subjective and to emphasize how Christianity helps solve personal problems of worry, tension, depression, and loneliness. In Hunter's judgment, these accommodations have been purchased at a great price. Indeed, he is convinced that evangelicalism is being divested of the "energy and force necessary to sustain it over time."

Hunter concludes, then, that the current evangelical renaissance will be short-lived. Evangelicals have been able to resist modernity thus far chiefly because they are demographically most distant from its most powerful agents: university education, the higher socio-economic classes, urban culture, and the professions. Although evangelicals have been able to retain their doctrinal orthodoxy, their cultural style has become very different from (and implicitly inferior to) that which characterized their forefathers. Disagreeing with Jeremy Rifkin and other more optimistic seers, Hunter maintains that a third Great Awakening is "a virtual sociological, not to mention legal, impossibility under the present conditions of modernity." Hunter predicts that the popular support, socio-political strength, and ideological purity of evangelicalism will all diminish in the future as the pressures of modernity grow and evangelicals are more and more exposed to them.

While Hunter's analysis offers us many helpful insights, it has several weaknesses. The first is methodological. Hunter attempts to assess the emotional, psychological and spiritual development of the average evangelical principally by analyzing books on these subjects by the eight leading evangelical publishing houses. In my judgment, this source is too limited. To discover what the typical evangelical is taught and believes in these areas, is it not necessary to sample sermons of evangelical pastors, to examine major evangelical magazines such as *Christianity Today, Eternity, Moody Monthly,* and *Christian Life* and, even more significantly, to survey the attitudes and behaviors of evangelicals nationwide? Far too often when trying to portray typical evangelical attitudes, Hunter relies on Jerry Falwell, Tim LaHaye or others who speak for the fundamentalist right-wing of evangelicalism.

The second problem is theoretical. Hunter suggests repeatedly that religion, specifically evangelicalism, can do little to affect or alter American society. Secularization seems inevitable and almost irresistible. It is his belief that the forces of modernity will smash everything in their path which makes Hunter pessimistic about evangelicalism's future. Yet, it is possible, as Thomas O'Dea and others have shown, for religious movements such as evangelicalism to modify or even halt the advance of these processes. The recent history of several colleges, businesses, and even individual moral and social practices suggest as much.

Third, Hunter makes no distinction between accommodation and adaptation, between modifying one's message in response to alternative viewpoints and adapting one's message to changing cultural conditions. As cultural pluralism has replaced Protestantism's dominance over American culture, evangelicals obviously have been forced to adjust their cultural style. Throughout the Church's history Christians have sought to make the gospel message relevant to their time and place. Their basic message has remained remarkably stable while the focus and style of its presentation has changed. Yet, Hunter does not allow for a distinction between doctrinal and cultural capitulation and adjustments which allow Christians to speak more appropriately and effectively to their culture.

Finally, in contrasting present day evangelical attitudes and beliefs with those of their forefathers, Hunter tends to portray earlier evangelicals as much more monolithic about issues than they were. In my judgment, he exaggerates their emphasis upon hell, sin, and God's transcendence and minimizes the extent to which they stressed this-worldly benefits of Christian belief, the intimacy believers could enjoy with God, and God's immanence and involvement with His world.

In sum, Hunter's study sheds new and disturbing light upon contemporary American evangelicals. It clearly shows how modernity has modified evangelicalism's message and style in several significant and potentially enervating ways. But Hunter's assumption that religion has little power to resist modernity and reshape culture prevents him from investigating the possibility that evangelicals and the modern secular world have been engaged in a more genuinely mutual relationship.

Hunter's study sheds new and disturbing light upon contemporary American evangelicals.

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Some Recent Contributions To Biblical Linguistics

by Richard J. Erickson

***Analytical Greek New Testament* by Barbara and Timothy Friberg (Baker, 1981, 854 pp., $19.95).**
***Preliminary Analysis* by Arthur Gibson (Blackwell's/St. Martins, 1981, 244 pp., $32.50).**
***A New Testament Greek Morpheme Lexicon* by J. Harold Greenlee (Zondervan, 1983, 333 pp., $10.95).**
***Semantics of New Testament Greek* by Johannes P. Louw (Fortress/Scholars, 1982, 166 pp., $12.95).**

As a source of fresh approaches to the well worked biblical material and as a tool for producing stable and often empirically verifiable data from it, the twin fields of modern linguistic and semantic theory have scarcely begun to be explored. Such basic problem areas as discourse, syntax, and lexicology, as well as the more dependent areas of exegesis and language-teaching and those disciplines which depend in turn on them, all stand to gain from expanding insights into the phenomenon of human speech. Quite apart from so-called structuralist methods of exegesis, the disciplines of structural linguistics and structural semantics have their own more fundamental role to play simply in giving us a clearer understanding of how language works. The better we grasp universal principles of language, as James Barr argued more than twenty years ago, the less susceptible we shall be to errors in our treatments of scripture—a linguistic datum—and the better able we shall be to comprehend its message. It stands to reason.

Among numerous recent publications taking advantage of linguistic and semantic theory in one way or another are the following four, each illustrating a different aspect of the business: discourse analysis and syntax, morphology, logic, and computer-assisted research.

Johannes P. Louw's *Semantics of New Testament Greek* is a stimulating argument for the thesis that semantics is more than the meaning of words, and, indeed, more than the meaning of sentences: "every separate element receives 'real' meaning only within the whole text" (p. 158). The paragraph is the basic unit of semantic analysis, since sentences, the basic units of a paragraph, have their meaning restricted by that of the paragraph; and sentences in turn restrict the meaning of the words with which they are themselves constructed. Thus, the only adequate method of determining the meaning of a word or a sentence in a given usage is to permit the larger context to eliminate the inappropriate alternative possibilities. But this implies (1) a knowledge of semantic principles and (2) skill in analyzing the flow of an argument, i.e., of discourse.

Louw spends the first eight of ten chapters discussing these semantic principles, much as Barr and others have done. His orientation in the somewhat problematic semantic theory of "componential analysis" is evident in the discussion, but his chief point is well taken: viz., we must analyze meanings and the words signifying them rather than words and the meanings they have. For there is no one-to-one relationship between words and meanings, not even within the same language, let alone between languages.

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The implication of this is that context must determine meaning. Hence Louw devotes the last two chapters (more than half the book) to the way sentences restrict word meanings and paragraphs restrict sentence meanings. Working through the examples, in the last chapter especially, exposes one thoroughly to discourse analysis, an exciting and linguistically sound method of determining the structure and meaning of a full text.

While some of the discussion assumes a technical vocabulary, the book is for the most part readable and very useful. Typographical errors, though unusually frequent (and glaring), pose no serious problems.

From discourse-analysis our attention turns to word-analysis (morphology) with J. Harold Greenlee's *A New Testament Greek Morpheme Lexicon.* This very useful publication was born of Greenlee's desire for easily accessible lists of lexical items sharing certain "morphemes and components (prefixes, root words, suffixes, and terminations)." Persons wishing a more sophisticated definition of *morpheme* will not find one provided; and while this deficiency makes no difficulty for the use of the book, it does give the title a slightly ostentatious ring. For what Greenlee has done is "simply" to divide every word listed in Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich-Danker into its component parts, including the "root" words to which each is related. We may say "simply" because it is not a complicated process; but the actual labor represented is near staggering. (Roots for individual words were all traced in Liddell and Scott, sometimes through several steps!)

Once the lexical entries have been analyzed in Part 1, the components are then in Part 2 categorized as prefixes, roots, suffixes and terminations, and indeclinables, and presented alphabetically in four separate lists. Thus, for example, as Greenlee demonstrates in a ten-page preface, if one wishes to investigate whether a given suffix always has the same meaning, a check of that suffix in Part 2 will reveal every word in BAGD containing it. Two or more components with similar meaning can be studied in all their occurrences and compared. In Louw's volume allusion was made to subtle shifts of meaning among the eight compound forms of *dechomai;* Greenlee lists 35 items containing some form of this root word. Fascinating data emerge with respect to accent patterns: of 230 verbal adjectives, 67 have forms for all three genders; twelve of these are oxytones and eleven of these oxytones relate to numerals. These few examples merely hint at the possiblities for using this lexicon. Provided the user does not expect an up-to-date discussion of Greek morphology, he or she will not be disappointed in this tool.

Of an entirely different character is Arthur Gibson's *Biblical Semantic Logic: A Preliminary Analysis.* At such a price, few readers will casually pick this one up at their local bookstore. Neither will it be read casually. In fact for those who are not initiated in logical theory (which includes this reviewer!) a thorough grasp of the book may require several *non*casual readings, in spite of Gibson's assurances in the preface that the work does not presuppose knowledge of formal logic.

In what appears almost to be a mania for brevity, Gibson makes free use of unexplained technical terminology and notions, leaving the lay reader dazed, muddled, and frustrated. "Unexplained" is an overstatement here, but it describes the effect. Gibson frequently refers the reader to a later section of the book for the explanation of some term or concept vital to the argument at hand; or he may give totally impractical aid in a footnote. For example (p. 40), after employing the term "quasi-tautology," he offers the following (typical) note: " 'Quasi-' is here employed along the lines of P. T. Geach's use of the term (*Logic Matters*, pp. 161-5, 206f.)." Now either a knowledge of Geach's work is "presupposed" or the reader is expected to stop reading, go to the library and study Geach himself before proceeding with Gibson.

Nevertheless! Nevertheless, if a person is willing to work and wade and think and reread three or four times, there is much to learn from Gibson and much to profit by. What he wishes to give us is a preliminary application to biblical studies of G. Frege's theory of logical semantics, as interpreted especially be Geach and others (including Wittgenstein). The central core of the theory is that meaning is dependent upon use, and that a strict distinction is to be drawn between sense and reference.

Gibson shows repeatedly that in spite of the powerful effect which J. Barr's criticisms of biblical language studies had nearly a quarter of a century ago, many of the same errors are being committed today, even by scholars who have appreciated Barr and have attempted to follow his lead. The problem has frequently been a failure of logical consistency.

Thus Gibson's book is a brother to Barr's *Semantics* of 1961. Where Barr applied *linguistic* analysis to biblical study, Gibson applies *logical* analysis to biblical linguistics, and with similar negative, critical results. These results, however, can be expected to lead to further refinement of method in the discipline, just as Barr's criticisms did . . . and are yet.

With mixed feelings, then, Gibson's book can be highly recommended as a demanding (and frustrating) exercise in a sort of on-the-job education. Let the buyer beware, you might say, but let the reader stick with it.

Doubtless the most ambitious of the four projects touched on here is Barbara and Timothy Friberg's *Analytical Greek New Testament,* which itself is only the first part of a three-part, six volume research tool, now in the process of publication. A by-product, actually, of Tim Friberg's Ph.D. work in linguistics (University of Minnesota), this contribution to NT studies is an excellent and exciting example of what "computational linguistics," or computer-assisted linguistic research, can offer us.

What the Fribergs have done with the assistance of numerous colleagues is to have assigned every word in the Greek NT (USGNT[3]) a grammatical and (sometimes) discourse-functional "tag," an abbreviated code parsing each lexical item. These tags are printed interlinearly with the text. The parsing itself is in many cases freshly innovative, and an extensive appendix to this first volume explains the underlying grammatical assumptions of the tagging process. It is well worth reading. (Several types of "pronouns," e.g., are recategorized as adjectives, as are adverbs.)

The other two parts of the project will include a two-focus analytical concordance to the Greek NT and an analytical lexicon, both computer-produced. The four-volume concordance will list in concord all occurrences of each individual grammatical form (in the lexical focus) and every occurrence of a form satisfying a given grammatical description or tag (in the grammatical focus). Thus all occurrences of the genitive singular of *hypo-*

mon:ame, e.g., will be listed together, on the one hand; and on the other hand all occurrences of *all* nouns having a tag of N(oun), G(entive), F(eminine), S(ingular) will be grouped together. Even all question-marks are listed in concord! The possibilities for research with this tool are almost limitless. The analytical lexicon will in one volume list every grammatical form or lexical item in the Greek NT and provide a prose description of its various usages. Moreover the entire project will also be available on microfiche and magnetic tape, as well as in printout format for computer searches specially ordered from the University of Minnesota Computer Center.

The *Analytical Greek New Testament* is important in its own right as the database for the other two parts of the project. But it will serve intermediate Greek students as a help to reading the NT text, providing both grammatical parsing on the spot and in many instances (there ought to have been and could have been many more!) indications of a term's function in the flow of discourse, the larger context.

Those interested in a more detailed description of this project may consult the Fribergs' article in the volume *Computing in the Humanities* (eds. P. C. Patton and R. A. Holoien; D. C. Heath, 1981), pp. 15-151.

Obviously, these comments have merely touched on a very few of the items which have been appearing lately in this field of biblical study. It is an encouraging sign that the primary means by which God reveals Himself to us is itself having such attention paid it. Much of our misunderstanding through the centuries, not only of the Word of God but also of each other, can be laid in the lap of an ignorance of the *way* we humans speak.

BOOK REVIEWS

An Eye for An Eye: The Place of Old Testament Ethics Today
by Christopher J. H. Wright (InterVarsity, 1983, 224 pp., $5.95).
Reviewed by Frank Anthony Spina, Professor of Old Testament, The School of Religion, Seattle Pacific University

Christopher Wright contends that Old Testament ethics are to be *covenantal* (Abrahamic and Mosaic traditions), *canonical* (the final text is the primary datum) and *comprehensive* (all texts are relevant and to be applied paradigmatically). His theoretical basis is further elucidated by the drawing of an "ethical triangle." The apex angle is *theology*, which involves who God is and what He has done. Starting from this premise leads to the conclusion that Israel's ethical behavior is a response to God's love and grace. Divine activity in Israel's behalf supplies the motivation for obedience—gospel precedes law. One of the base angles is *social*, which has to do with God's intention to constitute Israel as a nation. Israel's distinctiveness is to be found in every sphere, not only the religious one. Israel as a social organism then serves as a paradigm for contemporary ethical discussions. The other base angle is *economics*, logical consciousness. As a theological conception, the land was the impetus for a variety of theological and ethical emphases in Israel, from sabbath observance to leaving fields for gleaning. For Israel the land was much more than a geographical locale.

With the "ethical triangle" as his framework, Wright then discusses the principle ethical themes of the Old Testament: economics, politics, righteousness and justice, law and legal systems, society and culture, and personal ethics. This treatment requires more than citing verses appropriate to a given topic; instead, each subject is shown to be derivative of the ideas contained in the "ethical triangle" and is then worked out in terms of the impulses, guidelines and principles which emerge from the text. The Old Testament thus provides an interpretive context in which the ethical choices for the community of faith are laid out.

Wright should be commended for making biblical ethics a function of biblical theology, for insisting on a comprehensive application of the Old Testament, for emphasizing the paradigmatic role of the biblical text, and for pointing out that Old Testament "law" is not the negative thing most Christians think it is but rather a response to God's gracious initiatives. Gospel precedes law as much in the Old as in the New Testament.

This book is worth reading and could be used with profit by college and seminary students, as well as by laity and pastors. But there are some questions which can be raised. Are the *canonical* Israel and the *historical* Israel synonymous? The attempt to wed "canon criticism" and history as presently practiced in the guild requires more effort than is evidenced in this book. Leaving aside the issue of the apparent difference between the Israel of history and the Israel of the canon, at least Wright should address himself to those who argue that the canon actually relativizes some traditions which were paramount for the historical Israel. For example, the conquest of the land and the monarchy are outside of Torah in the canon, but were doubtless part of Israel's quintessential Tradition in the historical periods. Thus, the land and the *canonical* Israel have a different relationship from the land and the *historical* Israel (which went out of existence without the land and the monarchy). Also, given Wright's insistence on the broad theoretical framework of biblical ethics and his focus on the paradigmatic, analogical and typological (the interpreter decides which) applications of the Old Testament, it would have been helpful to know whether the author believes such an approach requires a fundamentally different understanding of authority. For many Evangelicals, authority means a specific, final, irrefutable answer to a particular (ethical or theological) problem. Wright seems to advocate a somewhat more open-ended system, but does not indicate expect by implication how this relates to more traditional conceptions of authority.

Tensions in Contemporary Theology
second edition, edited by Stanley N. Gundry and Alan F. Johnson (Baker, 1983, 478 pp., $12.95). Reviewed by Clark H. Pinnock, Professor of Theology, McMaster Divinity College.

I had read this book when it first came out in 1976, and realized how good it was then. Having read the second edition, I give it an even higher rating than before. The original material is exceedingly solid, while there has been added a magnificent 100 page section by Harvie Conn discussing liberation theologies. Along with P. E. Hughes, editor of *Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology* (1966), the only book comparable to this one, *Tensions in Contemporary Theology* symbolizes the entry of evangelical systematic theology into the wider discussion. It's out of the ghetto into the debate. The best thing for me to do is to tell the reader what's available in this large but reasonably priced volume.

There are ten chapters ranging in length from 30 to 70 pages. Conn's was so long that they had to divide it up into two chapters! Ramm and Grounds have written the first two chapters which are designed to introduce us to theology in the 60's and 70's by explaining how we got there. Ramm is sketchy, but Grounds really did his homework, and gives us a good run-down on several pacesetters like Tillich and Bonhoeffer. The chapter by Stan Obitts, philosophy professor at Westmont College, is a little different from the rest, in that he takes on the wide-ranging discussion about religious language rather than a school of theology per se, and in effect suggests how evangelicals can try to resolve it. Until this reading I had not appreciated how sound Obitts' remarks and proposals are.

Harold Kuhn, like Obitts not nearly as well known as he should be (neither have rushed to print), conducts a knowledgeable survey of secular theology, including people such as Altizer, Robinson, and Cox, and makes some astute observations. But the book really picks up steam with the chapter by David Scaer, a Lutheran from the Missouri Synod, who sees the theology of hope as successor to death of God theology. In his view, Moltmann denies the objectively existing God of classical theology and metaphysics as much as Altizer does, except Moltmann affirms historical transcendence, the god who may be coming over the next hill of a future revolution. Admittedly this is an unsympathetic reading of what the theology of hope is saying, but it certainly caused me to look twice.

Given Geisler's recent activity in purging the ETS of Robert Gundry and defending creationism in the courts, I suppose one is not supposed to say anything nice about him. But I confess to having a great admiration for him, and his essay here on process theism explains why. I ask myself how many Christian philosophers have or even could lay out the drift of this rarified school of theology, and then have offered an extensive set of searching criticisms of it? The chapter here is Geisler at his best, and Geisler's best is very good indeed. I was even delighted at the way he tried to render classical theism so as to present God as very much in relation to the world, and not as hopeless as the process theologians say. For myself, I do not think immutability can be saved against their critique in the strong sense Geisler wants to defend—or timelessness or total omniscience either, for that matter. I tend to agree with Hartshorne that we need a neo-classical theism, but not one so radically different as the process God. I note that Ron Nash agrees on this too (*The Concept of God*, 1983, p. 22).

David Wells of Gordon-Conwell writes about the new Roman Catholic theology. He knows it very well, having done his doctorate on George Tyrrell, and written *Revolution in Rome* (IVP, 1972). The struggles the Catholics are having parallel closely our own evangelical ferment since they operate out of a classical framework and are trying to respond to modernity as we are. Wells is a good guide to this Roman maze. The only real change to this book in the second edition is this massive piece of description and critique of liberation theology by Harvie Conn. Besides telling us all about the movement and its chief personalities, Conn also agrees with the need to do theology from the standpoint of concern for the poor and the oppressed, which I suppose makes him a liberation theologian too. His criticism is that people too often reduce the salvation of Christ to politics and in effect replace Jesus' vision of the kingdom with Marx's vision of the classless utopia. I missed much reference to the 20th century barbarities performed in Marx's name, and its relevance to this theological idealism. Surely it suggests we take this work with several grains of salt.

The work ends with an essay on the conservative option by Harold O. J. Brown. With Conn's chapter just before it in this edition, it becomes noticeable that the sufferings of the poor are not prominent in the conservative option as Brown presents it. He is more concerned about commending Christian theology, as Carl Henry would, as a presupposed world view which enjoys rational self-consistency. The reader is left wondering how the truth of theology, in the sense of external fit, is to be defended by the evangelicals who are now into apologetics again. It is perhaps fitting that the book should end on a weak note, because evangelical

theology is weak precisely at commending itself as ethically and intellectually superior to the movements it is becoming more proficient at critiquing. Thus the book leaves us more or less where we are, splashing about in the water of contemporary theology and making some good shots, but uncertain in what direction to swim our own marathon. A full recovery of classical theology in contact with the challenges of our day is going to require more wisdom and commitment than we have yet accumulated.

The Oral and Written Gospel: The Hermeneutics of Speaking and Writing in the Synoptic Tradition, Mark, Paul, and Q.
by Werner H. Kelber (Fortress Press, 1983, 272 pp., $22.95). Reviewed by William A. Heth, Th.D. student in NT, Dallas Theological Seminary.

The Oral and Written Gospel is the first rigorous attempt to apply modern studies of oral cultures and a modern hermeneutic of texts to the New Testament tradition. Kelber's central thesis is the "the written gospel is ill accounted for, and in fact misunderstood, as the sum total of oral rules and drives." Put simply, the nature of the medium (oral vs. written) through which the sayings of and stories about Jesus have passed will determine the form and kind of knowledge preserved. It is a mistake to assume, with Bultmann, that the features, forms, content, values, and purposes of oral speech are the same when conveyed through the medium of written texts like our gospels.

In Chapter 1 ("The pre-Canonical Synoptic Transmission") Kelber concisely reviews the theses of the synoptic transmission advanced by Bultmann and Gerhardsson and critiques them in light of a new model of the pre-Markan processes of oral transmission based on current Anglo-American studies in orality. (A good number of the 452 works listed in the two part bibliography concern this research.) Contemporary theorists of orality may differ on the manner and degree of difference between spoken versus written words, but all seem to agree that oral and written compositions come into existence under different circumstances and therefore warrant separate hermenutics. Speech is invariably socialized, and speakers and hearers share in the making and clarifying of the message. An author, in contrast, works in a state of separation from audience, and readers are excluded from the process of composition. It is fundamentally wrong to apply laws derived from written texts to the reconstruction of a predominantly oral synoptic tradition. The concepts of "original form and variants" have no validity in oral life for each speech-act is a unique event. "In orality, *tradition is almost always composition in transmission.*" Chapter 2 ("Mark's Oral Legacy") illustrates the importation of oral forms and conventions into Mark's written gospel. Ten *heroic stories* (healings), three *polarization stories* (exorcisms), six *didactic stories* and six *parabolic stories* are examined. "Mark as Textuality" (chapter 3) discusses how Mark's new technology of writing produced a christology that was in tension with and a replacement of an oral christology. The lining up of formerly autonomous single stories and sayings into a novel unity in a written medium absorbs and transforms what it inherits. It is Kelber's conviction that Mark took to writing not ultimately to continue and preserve, but in order to uproot and transcend oral forms and values he felt would be destructive to the continued authority of Jesus.

In brief, the twelve disciples in Mark's gospel personify the principal oral representatives of Jesus whose task is to imitate the master, to model his words and his life. However, the Markan theme of discipleship failure and misunderstanding suggests the breakdown of the imitation process. Kelber infers from this that oral representatives and oral mechanisms for transmitting traditions have come under criticism. The gospel articulates its own reason for existence (in a life-world generally hostile to written tests; cf. Papis' remarks in Eusebius' *Eccl. Hist.* 3.39.3–4) by dramatizing the breakdown of the mimetic process. Kelber also believes the christs and prophets singled out for condemnation in Mark 13 are identified (cf. vv. 5b–6. 21–22) as the early Christian prophets who perform signs and wonders and make pronouncements in the name and on the authority of Jesus. Mark is objecting to prophets who used the *egō eimi* style of speech to speak as representatives of Jesus and maximize the power of the oral medium to suggest Jesus' very presence and authority. Mark feels these prophets are misrepresenting Jesus and imperiling his status as the living Lord by maintaining his realized presence. Jesus is best safeguarded through the written medium. (I am left with the feeling that most of this reconstruction is the product of Kelber's fertile imagination and would surprise Mark if he were to read it today.)

Chapter 4 ("Orality and Textuality in Paul") develops Paul's fundamentally oral disposition toward language. Paul seems to link the word primarily not with content, but with the effect it has on hearers. Rom. 10:14–17 is the *locus classicus* of the oral hermeneutics of sound, voice, speaking and hearing. As speech, the gospel actualizes the reality of what is being spoken.

Chapter 5 ("Death and Life in the Word of God") argues that the entire form of the gospel—the construction of a pre-resurrectional, christological framework—constitutes a written alternative to the oral metaphysics of presence. The narrative coherence of Mark 14–16 does not hint at an early pre-Markan passion narative: narrative coherence, says Kelber, is intimately connected with textuality. It indicates freedom from restraints of oral formularity and not necessarily historical closeness to the facts narrated. In contrast, Q, the earliest sayings source, does not speak of Jesus' death.

These are only some of the salient points of Kelber's multi-suggestive study. Further research by oral theorists may well suggest that Kelber's distinction between oral and written narratives is much too overdrawn (cf. D. Tannen, "Oral and Literate Strategies in Spoken and Written Narratives," *Language* 58 [1982]: 1–21). Kelber's post-70 dating of Mark will not impress many Bible scholars, nor will his belief that Jesus is merely a charismatic speaker who "risked his message on the oral medium and did not speak with a conscious regard for literary retention." Kelber surely has no regard for the evangelists as reliable traditionists (cf.R.T. France, "The Authenticity of the Sayings of Jesus," in *History, Criticism & Faith*, pp. 100–141 [ed. C. Brown; IVP, 1977]), nor is there any room in his approach for texts like John 14:26; 16:13; Matt. 28:20a. Certainly this will prove to be a controversial book and is valuable for the potential insights one may gain by looking at the New Testament through Kelber's glasses.

Creeds, Councils and Christ
by Gerald Bray (Inter-Varsity Press, 1984, 224 pp., $6.95). Reviewed by Richard A. Muller, Associate Professor of Historical Theology, Fuller Theological Seminary.

This is a useful and nicely written book which should have a salutory impact on religious and theological study in Christian colleges. Bray writes with the conviction that the theological efforts of the early church, as embodied in the creeds of the great ecumenical councils, provide not only a correct presentation of the Christian faith in its central articles concerning the triunity of God and the divine-human person of Christ, but also a doctrinal synthesis of profound relevance to the church today. Bray also realizes that in many parts of the Protestant world today, a sense of the usefulness of history and of the value of theological answers to biblical questions is sadly lacking. All too many students of religion and theology fall into the trap of using academic critique to set aside traditional belief or, on the opposite side of the problem, the trap of ignoring academic theology because they view it as potentially damaging to their beliefs. Bray, quite successfully, moves through the problems of the canon of Scripture, of the uniqueness of the Christian revelation in a world of competing truths, of the establishment of a "rule of faith" in credal documents, of the relationship of church and world, of the triune being of God, and of the church's confession of Christ as Incarnate God, with a view toward showing the relationship of the early church's theological conclusions to the perennial questions of Christian faith.

Bray's book will be of importance both to historical and to systematic theological study. In both cases, it will not supplant standard textbooks either in early church history and doctrine or in systematic theology, but should serve as an adjunct and an aid in stimulating thought and discussion. For example, after briefly discussing modern problems with the unity of the New Testament testimony and the integrity of the New Testament canon, Bray discusses the process of the formation of the canon in the early church as defined by the early church's strong sense of the integrity of the apostolic tradition as passed on through the bishops. He also shows that the early church was able to present the New Testament witness to Christ as a unified faith, not as a series of variant perspectives and divergent theologies. Throughout his presentation, Bray takes care not to gloss over problems raised by history and by contemporary scholarship. Bray then concludes his chapter with a discussion of how a renewed sense of the unity of witness and of the canon of scripture can stimulate and undergird theological formulation today. Hopefully, this book will reach a wide audience of students, enable many to avoid the pitfalls of academic study of religion and the traps of anti-intellectual fideism, and provide many more with a basis for significant theological discussion and spiritual growth.

The Theology of Schleiermacher
by Karl Barth (Eerdmans, 1982, 287 pp., $13.95). Reviewed by Vernard Eller, professor of religion, University of La Verne, California.

Here we get three books for the price of one—and it might even be profitable to read through it three different times, each time as a different book.

The book is Karl Barth's careful and painstaking analysis of the thought of F.D.E. Schleiermacher—this in the form of class lectures delivered in 1923-24. Of course, in the intervening years, Barth followed up his Schleiermacher critique in his Church Dogmatics and elsewhere. Yet this present volume also includes a fleshed-out summary done by Barth in 1968, the year of his death.

For one reading, then, this book constitutes essential source material for students of Barth, Schleiermacher, and/or 19th-century Protestant thought. Any future dissertations or scholarly articles centering upon any of these three topics had better include a goodly number of footnotes referring to this book. Enough said.

In a second reading of much broader application, this book is for anyone presuming to try a hand at Christian polemic (the sort of debate Paul calls "the testing of everything" [1 Thess. 5:21] and "weighing what is said" [I Cor. 14:29], a skill which

should be the practice of all Christian ministers and teachers and of much of the laity). Yet no Christian polemicist could do better than to read Barth-on-Schleiermacher as a demonstration of how polemic is Christianly to be done.

There are two aspects of which Barth is absolutely master: The ultimate purpose of his study is to cut Schleiermacher's thought to ribbons. Yet his first step is to understand and expound Schleiermacher's thought at least as accurately and clearly as Schleiermacher could himself. Before Barth proceeds to his critique, he wants to set up the truest, strongest, best Schleiermacher he can—giving him every possible advantage. When so much of the polemic of our polemical age works just the other way around—drawing the target so as to give us the advantage when it comes to shooting it down—I mean it in all seriousness when I suggest that reading this book would be well worthwhile for no purpose other than to learn the skill of Christian polemics.

The second aspect of Barth's skill lies in his communicating his personal regard for the intellect, honesty, dedication, and personal virtue of the man Schleiermacher—even while finding his theology a complete travesty of the gospel. This ability to maintain the distinction between the human person and that person's ideational system is surely one hallmark of Christian love. And unless Christian polemic maintains itself in Christian love it is not Christian polemic. Barth can teach us how.

The third reading of this book is just as crucial as the second. I know of no other book that could serve any better both to define and to pose the fundamental issue dividing the theological world of our day. Barth certainly is correct in spotting Schleiermacher as the source and founding genius of modern theological liberalism. Just as certainly, Barth is himself our one best modern representative of an intellectually-respectable biblical orthodoxy. Accordingly, "Barth versus Schleiermacher" becomes perhaps our best opportunity to measure liberalism's "religion from below" (theology as the effort of the human mind in formulating and explicating its own religious feelings and experience) against orthodoxy's "religion from above" (theology as the effort of the human mind in understanding a truth it is totally incapable of apprehending on its own but which has been revealed to it from the "wholly other" of God in Jesus Christ).

Even though Schleiermacher argued his liberal thesis 150 years ago and Barth his orthodox rebuttal 60 years ago, the debate is as pertinent as if the League of Women Voters had staged it today—and it is easily more interesting and informative than some they have staged but which I will not identify.

Evolution and the Authority of the Bible
by Nigel M. de S. Cameron (The Paternoster Press, 1983, 123 pp., $4.45).
Is God a Creationist? **ed. by Roland Mushat Frye (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1983, 205 pp., $9.95).**
What Are They Saying About Creation, Christ, The Bible and Science? **by Zachary Hayes, O.F.M. (Paulist Press, 1980, 120 pp., $2.95). Reviewed by Kenneth Watts, Ph.D. student, Fuller Theological Seminary.**

Thoughts about Genesis these days seem to lead inevitably to thoughts about Darwin. One can hardly separate considerations of the doctrine of creation from visions of monkey trials, struggles over the content of textbooks, or implicit accusations of ignorance and stupidity on the one hand and of atheism and subversion on the other.

These three books provide a helpful overview for anyone who would like to understand the various positions better. They also highlight some of the theological issues which often get lost in the current debate.

Cameron's first thesis is that the doctrine of creation is such an important part of the biblical and evangelical world-views that to substitute an evolutionary understanding is to sabotage our theology in general. He argues that an evolutionary point of view not only excludes any idea of an original fall, but also excludes the possibility of connecting natural evil in general to that fall.

He also argues that the *reasons* for allowing a scientific world-view to modify our theology apply as much to the future as to the past. We reject a supernatural creation because the laws of science, projected into the past, only leave room for a natural chain of cause and effect. But those same laws leave no room for a future supernatural intervention such as the second coming.

Cameron's second thesis is that the acceptance of evolutionary theory, both by western culture and by the church, has been extremely uncritical. This he attributes to the fact that evolutionary theory has provided a working world-view for our secular culture. In line with this, he includes as an appendix an article by a biochemist at the University of Glasgow arguing in favor of a creationist interpretation of the fossil evidence, and—on the basis of information theory—against random changes leading to more complex organisms.

Due to an unfortunate tendency to oversimplify some rather complex issues (e.g., the nature of inspiration) this book may turn off some readers' interests too easily. But Cameron raises some important questions about the relationship between science and theology.

On the other side of the fence is the collection edited by Frye and subtitled *The Religious Case Against Creation Science*. The book is divided into four parts. The first focuses on the psychological roots of the conflict on both sides, the second on arguments against creationism, and the third on the possibility of accepting a Christian and a scientific world-view simultaneously. The fourth presents a Roman Catholic, a Jewish, and a Protestant perspective on the issues.

This anthology suffers somewhat from the fact that it misrepresents itself. Both the subtitle and Frye's introductory essay claim that the book will focus on the *religious* case against creationism, but in fact the contributors—roughly half of whom are scientists—spend at least as much time on scientific arguments. In several cases there appears to be a misunderstanding or ignorance of what creationists are actually saying.

However, if the book is taken for what it is rather than what it claims to be it is a valuable contribution, not only to the debate over creation, but to the entire question of the relationship between science and theology. Some of the essays, particularly those by Hyers and Gilkey, offer valuable insights into the theological issues. And while those by scientists tend to be naive theologically, they are helpful from their own perspective.

The third book, written from a Roman Catholic viewpoint, provides an interesting counterpoint to Cameron and Frye. Like Frye and his contributors, Hayes rejects a strictly historical understanding of creation. However, like Cameron, he is aware that there are deep theological implications to this—especially in eschatology and the doctrine of original sin.

He attempts to resolve these dififculties by distinguishing between the subject matters of science, philosophy, and theology, which he identifies as nature, metaphysics, and the meaning of human life, respectively. Thus, he would separate the theological truths about sin in passages like Genesis three or Romans five from the story which communicates them. Likewise, he sees eschatology as expressed in highly symbolic language to be fulfilled in a state that transcends our historical experience. He argues that future theology should follow the example of the past by reinterpreting theological truths in terms of a modern scientific world-view.

Hayes' position is both informed and consistent. On the other hand, he relegates the second coming to a state outside of history, and it is not clear what his approach would imply about the historicity of other supernatural interventions—for example, Jesus' resurrection. By separating theology from the realms of science *and* metaphysics, he leaves it with very little territory of its own.

Each of the books are valuable in their own right. Read together, they provide an unusual insight into the theology and the psychology of the current debate about creation.

The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology
edited by Alan Richardson and John Bowden (Westminster, 1983, 614 pp., $24.95). Reviewed by Colin Brown, Professor of Systematic Theology, Fuller Theological Seminary.

Since the late 1950s students of theology have been blessed with a steady stream of reference books giving them ready access to a vast amount of information unimagined by previous generations. 1957 saw the publication of *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, edited by F. L. Cross. It was magisterial and authoritative. It freely used Latin, German and French. Its bibliographies referred its readers to standard works in the major European languages. Twelve years later it was followed by *A Dictionary of Christian Theology*, edited by Alan Richardson.

Richardson's work was not exactly a poor man's version of Cross. Admittedly the bibliographies were almost cut to the bone. Neither the bibliographies nor the articles relieved the serious student from having to consult Cross. But in some instances they were more up-to-date. Some of the biographical entries did little more than give dates and state their subjects' interest in the broadest of broad terms. Nevertheless, Richardson's *Dictionary* was a useful standby. It provided the student, minister and teacher with a means of ready reference to people, ideas and movements in a slim, elegant volume.

Half a generation has passed. Cross and Richardson are dead, and their respective dictionaries have been reissued under new editors. The second edition of *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* appeared in 1974 under the editorship of E. A. Livingstone. Its pages were increased from 1492 to 1518. The bibliographies were updated, but the new material had to do mainly with ecumenical and ecclesiastical affairs, especially Vatican II and its aftermath. Ninety percent of the original material survived.

No such fate has befallen Richardson's work. The book is no longer slim. The original 364 pages have been expanded to 614. The circle of contributers has also been enlarged. But a great deal has disappeared. The biographies have been axed. Those who want such information are referred to a forthcoming companion volume entitled *Who's Who in Theology*. In the meantime they have to make do with a four-page index of names which crop up in the various entries.

The new joint-editor has refocused the scope of the dictionary. He confesses that Richardson "would certainly have disapproved of a good deal of what has gone into this revised dictionary." He sees the earlier work as affected by concerns that were "retrospective and obsolescent": the aftermath of the biblical theology movement whose weaknesses had already become evident; the last stages of a German theology represented by Barth and Bultmann, "which has since proved to have

less and less to offer," and a preoccupation with the "secular Christianity" of the sixties which was parasitic on the prosperity and irresponsibility of the Western world. Bowden sees a need to pay more attention to pluralism in multi-cultural societies, political theology, doctrinal criticism, psychology and sociology.

Some of the articles remain much as they were. Bowden's original contribution on "The Jesus of History" reappears as "Jesus" with only minor changes. But others have disappeared without trace. In the first edition those who wanted to learn about the "Imago Dei" were referred to "Man, Doctrine of." But "Man" together with the "Image of God" has dropped into oblivion. On the other hand, the brief paragraph on "Martyr: has been expanded to nearly two pages. "Mass" has been dropped, but room has been made for over four pages on "Marxism" and "Marxist Theology." There are new articles on "Hegelianism" and "Existentialism," but there is no entry on Kantianism.

In all this there is loss and gain. The value of the work lies in its ability to spell out issues and convey in "layman's language" the state of current discussion on a wide range of theological questions. As a bonus it throws in minimal but up-to-date bibliographies which represent the state of the art. It is a boon in helping students and non-specialists to find their way around the intricacies of subjects such as "Analytic Philosophy," "Arianism," "Gnosticism," "Hermeneutics," and "Process Theology." But it is not a dictionary of biblical theology. The articles on "New Testament Theology" and "Old Testament Theology" are not accounts of the content of the respective theologies but reviews of rival methodologies. It would have been more accurate if the article on "Jesus" had retained its former title, for it is not an article on Jesus but on the quest of the historical Jesus.

Although biblical exegesis plays a part in the articles on "Covenant," "Justification" and "Virginal Conception of Jesus" (to name three examples), biblical theology falls largely outside the scope of the dictionary. To a lesser extent this is also true of historical theology. There are entries on "Arminianism," "Calvinism, Calvin" and "Roman Catholic Theology," but the reader looks in vain for "Dort," "Westminster Catechisms and Confession" and "Rome, Roman Catholicism" (all of which appeared in the first edition). Presumably such items were deemed to belong to the province of church history rather than theology proper.

The Westminster Dictionary for Christian Theology is valuable for what it does. But, despite its size, it leaves many things undone. If I had had it in my student days, I would have found it very useful. As a teacher and researcher I have no doubt that I shall find it very useful in the days to come. But it is not an alternative to *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*. The downplaying of biblical and historical information and the deliberate omission of entries dealing with individual thinkers and theologians mean that the student will have to buy at least one other reference work in order to fill these gaps. It poses the question of whether, for those on a limited budget, this is their best buy.

John Wesley's Message for Today
by Steve Harper (Zondervan, 1983, 140 pp.).
Practical Divinity: Theology in the Wesleyan Tradition **by Thomas A. Langford (Abingdon, 1983, 272 pp., $9.95). Reviewed by Rev. J. Mark Hendricks, graduate student, Christ Church, Oxford, England.**

In recent years there has been a renewed interest in Wesley studies. Several volumes have appeared which discuss his life and thought, others are concerned with Wesleyan theology in general, and of course there is the long awaited (and very slow in coming) 34 volume *Complete Works*. Steve Harper, assistant professor of "Prayer and Spiritual Life" at Asbury Theological Seminary, has now provided a small, useful, devotional-style exposition of basic Wesleyan theology.

Harper, a graduate of Duke University, writes from squarely within the Methodist tradition. He presents a clear summary of Wesley's life, then covers the cornerstones of Wesleyan theology: original sin, prevenient grace and sanctification. Each chapter concludes with questions for discussion and suggested readings from Wesley for those interested in delving further.

Because of its nature, this is the type of book which would be most useful in introducing new converts to the basic Wesleyan message, or helping younger students better understand their Methodist heritage. Those looking for a deeper exposition of Wesleyan theology will be disappointed, but that is not the purpose of this book.

Thomas Langford is a professor of systematic theology at Duke University Divinity School. Like Harper, he writes from within the Methodist tradition; he also gives his reader a basic exposition of the fundamental elements in Wesleyan thought. The similarities between the two, however, stop there. Whereas Harper makes the discussion of Wesleyan theology in its classical expression his primary task, Langford uses a similar discussion as the jumping off point for an excursion across two hundred years of Wesleyan theological developments. Langford gives us a broad picture of Wesley's successors and interpreters. Beginning with those who had immediate contact with Wesley, Langford proceeds (often at seemingly breakneck speed) to introduce and discuss the major Methodist figures from the 19th and 20th centuries, covering American and British figures, the Holiness movement, contemporary directions, and leaders within the traditions.

Given the scope of the undertaking, Langford is to be commended. He has done an able job of presenting the development and diversification of theology within Methodism since Wesley's day. For anyone interested in following the path Methodist theology has taken over the last two centuries, or for anyone interested in learning the basic thought of many little known or unjustly neglected Methodist thinkers, this volume is highly recommended.

BOOK COMMENTS

Luther and His Spiritual Legacy
by Jared Wicks, S.J. (Michael Glazier, 1983, 182 pp., $7.95).
***The Luther Legacy: An Introduction to Luther's Life and Thought for Today* by George Wolfgant Forell (Augsburg, 1983, 79 pp., $3.95).**
***Luther the Preacher* by Fred W. Meuser (Augsburg, 1983, 94 pp., $4.50).**

These three volumes are among the wealth of publications which appeared in and around 1983 to mark the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's birth. All are useful. None say anything entirely new.

The most interesting is Wicks' study of Luther's spiritual legacy. Wicks, a Jesuit who teaches at the Gregorian University in Rome, means "spiritual" in the Catholic sense of specifically religious life. Although Wicks feels that Luther gave too little attention to the subordinate human element in conversion, the eucharist, and the interpretation of Scripture, he yet finds great value in Luther's spiritual journey and commends its continuing significance for all Christians. Especially good chapters on Luther's "theology of the cross" and on the major insights of Luther's mature years highlight Wicks' interpretation. An added benefit is the book's basic bibliography which traces the shifting emphases in the Catholic interpretation of Luther. From the polemical denunciations which dominated Catholic historiography into the twentieth century, we have moved to a situation where appreciative books like this are now the norm from Roman Catholics.

Forell's brief study would be a good introduction for adult education classes, particular in Lutheran churches. Briefly, but clearly, Forell, who has long taught at the University of Iowa, tells the story of Luther's theological and religious development. The book is not deep, but it bears the marks of a sure authorial hand.

Meuser, president of Trinity Seminary in Ohio, constructed his book from lectures given in the American Lutheran Church. Like Forell's, the book is short, but clear. It describes Luther's very high evaluation of preaching ("when the preacher speaks, God speaks") and the steps, theological and practical, which he took to promote preaching.

—Mark A. Noll

What are They Saying About the End of the World?
by Zachary Hayes, O.F.M. (Paulist Press, 1983, 73 pp., $3.95).

This short book is well described by its title, which leaves unanswered only one question: Who are they? The answer is: Hans Urs Von Balthasar, Johannes Baptist Metz, Wofhart Pannenberg, Karl Rahner, Joseph (Cardinal) Ratzinger, Michael Schmaus, and a dozen or so other theologians, some well known, some little known, of both Protestant and Catholic persuasions.

Since the book is mainly descriptive, it does not make an original contribution to the literature on eschatology. But Hayes has produced a timely survey of how several modern theologians have treated eschatological matters—one which is of added value because it considers the contributions made by several German and Roman Catholic scholars whose works are little known among Protestants in this country. Further, although Hayes readily concedes that unanimity on the various issues has hardly been reached, his survey is suggestive in so far as it records certain trends. Perhaps the most significant of these is the switch from "physics" to "anthropology." According to Hayes, theologians were once convinced that they could have clear and distinct knowledge about the end of all things, that they could draw from the Bible information as to when and how God would wind things up. But theology today, having learned the symbolic nature of biblical eschatology, is no longer inclined to think of eschatology as detailed data about future events, nor does it attempt to describe what the world to come will be like. Instead the focus is on the final relation between God and his creation and what that means for us today.

So in this sense the content of eschatology has been greatly reduced. And yet, and at the same time, the scope of eschatology has, somewhat paradoxically, been much expanded. Eschatology is no longer the final chapter of dogmatics; rather, eschatological truths cast their light upon the whole of Christian doctrine (witness, for example, Pannenberg's endeavor to define God as "the power of the future"). Among the reasons for the increased attention paid to eschatology and the expansion of its traditional boundaries are (a) the dialogue with Marxism; (b) renewed interest in the structure of human hope in general (E. Bloch); and (c) the demonstration that eschatological expectations permeate the New Testament.

Whether or not one agrees with the direction of Hayes' conclusions, *What are They Saying About the End of the World?* is a handy introduction to an ongoing discussion.

–Dale C. Allison,Jr.

The Love of Jesus and the Love of Neighbor
by Karl Rahner (Crossroad, 1983, 104 pg., $5.95 pb.).

Until his recent death, Karl Rahner was widely recognized as perhaps the most penetrating and significant living theologian of the Roman Catholic Church. This little book, consisting of essays loosely connected to its title, is a nice introduction to Rahner. The book is divided into two parts: "What does it mean to love Jesus?" and "Who are your brother and sister?" Part One is generally an essay in Christology in which Rahner argues for the significance of holding a Chalcedonian view of the unity of God and humanity in Jesus and suggests the spiritual implications of this view that the natures of God and humanity are "unconfused" in Jesus. Part Two is far less intellectually demanding but offers valuable insights into the meaning of neighbor-love in the new world situation of global-interdependence and global intercommunication. Despite the rather difficult and often obscure Part One, this work is rewarding reading both in its concern for the spiritual life and as an example of the tone and direction of some contemporary Roman Catholic theology.

–Thomas D. Kennedy

Christian Faith and Historical Understanding
by Ronald H. Nash (Zondervan, 1984, 174 pp., $5.95).

This book attempts the difficult double task of both introducing and critiquing important ideas. It succeeds remarkably well in a very brief space.

The important ideas it introduces are those surrounding the relationship of Christian faith and modern historical consciousness. The central question here in particular is, In what way should faith be related to historical knowledge of Christ? It discusses the major nineteenth- and twentieth-century views of this relationship, drawing on both historiographers (e.g., Ranke, Dilthey, Collingwood, and Dray) and theologians (e.g., Barth, Pannenberg, and especially Bultmann). Nash helpfully defines the major terms and issues at stake, and argues well for a solution to the problem which evangelicals can endorse.

As well as introducing these ideas, Nash critiques them from his evangelical perspective. Here he does good work, especially in exposing various problems in Bultmann's influential scheme. And he often takes time to point out the positive value of the ideas he critiques.

But the apologist in him does at times rush ahead of the expositor, leaving the reader at a loss as to just how one of his subjects could *possibly* have thought *that*. This marks a failure of historical sympathy, and reduces both the book's appeal to those who are not immediately in agreement with Nash and its usefulness for those who *are* in agreement and could stand exposure to a fuller appreciation of these other points of view.

For the most part, however, the book is careful, fair, and incisive. Read with Van Harvey's *The Historian and the Believer* (Westminster, 1966), it will quickly immerse the student into one of the most crucial debates in modern theology. And it will provide well-informed, soundly-reasoned evangelical answers to several of the central questions in this discussion.

–John G. Stackhouse, Jr.

Religious Belief and Religious Skepticism
by Gary Gutting (University of Notre Dame Press, 1982, 180 pp., $15.95, $9.95 pb.).

This work walks a line between those who find a particular religion rationally compelling on logical or experiential grounds, and those for whom rational justification of belief is either impossible or irrelevant. Religious belief for Gutting is rationally justified, cognitive, and compelling, but the content of such belief is limited to the understanding that there is a good and powerful being concerned about us and encountered through religious experience (in many traditions). A particular tradition's beliefs which exceed that understanding are worth only tentative assent, and should be open to philosophical criticism. Thus Gutting claims to have established a new relationship between faith and skepticism—since religion is a significant human endeavor (like science or art), the philosophical question is not whether religion is true, but whether the practioners "overbelieve" with respect to the essential truth of religion.

The book is well organized and argued, includes an interesting summary of post-Wittgensteinian thought, and a critique of a contemporary restatement of Aquinas on language. But a philosopher and an evangelical must pose the following questions to it: Is it fair to abstract a core of belief from a reported "of God" experience (and call that core rationally justifiable), but discount a core based on historical revelation or tradition? And do all re-

ligions give "of God" experiences the significant weight Gutting finds, especially vis-a-vis scriptures and dogmas?

—Steven Sittig

Reason Within the Bounds of Religion
2nd ed., by Nicholas Wolterstorff (Eerdmans, 1984, 161 pp., $4.95).

In 22 brief chapters, Wolterstorff sets for himself two tasks. In part one he considers the proper way to decide between theories, i.e., a "theory of theorizing." In part two he considers the goal and purpose of theorizing (scholarship), in the light of social needs such as liberation, justice, and shalom.

Part one is a good job of criticizing the "foundationalist" approach to the search for truth. Wolterstorff is correct in arguing that a set of indubitable, noninferential truths is humanly impossible. What is more, there is no indubitable *process* of using such a set of propositions in deciding between various theories. Wolterstorff rightly argues that even the Bible does not give us a set of propositions or a "foundation" for constructing or criticizing theories about the world. The argument against foundationalism is worth the price of the book. Wolterstorff does not opt for relativism, however. He argues that the search for truth involves focusing on one particular theory or model of the "facts." This means that other beliefs, facts, etc. (which later could be doubted) are accepted as "given" in order to weigh or test the theory under consideration. Christian faith does not operate as data or a foundation, but rather as a "control belief" which helps us, in some cases, to decide between alternative theories.

Part two argues that while scholarship, in part, is justified in and for itself, we Christians ought to pursue research and reflection in the light of the needs of our neighbors. We cannot do scholarship in an ivory tower, isolated from the need for social justice.

This is a good book that raises important issues. But it is too short. The arguments are sound, but need to be expanded and detailed. Also, the book is disjointed. I never got the idea of how it all fits together for the author. But as a "programmatic" essay by an evangelical, this book is exceptional. I recommend it.

—Alan Padgett

Renewal and the Powers of Darkness
by Cardinal Leon-Joseph Suenens (Servant Books, 1983, 117 pp., $6.00).

This timely, even providential, book on the church and the mystery of evil comes from the pen and pastoral heart of Cardinal Suenens, a father of the Second Vatican Council and of the charismatic renewal within the Roman Catholic Church. In a very personal tone he writes almost an encyclical to all those in the renewal movement, Catholic and non-Catholic, critically evaluating deliverance prayer and the practice of exorcism from a biblical, theological and psychological perspective. He steers a prudent course between what he calls the extremes of "an immoderate demonology" (admonishing Francis MacNutt at one point) and a reductionistic rationalism. Since his book is designed for stimulating reflection and discussion, he concludes each of his thirteen short chapters with a prayer and questions. Everywhere he emphasizes the victory of Christ over the devil (yes, like C. S. Lewis, Suenens does believe in a "Power of Evil, endowed with intelligence and will, at work in the world"), the freedom and responsibility of each person for his/her sin (no, the Devil does *not* make us do it, *contra* Flip Wilson), and the personal and structural nature of sin. Suenens models the discretion and the deep faith and love to which he calls the whole Church in this excellent book, itself a model of layout and translation (however, note 2 on page 37 should read, "Cf. B. Longergan, *Insight* [London-New York, 1957], p. 666"). And though not his main aim, his book serves as a short course in past-Vatican II theology. Every pastor and theologian has something to learn from *Renewal and the Powers of Darkness.*

—Paul F. Ford

The Word of God in the Ethics of Jacques Ellul
by David W. Gill (The American Theological Library Association and The Scarecrow Press, 1984, 213 pp., $17.50).

In spite of his formidable literary output, the ideas of Jacques Ellul remain relatively obscure to most English speaking Christians. In recent years David Gill has emerged as a zealous voice proclaiming Ellul's significance for Western Christendom. His "point of entry" into the Ellul corpus in this book is the "Word of God" in its threefold form with a particular focus on the Word-in-Scripture. Chapter one is a discussion of this focus in contemporary theological ethics. Chapters two and three consider Ellul's theology as a whole with an emphasis on his formal ethics. In chapters four and five, Gill shows how Ellul combines faithfulness to the Bible with a "hard-nosed" approach to social problems such as technology, violence and politics. The final chapter is a perceptive analysis of weaknesses and possibilities in Ellul's thought. Additional discussion of these issues and less summary and quotation would make this a better book. In any case, Gill's passion for Ellul shines through the book's plodding and repetitive dissertation style. It is useful as it leads the reader to and through Ellul's writings, but is no substitute for them.

—Stephen Crocco

Trinity and Temporality
by John J. O'Donnell (Oxford University Press, 1983, 215 pp., $32.50).

This book is exceedingly well done both in terms of the printer's craft and the author's task. After surveying the traditional doctrine of the Trinity, O'Donnell turns to the question of the radical place that time and history have in modern thought and the way in which this "process" perspective has influenced the understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity. He uses the work of two present-day theologians, Schubert Ogden and Jürgen Moltmann—with a generous sprinkling of Karl Rahner—as furnishing paradigms for creative rethinking of the doctrine. His critical comments are insightful and sometimes incisive. When all is said and done, he is much closer, in his own thinking, to Moltmann than to Ogden. In fact, he sees Ogden's thought, and that of other consistent process theologians, as leading to an entirely different understanding of the Christological question (the question which the early church sought to answer at Nicea and Chalcedon) than is found in Scripture and tradition. As a result, there remains no adequate doctrine of the Trinity. What strictures there are on Moltmann's thought are much milder though not inconsequential. The most serious are his tendency to panentheism, his social understanding of the Trinity that verges on tritheism, and the possibility that when one follows the implications of his thought the Father becomes (as Solle has noted) the "executioner" of the Son at Calvary.

All in all, this book is very imformative concerning theological methodology, especially as it impinges on such issues as ontology and history.

—Paul K. Jewett

Just As I Am
by Harvey Cox (Abingdon, 1983, 159 pp., $10.95).

This journey of faith is appearing in a series of such testimonies being edited by Robert A. Raines. Other titles have been provided by Wallis, Ruether, and Mollenkott. The title points back to Harvey Cox' roots in a conservative Baptist church, a tradition which he says he has never abandoned (*Religion in the Secular City*, p. 267). Although I find it hard to swallow that piece of self-analysis, I like the story he tells, and the creative way he tells it. The book goes into his roots in Pennsylvania, his experiences in Eastern Europe, his residency in Roxbury, and his present enthusiasm for liberation theology. The writer makes use of a variety of literary modes (a letter, an interview, some fictional documentation) and draws the reader into his faith journey effectively.

In response to the book, I find myself wondering how Cox could think his journey of faith was in continuity with his evangelical beginnings. From reading all his work I can only think it is a journey away from faith. Does he forget that we are accepted because the blood of Christ was shed for us (as the hymn of this title has it) and that this is far from what Tillich and apparently Cox have in mind? And what about his view that the metaphysical God is dead, and only the God of historical transcendence lives? (*On Not Leaving it to the Snake*, pp. 5–11). That sounds a lot like atheism to my ears. And according to his latest book (*Religion in the Secular City*), what matters is that Christians should support revolutionary politics and the nuclear freeze (read disarm the West), and if popular superstition like belief in the Virgin of Guadaloupe helps us do it, so much the better.

My hope would be that Cox should return to the religion of his youth and of his favorite hymn before he signs off.

—Clark H. Pinnock

God, Action, and Embodiment
by Thomas F. Tracy (Eerdmans, 1984, 184 pp., $11.95).

This book continues the discussion of how one might understand God as the possessor of attributes of perfection and, at the same time, as personally active in the world. In order to break this dilemma, the author takes a course that borrows elements from classical Thomist theology and process thought. In reference to the former, Tracy believes that a concept of the perfections of God as the perfection of being renders God inaccessible to us because we are able to comprehend only particular instances of being, not Being-itself. On the other hand, he finds the process idea of God's dependence on the world unacceptable. The alternative offered by the author is an understanding of God as the perfection of agency. This allows for such critical doctrines as God's creative ability, omnipotence, unity, and independence while also leaving room for His involvement in the world.

Tracy recognizes that neither the classical theologian nor the process theologian is likely to be satisfied with this proposal. Indeed, many evangelicals will feel that his modifications compromise

such doctrines as the immutability and eternity of God. However, in offering God's agency as a point of departure, this book presents an alternative to the concept of being, which has been the dominant center of discussion between classical and process theologians. In addition, the author's discussion of human agency, of which the major portion of the book is comprised, offers a helpful examination of the unity and action of the person.

–Steve Wilkens

Jewish and Pauline Studies
by W. D. Davies (Fortress, 1984, 432 pp., $29.95).
***Jesus and the World of Judaism*, by Geza Vermes (Fortress, 1984, 224 pp., $10.95).**
***Meanings: The Bible as Document and as Guide* by Krister Stendahl (Fortress, 1984, 240 pp., $14.95).**
Reviewed by Scot McKnight, Adjunct Professor of New Testament, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

Fortress has provided students of the New Testament with a collection of essays by three influential scholars. W. D. Davies presents his essays in Judaica, Pauline studies, and New Testament miscellanea. Known for his exceptional volume, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, Davies offers some of his technical studies which clarify especially Paul's knotty relationship to the Torah, both Old Testament and Rabbinic. This volume, though pre-E.P. Sanders at places, will provide a useful vantage point for surveying the canvas of Paul and the Law as well as a convenient sample of a dominant New Testament scholar.

Geza Vermes' Riddell Memorial Lectures, published in booklet form in Great Britain, are now available in the U.S. in chapters two through four of *Jesus and the World of Judaism*. Most of the remaining essays were originally published in the *Journal of Jewish Studies* and were therefore unavailable to many. Vermes is known for his Jewish understanding of Jesus as a charismatic master. By progressing beyond the actions of Jesus to his teachings (chapters 2-4), Vermes is completing his proposed trilogy on Jesus; the final volume will cover what he calls the transformation of Jesus into Christianity. Of especial interest for students is Vermes' nuanced presentation of the relationships of Jewish sources and the New Testament and how one studies the New Testament in light of these documents (chapters 5-6). These chapters (and the book!) deserve reading by all who desire to interpret the Gospels with historical responsibility.

Finally, it is valuable for students to have before them a collection of articles by Krister Stendahl, former Dean at Harvard Divinity School. An extremely influential essay by Stendahl on Biblical theology has here been reprinted (originally in *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*) and still warrants careful examination. As is known, the author urged that scholars doing New Testament theology stick to the descriptive (what did it mean?) rather than the prescriptive (what does it mean?) task. This volume is unabashedly pluralistic; it nevertheless provides the student with some significant interpretations of several passages.

Pacific People Sing Out Strong
by William L. Coop (Friendship Press, 1982, 92 pp., $4.95).

Most of us "mainlanders" know little about the people of the Pacific Islands, eighty-five percent of whom are Christian. In Coop's collection of essays, Christian leaders of the islands speak for themselves about the beauty, the variety, and the severe problems of their beloved part of the world. This book makes interesting, informative reading for those who are concerned about ministry in this area, as well as for those American Christians who want to understand better the needs and the gifts of our brothers and sisters in these Islands.

–William H. Willimon

BOOK COMMENT CONTRIBUTORS

The following reviewers have contributed book comments in this issue: Dale C. Allison Jr. (Research Associate, Texas Christian University), Stephen Crocco (Dept. of Theology & Religion, Elmhurst College, Illinois), Paul F. Ford (graduate student in systematic theology, Fuller Seminary), Paul Jewett (professor of systematic theology, Fuller Seminary), Thomas D. Kennedy (Dept. of Religion, Hope College, Michigan), Scot McKnight (Adjunct Professor of New Testament, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois), Mark Noll (Professor of History, Wheaton College), Alan Padgett (pastor, United Methodist Church, San Jacinto, CA), Clark Pinnock (professor of theology, McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ontario), Steven Sittig (Ph.D. candidate, Claremont Graduate School), John G. Stackhouse, Jr. (Ph.D. student in church history, University of Chicago Divinity School), Steven Wilkins (graduate student, Fuller Seminary), William H. Willimon (minister to Duke University, Durham, NC).

IFES EUROPEAN CONFERENCE

The International Fellowship of Evangelical Students is sponsoring a European Theological Students' Conference titled, "Relating the Bible To Today," to be held August 17–24, 1985, at Schloss Mittersill, Austria. Speakers include Andrew Kirk, author of Theology Encounters Revolution, and Sven Findeisen, Head of the Spiritual Training Center, Krelingen, Germany.

For an application, write to IFES, 10 College Rd., Harrow, Middsex, United Kingdom.

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BOOK REVIEWS

BOOK COMMENTS

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Reformed Versus Anabaptist Social Strategies: An Inadequate Typology

by John H. Yoder

Some of the striking contours of our time—the arms race, the appearance of Liberation Theology, the increasing marginalization of the church in the North Atlantic nations—have made the Anabaptist tradition look more interesting to many. The difficulty for those in other traditions who wish to learn of this tradition has been finding appropriate situations for dialogue. We are delighted to present one such dialogue here. John Howard Yoder, professor of theology at the University of Notre Dame, has been a leading interpreter of Anabaptist traditions for this generation; Richard Mouw, professor of philosophy at Calvin College, has been one of the few Reformed thinkers who have sought to nurture this particular dialogue. To both of these go our thanks.

I have been invited by the editors of the *TSF Bulletin* to undertake two different and, in fact in a way, contradictory arguments. First, I shall show why the widely used Reformed/Anabaptist typology, despite or maybe because of its wide circulation, is untrue to the facts of the argument. The Reformed/Anabaptist debate does not represent a classical dilemma.

By the term "classical dilemma," I mean that the kind of necessary decision which one can argue is genuinely built into the shape of a problem, so that the logically available options are few; they constantly recur as, through history, Christian thought encounters afresh the same basic questions; and one can show in the logic or the socio-logic of the problem that whenever it arises there is the same necessary choice.

By the nature of the case my objections will be of different kinds. Some are specifically historical, derived from the sixteenth century experience, which the approach I am objecting to takes as a model. (Since sixteenth-century history is my own dissertation field, my skepticism on this subject expresses an affirmation of, not doubt about, the uses of history.) Others relate more to contemporary church politics and caucus policies. Still others are more abstractly logical. Each kind of argument would need to be introduced by documentation, which, in this context, would be too much.

My second task will be to argue as if the typology were fair to the facts, and as if the use made of it by persons affirming a "Reformed" loyalty were to be cogent in rejecting what they call "Anabaptist." I shall seek to disengage from the "typed" debate what the "Reformed" would then need to prove.

The Reformed/Anabaptist Typology: An Historical Challenge

In the present context we may stipulate what elsewhere might need to be documented or exemplified further: the self-understanding of churches in the Reformed tradition begins by naming and rejecting "the Anabaptists." The Belgic Confession is prototypical: "We detest the error of the Anabaptists and other seditious people."[1]

Richard Mouw, in his *Politics and the Biblical Drama*, pp. 93ff., discusses the "principalities and powers" language of the Pauline literature, as the pertinence of those passages and their world view has been brought to the fore by Reformed theologians such as Berkhof, Caird, Barth, van den Heuvel, Visser 't Hooft, and Ellul. In the midst of this intra-Reformed debate, Mouw (*Politics*, pp. 98ff.) moves to my use (*The Politics of Jesus*, pp. 135ff.) of the same Pauline materials. Both Mouw's work and mine claim to be Bible studies. Yet the argument shifts without explanation to the sixteenth century typology.

His description is substantially the same as mine in chapter eight of my *Politics of Jesus*, which is no surprise, since he leans on the same group of Reformed exegetes and theologians I had been citing. But then, just before it gets serious, Mouw warns the reader that there is this Reformed/Anabaptist dialogue, beginning with a division between Hendrik Berkhof (whose work on the subject I first introduced to English readers) and myself. Before the readers can proceed any further the typological barrier must be built: "before looking at some of the details of Yoder's discussion, some note must be taken of the historical setting . . ." I do not grant that anything dealt with in the following pages of my interpretation of Paul and the powers, or Paul and *Haustafeln*, or John of Patmos and historical hope, is specifically "Anabaptist." They are not texts which sixteenth-century Anabaptists used a lot, in this interpretation, and Calvin or Knox did not. Especially the *Haustafeln* have been used with far greater simplicity, clarity, and historical impact in Reformed social thought than ever by Mennonites. I can't really complain if the historical typology keeps Mouw from fairly understanding me on the first go-round; but that he lets a sixteenth-century typology keep him from dealing directly with Paul and John as interpreters of the "Biblical Drama" is too bad. That one unfinished friendly debate shall have to serve as documentation of the relevance of the theme.

If any debate is important, it is a mark of that importance that the two parties differ, at least at the outset, not only in their conclusions but in their understanding of what the debate is about. That is certainly the case here. The difference of views begins with the history. In all their major manifestations, these two theological tendencies arose interlocked with one another. There were many kinds of Anabaptists in the sixteenth century, but the most viable group, the first to initiate adult baptism, and the first to state the view of the state which is later taken as typical, arose in Zwingli's own circle. It first spread rapidly and then survived in the Zurich/Bern/Strasbourg triangle (later expanded to Geneva) which was at the same time the birthplace of Reformed theology. In the Netherlands, the Anabaptists were there first. They were tolerated when William of Orange consolidated a pro-Reformed state structure in the northern Netherlands and abandoned the southern Netherlands to the Spaniards. In the 1640s the consolidation of English Calvinism at Westminster coincided in time with the definition of the Baptist and Quaker alternatives. Thus these two streams or strands are regularly interlocked as neither of them is with other forms of protestantism, Lutheran, Anglican, or later pietists, etc.

In their interlocking naturally, the two streams dealt with their relationship in contradictory ways. The protestant creeds in general do not refer to the other confessions. The Augsburg confession refers to the Roman church only at points of claimed agreement, though it condemns "the Anabaptists" five times. Lutheran confessions do not name Anglicans or Zwinglians. Reformed confessions do not name Anglicans or Lutherans. But they all do name and condemn "the Anabaptists."

Thus, in its creeds, the "Reformed tradition" has a definition of the relationship between the Reformed and Anabaptist types of social ethic. This includes by implication a definition of historical origins, namely, that Anabaptist is something fundamentally different from "The Reformation." It therefore can best be understood by dramatizing and making central the points at which they differ, those points (rejection of the cultural mandate and rejection of the state) being the fulcrum or hub which moves all the rest.

The various sixteenth-century movements which were called "Anabaptist" differed so much among themselves that it is not really proper to speak of them as one movement. They did not respond to the guidance of a single leader or talk a single kind of language. But it was probably true of all of them that they began by considering themselves a part of the wider reformation movement of which Erasmus, Luther, and Zwingli were the major voices. Once those three major figures fell apart, the radicals considered

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themselves as being more with Luther and Zwingli than with Erasmus, since they too had already implicitly if not explicitly broken their ties with medieval Catholic unity, although some of them retained a pre-protestant mystical piety. It was true of almost all of them, although in quite different ways—some apocalyptic, some mystical, some intellectual, some biblicistic—that they claimed to be doing what the official reformers were doing, but more thoroughly and radically, refusing to let themselves be held back by the reticence of the civil authorities, and refusing to leave any agenda untouched in the reformation program.

It clearly spreads the debate too widely to speak of all the various kinds of Anabaptists together, because they radicalized the reformation intention in different directions. Putting them all in one bag was part of the strategy of the official Reformation, in order to be able to condemn them more easily by ascribing to each the vices of all. Yet the fact remains that they all did claim to be carrying the Reformation, properly so-called, to its logical conclusion, not doing something else, and not coming from somewhere else.

To come to the narrower focus of those whom Bullinger called the "general Anabaptists," or whom George Williams calls the "evangelical Anabaptists," the shape of the radicalization can be even more simply shown. The leaders of this movement were literally the pupils of Huldrych Zwingli. They became disappointed with his leadership because he did not live up to his promises and threats. When they went beyond him they used no language against him but what they had learned from him. The most sweeping affirmation that this particular kind of Anabaptism represents a radicalizing of the original language of the Zwinglian Reformation is today made by the late Richard Stauffer, the most respected Calvin scholar of his generation in French speaking Europe.

First, in terms of genetic relationships, Anabaptism in the Upper Rhine Valley is "radicalized Reformation." The Anabaptists were the children of Zwingli. When he disavowed them, they remained in conversation with the reformers of Basel, Schaffhausen, St. Gall, and especially Strasbourg. They were clearly the left wing of the very same movement using the same Bible and the same language, and moving in the same circles.

It is not our present concern, but it confirms the typology, to observe that the same thing happens again and again. In Britain the seventeenth-century radical reformers were not a transplantation of the sixteenth-century Anabaptist movement, but rather both the Baptists and the Quakers arose out of the radicalizing of the Calvinist Puritan movement. Both the concern for proper church order which resulted in origins of the "Particular Baptists" and the concern for a valid inner experience which culminated in Quakerism were the products of radicalized Puritanism much more than of borrowing from he Lollards or the Dutch Mennonites.

The same is the case once more with "Anabaptism" on the American frontier. Although other streams of population flowed into the movement, the source of the Restoration movement was radicalized presbyterianism, in its concern for the proper pattern of church order according to the Bible. As Richard Hughes and I have indicated elsewhere,[2] Anabaptist and Calvinistic understandings of restitution vary precisely at this point. The Calvinists' vision of restitution is more concerned for restoring the details of church order. Campbell was at this point a radicalized Calvinist.

What has been said above in terms of personal and group genetic relationship must also be said on the level of theological drive. In their debates with the official Reformation, the Anabaptists applied the principle of *sola scriptura* not only to the question of soteriology but also to the questions of ecclesiology and social ethics. In those debates, the Reformed reformers said scripture is not to be applied in those areas, because with Constantine and Justinia we have moved beyond the phase of holy history which the New Testament describes.

The Anabaptists applied the principle of *sola fide* not only to justification but also to epistemology; i.e., they called into question their reliance on the notions of the revelation of social ethics through reason and nature, which become all important when one claims that the orders of creation give us more valid guidance in ethics than do the words and the work of Jesus.

Since the reformers were debating among themselves and with Catholicism, they never had to face this problem in their classical self-image; but if one asks what the concept of revelation is that underlies reformed social ethics at the points where it differs from the Anabaptists, one thing becomes clear: a level of trust in reason and in nature is being affirmed which fits poorly with what is said about human reason at other points in the Reformed system.

The Reformed image of the Anabaptist is that of a fanatic wanting to derive all of theology from his denial of the sword. The Anabaptist picture of Reformed theology is of Zwingli's and Bucer's having started out a process of testing everything by Scripture, and then having pulled back from the radical implications of that testing when it was discovered that the post-Constantinian adjustment of the Church to her close symbiosis with the rulers would have to be tested.

Two Perspectives Then and Now

What has been said here in sixteenth-century terms can also be played back, in another key, regarding the present. The Reformed vocabulary and the Reformed thought patterns have largely set the tone for WASP theological culture in our time. This means that any American Mennonite who learns to read has some awareness of the Reformed thought structure. If he thinks theologically he becomes aware of his own position in the encounter with Reformed mainstream thought. This is further fostered by the fact (which I cannot fully explain) that between 1910 and 1970, when North American Mennonite students went off to doctoral study, they tended more often to go to Reformed institutions than to Anglican, Lutheran, secular, Catholic, or Methodist universities. Thus, whether consciously or not, and whether with intellectual independence or alienating subservience, most North American Mennonites understand Reformed thought patterns. In fact, many of them understand an intrinsically Anabaptist or New Testament logic less clearly than they do the Reformed thought patterns of their graduate educational context.[3]

On the other hand, there are no Anabaptist graduate schools to which a Reformed scholar could go; and, if they existed, a Reformed scholar would not go there. The few Reformed thinkers who have some notion of what a conversation with Anabaptist thought would be about are those (like Mouw) who have taken it up with a special sense of the reasons for doing so.

So far I have been making formal observations in order to locate our agenda. Before I proceed to the agenda, I will briefly give other reasons for challenging the usefulness of giving priority to this dichotomy:

A. It leaves out many components of the evangelical coalition: Lutherans, whose concern for the law/gospel dialectic puts this entire debate in another light; pietists, who affirm a spirit/world dualism different both from the Anabaptist faith/unfaith dualism and from the Reformed visions of church/world unity; evangelicals within other denominations, who intentionally have no ecclesiastical shape for a distinctive ethos; Anglicans, Brethren and Bible Church types for whom this entire debate is off the subject. Wes-

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leyans and Adventists have still other handles on the social agenda.

B. Although coalition building is important for "evangelicals," as far as social involvement is concerned, neither the Reformed nor the Anabaptist stance is tied one-to-one to "evangelical" assumptions about biblical authority or regeneration. One can very well be either Reformed or Anabaptist about social involvement and not concerned to prove oneself evangelical.

C. The need to be on record as rejecting "anabaptist separatism" has led some to be less critical of the powers that be than their theology would call for. The non-anabaptist "just war" tradition intends to provide relevant restraint on nationalistic violence; but for how many evangelicals has it done that? Many are more attached to disavowing pacifism than to disciplining nationalism. Therefore, the recent espousal of a "just war pacifism" with regard to nuclear arms by many non-pacifist believers is a striking development.

D. To speak in formal terms, there is a conflict between the systematician's task and the historian's. To use types derived from history without being subject to proving at what points their historical rootedness is verified, mixes two disciplines. The person using types systematically feels responsible to be selectively anachronistic, assuming from that confessed past only those elements still considered relevant. It is hard for any twentieth-century Christian to advocate the control of the church by civil government, the civil repression of religious dissent, or the imposition upon dissenters of the social views of the particular reformer who has the ear of the civil ruler. (These items are in fact what was at stake when in the 1520s the Reformed movement in Zurich divided.) These items are not what the modern Reformed thinker who rejects Anabaptism wants to favor. But the socio-theological type has been divorced from history. The Mennonite, Quaker or Sojourner is not granted the same liberty to disentangle his socio-theological axioms from the empirical options available to his ancestors—or even from the options of other "radicals" who were not his ancestors at all, but to whom the authors of the protestant creeds chose also to attach the label "Anabaptist."

If I reject as improper a picture of polarity between the Reformed and the Anabaptist thought patterns, am I then under the obligation to propose another image? I am not sure that I should; but if I had to, it would begin with an alternative historical scenario, imagining some adaptation of the original Anabaptist picture of a pilgrimage toward reformation which we began together. But then those who made their peace with the state structures solidified in the 1520s, and the doctrinal structures that solidified between 1532 and 1550 simply did not go "all the way" with the Reformation. What this "all the way" would have been, if the less radical "state church" brethren had been willing to go farther, is not identical with what the Anabaptists wound up doing, since the element of separation which was involved in their "going farther" was not of their own will. Not being able to describe the difference between stopping part way and going all the way in terms of the sixteenth-century model of separation as it was forced upon men like Sattler, I suppose the more adequate model would be seen in the British experience.

Some Calvinist thinking permeated the original established Anglican movement, especially in the age of Edward, with the presence of Calvin's own theological father Martin Bucer; but it could not be contained there. It moved into an early Presbyterianism, intrinsically willing to break with the official Episcopal structure, although that break took a long time to be consummated. It went beyond that into Congregationalism, still nourished by the theology and the biblicism of Calvin. Although they "went farther" formally, even then the congregationalists were still Calvinists in their hermeneutic approach, believing that they found in the New Testament a congregational pattern to be applied. Since it had to be applied, and could be applied by the sovereign, it should apply to all Christians in England. Therefore there was nothing separatist about that kind of Independents. All the way to the most independent party in the Westminster parliament, this assumption remains. As Baptists and Quakers pushed biblical radicality to the point of cutting their ties with the civil government, they still took this further step without breaking the momentum or the continuity of their Calvinist identity. They continued to assume and to affirm that there is one proper form which God wants his people to have, and that this form can be known and realized. Since every Christian should adopt this form, to advocate it is not sectarian or schismatic. Thus they continued to agree with Calvin against Luther, for whom all such matters of form are flexible or adiaphora, and against the Catholic views for which the desirable structure is the one which has continued to evolve over the centuries, with the assistance of the powers of this world.

Perhaps a Calvinist or a Lutheran needs, for reasons which can be defined theologically, to be faithful to his founder. The descendants of churches once led by Menno do not.

E. Favoring models from the heroic generation of founder-fathers may seriously skew considerations having to do with continuity, evolution, and necessary mid-course corrections. Both Reformed and Anabaptist tend to decry the development of body/spirit dualisms, sometimes called (with questionable accuracy) "pietism." But maybe some such adjustments are necessary parts of any movement that lives more than fifty years. Might it be intrinsically improper to use *any* first generation model as a base-line for categorizing or for guiding ongoing communities?

F. The issue of scriptural authority is not dealt with in the same way for all who would call themselves Reformed or Anabaptist. Yet many in both camps, and all of them in the sixteenth century, claimed to expositing the test of Scripture. For both, there were issues of hermeneutic method which took priority over and underlay the differences in ethics. We do an injustice to both parties in the dialog when we *then* deal with them first as different social approaches. For the Reformed, all the Bible stood on the same level of authority and usefulness, so Joshua and Josiah were valid models of Christian social responsibility. For the Anabaptists, the movement from the Old Testament to the New was a necessary implication of their Christology and applied to the civil realm as well as to the ritual. For the Reformers, the theologian's task was dependent on the authority and the university-taught rhetorical and linguistic expertise of the rulers. The Anabaptists were ready to entrust the hermeneutic operation to the Holy Spirit operating in the gathered community, with the linguist only one among the gifted members. There were also differences about the hermeneutic authority of the ecumenical councils and the fathers, as to whether the work of Jesus was relevant to the social realm, and as to the knowability of the will of God through "nature" and "reason," etc.

Our model from the British experience gives us a picture of a continuum of reforming initiatives, each standing on the shoulders of the one which went before it. No one of them is intrinsically sectarian, for each step along the way can be taken with the conviction that all true Christians can join in taking it. The congregationalists who argued on the basis of particular biblical texts and models that each local congregation should be formally responsible for its own order were simply carrying to its logical conclusion a doctrine already stated by Luther and Zwingli in 1523. This did not need to mean a break with all other Christians nor even with government, since government (Cromwell) could properly understand its task as being to support that kind of church. In the age of Cromwell and in New England it was obvious that congregationalism did not mean any break with the Christian civil authority.

Thus, no single step of fuller radicality in reformation is intrinsically sectarian. The least we can say about the divisions of 1525 is that Zwingli, who broke off the small-scale conversations and appealed to the civil power, was as responsible for the separation as were those who refused to let the conversation be decided on that level. If that appeal is not to be permitted to stop the conversation, or if the peculiar social situation (as in England) does not permit the civil power to stop the conversation, then the form the

reformation may take (while continuing to become more thorough) must be projected apart from its needing to produce separation within the churches. That is the matter I would like to see apply still today, if Reformed brethren would agree that we are carrying on a conversation within the same league, rather than beginning a priori by their boxing me into a position already rejected by their creeds.

One last cavil before moving to the polarity proper. The very value of holding to a *type* of theology, and of stating it in a confessional document, is perceived differently in the two families. The political function of a confession in the sixteenth century was not separable from its truth claim. That made it unavoidably a virtue that evolution from there on should be conservative. Everyone said "*ecclesia reformata semper reformanda*," but the parameters of the ongoing reformation could not reach past what was already defined. From the other perspective, it is not clear, or at least it would need to be explained for each time and each issue, why trueness to type should be a virtue. Perhaps a Calvinist or a Lutheran needs, for reasons which he can define theologically, to be faithful to his founder. The descendants of churches once led by Menno do not. By the nature of the case the tradition of the sixteenth century is not normative in the free church style. The free church tradition is also a *tradition*, so that guidance is also received from the past. But the *way* that guidance is received is much less firmly structured, and much less concerned for fidelity to any particular father.

Insofar as one particular "father" is recognized in the free church family as exemplary or as more interesting than other predecessors, a recognition which I affirm for Cheltchitski and Fox and Mack no less than for Sattler and more than for Menno, it is I who affirm that congeniality; and I, within my contemporary accountability to contemporary churches, therefore remain free to define the *tertium quid* which makes his witness congenial and interesting to my time and place. I have no commitment to detailed fidelity at those particular points of the view of one of those "fathers" of which Guy de Bres happened particularly to disapprove or to choose to take as typical.

The Typology Challenged

I have stated "from the outside" my doubts about the Reformed/Anabaptist polarity as inherited. Now I move on to test it "from the inside." I now set forth the discrepancy of structure between the two approaches as the typology seems to demand. To do so I shall characterize the Reformed position in the form of those theses which seem to be indispensable for its own coherence (and not to be acceptable from my perspective). It will not work to do it the other way around, by starting with Anabaptist theses, because the Reformed definition of the Anabaptist theses will appear to the

If I understand the Reformed argument on these matters, it is, first, that *the cultural mandate is univocal.*

When I say the cultural mandate is *univocal*, this means there is no serious debate as to the substance of moral obligation. It is only when we can assume everyone knows what is called for that it becomes possible to say that the only debate is whether to do it. Just as long as there are alternate readings of what is called for, then the interlocutor who refuses to do what I interpret to be culturally mandated is not rejecting the mandate as such by my interpretation of its content. The Reformed do not say that the Anabaptists misinterpret the cultural mandate but that they deny it. This only makes sense if that mandate's content is univocally that which the Anabaptist refuses to do. This is very obvious in the classical discussion of this theme by H. Richard Niebuhr. The single sentence in *Christ and Culture* which refers to the Mennonites says that they are opposed to culture *because they operate their own schools.* It would not occur to you to say that Calvinists are opposed to culture because they operate their own schools.[4] To be doing something different about education is still to be doing something about education and not negating it. Even the Old Order Amish, who wish for their children the freedom from the civil obligation to attend *high* schools in the *city*, do this not because they are opposed to education but because they are committed to a different context and content of education, whose total cultural meaning is more coherent with their faith.[5]

Second, one must say that the cultural mandate is *monolithic.* This is my label for the logical procedure which says that to be consistent, one must take the same attitude with regard to every segment of culture. In this way of reasoning, Richard Niebuhr says that Tertullian was inconsistent because on the one hand he rejected Roman imperial violence (thereby against culture), and yet he made very good use of the Latin language (in favor of culture). The common person looking at this argument would say that Tertullian should have the freedom to discriminate within culture, accepting some elements and rejecting others; but it is obvious that Richard Niebuhr considers this to be cheating, since to be consistent one ought to do the whole thing with culture as a whole. According to this understanding of the cultural mandate, it is an offense in logic and perhaps even in morality when the Anabaptist is willing to take more responsibility for some elements of culture than for others. Where I would see ethical selectivity as the essence of responsibility for limited resources in a diaspora situation, my Calvinist brother sees it as a culpable inconsistency.

The third general thesis of the Reformed stance, as I seek to understand it (despite my not being convinced by it), is that *the civil order is the quintessence of the cultural mandate.* The cultural mandate has many dimensions (family, the economy, education, the arts, communication) but they are not all of equal clarity and centrality. The civil order is the one on which the others all depend; the sovereignty of the other spheres is more relative. Both historically and philosophically, both in modern terms and in the sixteenth century, the bearers of the civil responsibility lead the community in all the other realms as well. The other realms have a degree of autonomy which the rulers delegate to them; it is not intrinsic. This is not only the case because rulers in fact do rule. It is by nature or by divine right that the sanctions of which the civil sovereign disposes are properly to be used to reinforce the virtues of the other realms.

This thesis is indispensable to the Reformed position, since it is only at the point of the sword of the civil ruler that there is any difference with the Anabaptist in acceptance of the cultural mandate. Yet the Reformed accuses the Anabaptist of refusing that mandate in toto.

The fourth thesis identifies a still further narrowing: *the sword is the quintessence of the civil order.* Again the argument may be based either on historical realism or on an understanding of the divine mandate. A civil order without the sword is not a better civil order but a defective one. This is to deny in principle the possibility of a progressive minimizing of the violence of the sanctions of the state and a progressive dismantling of the lethal sanctions of the state through considerations of social contract and checks and balances. It denies the vision of peace as the *prima ratio* of government, as held to by Catholicism, by liberalism, or by Karl Barth.

This narrowing is again essential for the logic of the polar debate to stand. If and when the civil order is understood as the implementation of the social contract, as the administration of public welfare, as the dialogical formulation of public policies, or as the execution of policies serving the common weal, there is no controversy. It is only at the point of the sword that classically there is a debate. The discussion is not about democratization, or about socialism as an option in the political economy. Nor is the debate about fraud, cheating, cronyism and classism, lying and defamation, and all other standard human vices which the civil realm shares with the realms of business and the university, but which are not its definition.

Fifth, in making this identification between the sword and the civil order, the Reformed tradition, if I understand it, also *fuses creation and the fall.* This observation is so important that I must return to it later. An unfallen earthly society would certainly need a civil order to make decisions and to apportion tasks and resources. But it would not need a sword. The sword is at the very best the reaction of the fallen order under Providence to the fallenness of its citizens. There is no ground in the biblical doctrine of the fall to argue that the hand that bears the sword or the order that defends itself by the sword is any less fallen than the offender against whom the sword is used. Once again, this thesis is indispensable for the Reformed position. It is only at the point of the sword that the Anabaptists denied the call to share in the administration of the created order. From the beginning they accepted non-combatant

civil duties. Pilgrim Marbeck, the leading thinker of the movement from 1530, earned his living as a civil engineer.

Sixth, it must be assumed that *the sword is available to the believers*. It is meaningless to discuss whether the Christian may properly be a ruler, if that option is practically excluded. Whereas the other axioms thus far identified are logical, this one is empirical, historical, and cultural. It must be possible, in some way deemed legitimate, for the Christian to accede to the possession of the sword, by hereditary royalty or nobility, by majority vote in a democracy, or by a justified revolution. Only when one or more of those is possible is the sword question other than of an hypothetical empty set.

In the early church, as in most of the world through most of history and today, that set is still empty. The Reformed statement of the issue makes "Christendom" assumptions which, if empirically valid sometimes, are on the same grounds inappropriate elsewhere.

This is an issue that needs more attention than it is getting today in the West. Nothing in the written laws keeps a Christian from running for candidacy in a democracy, but in reality there is much to keep a Christian with the substantial moral commitments that any Evangelical makes, from being very likely to be elected very often. The Reformed candidate who takes a position on *any* question (truth-telling, slavery, abortion...) such that he will not get elected, and the Anabaptist who will not get elected because his views concerning government's violence are rejected by the majority, differ only in detail, not in structure. Both are willing to let others run the government (except for those older pre-Cromwell Calvinists who affirmed aristocracy rather than democracy and were themselves aristocrats). The idea that "Anabaptist withdrawal" will abandon government to the bad guys, i.e., to non-believers, is silly. Democracy does this.[6]

The above six points are true by virtue of *a divine act of institution*. A specific divine decree created the institution of government. This is most meaningfully spoken of when the word "institution" is taken literally, in such a way that it would be possible to hypothesize a time (or an eternity) before the event of that institution, just as we can say that the *institution* of the Lord's supper took place at a given time in Jerusalem.

If we exercise our historical imagination, it is quite possible to understand what Christians in the middle ages of the sixteenth century were thinking about when they used such language as this. Even then, we need to ask whether this "institution" should be ascribed to the order of preservation or to some other covenant. What is usually referred to as the institution of civil government is reported in Genesis 9 after the flood rather than after the Fall in chapter 4. Thus, if we were to attempt to take seriously the orthodox Calvinist scheme of a series of covenants, the definition of government for all humankind comes not even right after the Fall but only with Noah. "Creation" then is hardly the word for it.[7]

But not all of us have the historical imagination or the playfulness to attempt to discuss a matter like this in terms borrowed from the seventeenth century. It is anachronistic to replace "institution" with the idea that a need for or inclination toward certain orders is part of human nature, without seriously questioning how much of this can be retrieved and carried over into a more contemporary post-enlightenment historical awareness.

Eighth, all of this information is *known to us by revelation*. But again, the argument is not always clear. Sometimes the revelation in question is the natural revelation accessible to reason. Other times the revelation in question is the special revelation of a few biblical texts on the subject. These two kinds of revelation may be held to coincide completely, or one may be ascribed greater precision or greater generality than the other.

To try to take seriously theses seven and eight in the modern world, we must remember that what is being debated is not whether there is or whether there needs to be social organization, but whether it is the will of God that one nation should fight another or that one man should oppress or destroy another in the name of divine right.

When we look specifically at this question, at least the following limitations to the applicability of these theses must be recorded:

a) Romans 13 affirms the acceptance by the apostolic church of the existence of a *pagan* government in which Christians had no responsible decision-making possibilities or duties. When they logically derived from this observation a duty to be *subject* to government, one may not with legitimate logic draw from their statements a duty to administer government. It could not have been a duty when it was not even a possibility.

b) There is a considerable difference in local situations so that involvement-in-tension in one place, moderate involvement in another, and uninvolved witness in another might all be expressive of the same basic ethical view. When Menno Simons said a Christian can be in government if he does not apply the death penalty, and Michael Sattler said a Christian cannot be in government because it does apply the death penalty, they did not necessarily have different views of Christian ethics. They may have been responding to different experiences of government.

That the Anabaptist reject all concern for the civil order is not a fact of history but rather a defamatory statement in the Reformed confessions. In what other area is the historian still ready to take at face value the description of dissenters as stated by their persecutors? It is true that in circumstances where they had no significant access to such decision making as could change the nature of the civil order, certain Anabaptists did affirm in light of Romans 13 that the civil order, even when it persecuted them, was still within the divine plan and that their participation in it was none the less not desirable. But as I have attempted to demonstrate, that position is not a sweeping generalization but rather the application for a given situation of a broader attitude toward society which is not fundamentally dualistic.

c) The most that the Genesis texts can authorize is punishment of death by death. There is no logical extension of this (in the texts) to cover the use of civil sanctions for any other crime but bloodshed. Nor does it determine who is the legitimate claimant to that punitive function: it assumes legitimacy but does not adjudicate it. Even less could it authorize war beyond the limits of a given sovereign's territory.

Creation, Fall and Preservation

Above, I observed the mixture of appeals in Reformed views of the state. That there must be order is a created mandate; but that it must wield the sword is not. The fusion of creation and Fall is not merely an imprecision. It is a logically illegitimate move whereby a number of substantial assumptions are smuggled in without examination.

First, the Fall makes a difference in the empirical order of society which is no longer wholesome and mutually supporting. To the extent to which "the order of nature" is an order which can be perceived within the structures of nature, this "knowability" is compromised if not lost.

Second, the human mind in its capacity to know the truth, however that truth be understood (special revelation, empirical nature, speculative nature), is distorted by the Fall. My capacity and desire to know the truth are distorted by my desire to use the truth for my own purposes and my desire to avoid those parts of the truth with which I disagree.

Even if in some sense it could be held that the truth remains essentially unconfused despite the Fall, and my ability to perceive it were not radically destroyed, there still remains the flaw in my will which no longer desires to obey but prefers to use the arena of history to act out my rebelliousness, my will to power, and my hostility to my brother.

Even if my will were unfallen and my knowledge were unfallen, my ability to control the course of events would no longer be whole. The chain of causation, the structures of the social order, communication and decision making are fallen as well.

A further change is on the epistemological level. When we speak seriously of the moral obligation derived from creation we can assume the univocality of the divine will. God's purpose is the same for all because all are in the same situation with the same potential

and the same function. After the Fall and especially after the conditional divine interventions classically referred to as the covenant with Adam and the covenant with Noah (a situation still further complicated by further covenants between then and now), that univocality is gone by definition. There is no self-evident reason to assume that the will of God has the same meaning for a Jew as for a Gentile in the age of Moses, when tabernacle worship and circumcision are not expected of the nations.[8] There is no self-evident reason to assume that the obligations of Christians and pagans are the same in the New Testament when one decides and acts within the reestablished covenant of grace and the other does not. There is no reason to have to assume that the moral performance which God expects of the regenerate he equally expects of the unregenerate. Of course, on some much more elevated level of abstraction, our minds demand that we project an unique and univocal ultimate or ideal will of God. But it is precisely in the nature of his patience with fallen humanity that God condescends to deal with us on other levels. The well-intentioned but uninformed heathen, the informed but rebellious child of the believer, the regenerate but ignorant, the educated victim of heretical teaching, the teacher, and the bearer of a distinct charisma all stand in different moral positions.

On the level of normative social ethical discourse, this awareness means that the substance of the Christian testimony to a pluralistic social order will not be identical with the claims of discipleship for the disciples of Jesus Christ; a relevant moral witness to the authorities in a Western democracy will be different from that to a pagan monarch. There is not one timeless pattern of pertinent social norms. The hermeneutic we need must be dialogical and congregational, renouncing claims to leverage from outside the historical flux.

A Personal Epilogue

There is one more level upon which one can attempt to gain hold on the substance of a debate. One can ask very subjectively, "Do they understand me? Do they speak to me?"

When I ask whether I am understood, my answer is, "not really." I perceive that I am being read and heard through a filter, whether I meet that in historical terms as the definition of Anabaptism which is in the Reformed confessions, or whether I identify it in logical content as the axioms stated above.

The other question is whether the alternative view which is being commended to me has something from which I can learn, because it appeals to the New Testament or to some other independent reference in a way that reaches past established confessional differences to or from the New Testament. Thus far this is not the case. What I hear my Reformed interlocutor asking me to accept is not some particular biblical text or even some particular biblical theme[9] but rather a system of definitions adding up more or less to the same thing as the axioms stated above.

There is a strange ambivalence in that criticism. On the one hand, I am told that I am wrong because my position implies a systematic dualism and total withdrawal from the social struiggle, and it is wrong to withdraw from the social struggle.

But then when I say I also consider it wrong to withdraw from social struggle because Jesus was "politically" involved, as were William Penn and Martin Luther King, Jr., I get two contradictory answers. One is that I am logically cheating because I ought to want to withdraw according to the Reformed image of what my position implies. I do not defend their image of what I ought to believe. Instead of seeing that as a challenge to the accuracy of their image, they challenge my representativity. The other is that they wish I would withdraw, because they do not want my Jesus and me in the real arena with real alternatives. They want me to affirm the irrelevance which is their a priori pigeonhole for me (and, more importantly, for the Jesus of the Gospels). My acceptance of withdrawal as the price of my faithfulness is needed for them to explain lesser-evil calculations as the price of the "responsible involve-

[1] Article XXXVI; article XXXII uses the same phrase with regard to baptism. We set that aside for present purposes: millions of Baptists are Reformed in their social ethics, showing that the link between ecclesiology and social strategy is not always close.

[2] Cf. my *The Priestly Kingdom* (Notre Dame University Press, 1984) p. 131f.

[3] Add to this anomaly the awareness that the sociology of the ethnic enclave, typical of most Mennonite experience from 1650 to 1950, is a form of establishment, rather than an implementation of the radical missionary vision.

[4] Nicholas Wolterstorff characterizes Mennonites as seeking to create "a holy commonwealth in a separated area" (*Until Justice and Peace Embrace*, Grand Rapids, 1983, p. 19); an inappropriate reference especially in lectures presented in Amsterdam, where Mennonites since 1600 have typically been about as separated as Quakers in Philadelphia. Another specimen—to demonstrate how widely abused is the typology—is an interview in the *NRC-Handelsblad*, the Dutch equivalent of the *Wall Street Journal*, 29 November 1984, in which A. M. Oostlander, research director of the Christian party (CDA), claims that the InterChurch Peace Council (IKV) represents "an ancient dutch phenomenon with deep roots in national history," namely the Anabaptist movement, which "turned its back on government." Oostlander is wrong on every count. a) The IKV is made up mostly of non-pacifists, mostly Reformed and Roman Catholic, who under the pressure of actions taken by the Reformed Church of the Netherlands since 1952 is critical of the nuclear arms race policies of NATO; b) The Anabaptists of the sixteenth century did not turn their back on government; government outlawed them and burned them at the stake; c) What Oostlander dislikes about the IKV is not that it turns its back on government but that it is becoming politically powerful. This is thus an excellent specimen of the way in which, far from using historical types as an instrument of authentic ecumenical communication, the reproach of Anabaptism is a tool of intra-Reformed polemics.

[5] Franklin H. Littell: "The Radical Reformation and the American Experience" in Thomas M. McFadden, ed., *America in Theological Perspective* (New York, Seabury, 1976), pp. 71-86; and "Christian Faith and Counter-Culture," *The Iliff Review*, Vol. XXX, No. 1, Winter 1973, pp. 3–13.

[6] I have been watching with interest the Reformed social think tanks at Grand Rapids, Pella, Toronto and elsewhere for some years now. What is most striking to me is the absence of any head-on recognition that if one recognizes or even advocates democracy, as it exists in pluralistic North Atlantic society, the classical theocratic language of the Reformed vision is more anachronistic than is the "sectarian" language of the Anabaptist model. As Nicholas Wolterstorff wrote, "In one way we have all become Anabaptist . . ., the sixteenth-century Anabaptists urged the abolition of a sacral society... That heritage of Anabaptism is the policy we all embrace . . ." (*Reformed Journal*, October 1977, p. 11). To negate "sacral society" is vaguer and easier than to affirm democracy, which Wolterstorff would also do, but either way is to say it lets other people run the place.

[7] Meredith Kline sees JHWH's threat to avenge any attack on Cain (Gen. 4:15) as an earlier version of the same revelation. That would bring us one covenant earlier, but still would be a salvation-historical intervention (Kline calls it "oracle") rather than an order of creation knowable to reason. It does not (like the Noachic covenant) name man as the executor of JHWH's vengeance. It would authorize only punitive vengeance, none of the other functions of the civil order. It would call literally for the vengeance taken to be collective, i.e., sevenfold. It would make the escalation of human autonomy through city-building and technology to the war cry of Lamech look like a fulfillment of JHWH's intent. It would make no difference to the question of what the New Covenant in Jesus' blood does with Genesis and Moses. Nonetheless, Kline's effort to found the notion of a divorce mandate for the civil order is more serious than most.

[8] Since the adjustment to the Jewish-Christian schism, whereby rabbinic thought largely abandoned "mission" to the "Christians," it is generally affirmed that gentiles can have access to "the world to come" if they live according to the Noachic covenant. Cf. David Novak, *The Image of the Non-Jew in Judaism*, Toronto, Lewiston, Edwin Mellen Press, 1983.

[9] With the exception of Meredith Kline, note 8 above.

Abandoning the Typology: A Reformed Assist

by Richard J. Mouw

Professor Yoder thinks that the differences between Anabaptist and Reformed Christians have been rather consistently misrepresented, especially on the part of Reformed thinkers. He demonstrates his convictions regarding these matters by means of two strategies. First, he argues that the common notion that the Reformed-Anabaptist cultural-theological debate constitutes a "classical dilemma" does not provide us with the best account of the historical developments bearing on these disputes. Then, having offered this argument "from the outside," he moves "inside" the discussion. Here he argues that if the issues at stake are properly construed, then Reformed criticisms of the Anabaptists often miss the mark; Reformed people, in attempting to make an effective case against the Anabaptist cultural perspective, would have to provide different sorts of arguments than they seem to think are necessary.

I am in basic agreement with Professor Yoder on these matters. This is not to say that I have become an Anabaptist. But I do endorse, in general terms, his account of the actual shape of the debate between the two camps. The continuing differences between the two groups ought to be understood, I am convinced, along the lines he suggests.

On a number of occasions I have protested against what I have labelled, for lack of a better terms, the "Mennophobia" of many of

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my fellow Reformed Christians. The deep hostility toward Anabaptists is expressed openly, as Professor Yoder notes, in Reformed confessional documents and in other writings from the past. My own denomination has officially declared that those of us who are required to subscribe to the Reformed confessions of the sixteenth century are not bound by the "incidental historical references" of those documents—and the "detesting" of the Anabaptists has been explicitly singled out as an example of those non-binding "incidentals." Making hatred non-binding, however, is not the same as condemning it as improper. Thus a detesting of the Anabaptists—no longer ecclesiastically compelled, but now merely optional—continues to occur in the Reformed community.

Of course, the detesting flows in both directions. When Calvin and other sixteenth century Reformers accused the Anabaptists of an unhealthy perfectionism, they were not completely off-base in their charge. The horrible programs of persecution which Reformed people launched against the Anabaptists—and what they did was surely horrible—were often stimulated by Anabaptist claims that the Calvinists and Lutherans were nothing but thinly disguised papists—or in other words, given the parlance of the day, tools of Satan himself. A properly revised narrative of our ecclesiastical pasts will require all of us to reformulate our confessional stories.

But this is not the place, nor am I the person, to deal with those pastoral matters. Nor is this the appropriate occasion to carry on what Yoder rightly calls the "one unfinished friendly debate" between him and me. Suffice it to say that in my *Politics and the Biblical Drama* I was motivated by some of the same concerns that move Yoder in this present discussion. I wanted, among other things, to demonstrate to those Reformed people who were wont to dismiss Yoder's case in *The Politics of Jesus* as advocating "Anabaptist withdrawal," that Reformed Christians must deal with the questions of Christian political action precisely where Yoder issues the challenge: by beginning with a non-negotiable commitment to the way of discipleship—to the waging of "the Lamb's War." If in the process of arguing that case I employed and perpetuated old stereotypes, I am sorry. This present discussion can at least serve as an occasion for me to make it clear that I want to join John Yoder in attempting to bring the Reformed-Anabaptist debate to a new and more honest level of mutual exploration.

The Historical Challenge

Professor Yoder convincingly presents historical evidence for calling the long-standing "Reformed-versus-Anabaptist" typology into question. I am not an historian, so I can do little to add to this case. But it is interesting to note that some verification for his contentions can be found by looking at intra-Reformed debates.

Discussions about "Reformed-Anabaptist tensions" often fail to account for the fact that each of the communities being discussed is itself quite pluralistic—so much so that the tensions between the two traditions are not experienced in the same light or with the same intensity at every point on the spectrum within each community.

My own denomination, the Christian Reformed Church, has been fed and shaped by two dissenting factions within the Reformed community in the Netherlands. The first faction has its roots in the Secessionist movement, which in 1834 broke from the established Reformed church in Holland. The Secessionists were deeply pious folk who placed a strong emphasis on preserving the Calvinist soteriological teachings of the past. They viewed themselves (and rightly so) as victims of a strong alliance between church and state in the Netherlands, and they exported this distrust of the cultural status quo to North America, by means of the emigrations of the 19th century.

These Secessionist Calvinists expressed their strong sense of separation from the world in two ways. First, they nurtured a piety in which there was a central emphasis on avoiding attachments to the values of "the present age." Second, in their theological reflection they gave an important place to the idea of "the antithesis"—i.e., a radical opposition between elect and reprobate. In its most expreme form, "antithetical Calvinism" fostered the notion that elect and reprobate, since they operate with radically different presuppositions, share little or no intellectual common ground.

The second dissenting faction stemmed from the movement headed by the Dutch statesman Abraham Kuyper who, during the 1880s, led another major movement out of the established Reformed Church in Holland. This group soon merged with the church body that had been formed by the earlier Secessionists. But the Kuyperians were of a somewhat different character. Their leadership was urbane and well-educated, not inclined to relinquish the reins of cultural leadership to the children of darkness. Kuyper initiated a major effort at ecclesiastical reform. He also founded the Free University and established a Christian political party which he represented in the Dutch parliament; for a few years around the turn of the century, he was Prime Minister of the Netherlands.

Kuyper himself made much of the antithesis between belief and unbelief. But this emphasis never functioned in this thinking as a basis for justifying cultural withdrawal. To many of those who sympathized with the earlier Secession, Kuyper's programs exhibited an unhealthy triumphalism; the Kuyperians, they thought, placed too high a premium on "horizontalist" forays into worldly territories. Some of the Secessionists made their case in pietistic terms, while others argued against Kuyper by a direct doctrinal appeal to the antithesis. But in any case there has been, as a consistent presence in this community, a nervousness expressed about a Calvinism that places too much stock in cultural activism.

The point I want to illustrate by this brief (and much too unnuanced) piece of ecclesiastical history is that something *like* the so-called "Reformed/Anabaptist tensions" actually occur *within* the Reformed community. And the fact is that when the going gets tough in one of the open debates that regularly surface in my confessional community, there will very often come a moment, as the Calvinist antagonists really begin to slug it out with each other, when the more culturally activistic Cavlinists will reach into the rhetorical arsenal and hurl out the ultimate insult: they will accuse their more pietist or doctrinalist Reformed opponents of being "Anabaptists."[1]

There are, of course, different ways of explaining this phenomenon. One is to suggest that since—on the standard typology, which Yoder and I are both rejecting—the Anabaptist position is the most detestable of alternatives to the Reformed position, it is quite likely that Calvinists would use the most insulting label that comes to mind when they really get angry with each other. But the fact is that this label is used by Reformed people to refer to actual tendencies which they observe within their own community. This suggests that the Anabaptist position is not one that Calvinists denounce because it is so alien to their own views, but rather because it represents very real tendencies that they fear within themselves.

It only remains to be argued that these tendencies are very natural ones, given the essential characteristics of the Reformed orientation. And I think that this is indeed the case.

Calvinism is well known for its stark portrayal of the human sinful condition. It is perhaps no accident that the first letter in TULIP stands for "Total Depravity," since it is this negative assessment of human abilities that gives everything else that is distinctive about Reformed doctrine its poignancy. The Calvinist emphasis on God's absolute sovereign control over the process of salvation has to be seen against the backdrop of its insistence that human beings are completely incapable of initiating, or making any interesting contribution to, that process.

Once Calvinism has begun with this negative assessment of the present human condition, any teaching that seems to modify this assessment, by attributing, say, some sort of positive noetic or ethical or volitional ability to human beings, will need special explaining. And the fact is that Calvinists have regularly gone out of their way to provide such explanations.

Recently I joined two of my Philosphy colleagues in teaching a course on "Philosophy in the Dutch Reformed Tradition." Dutch Calvinists have sustained a strong interest in systematic philosophical thought. We discovered that in these philosophical explorations, Dutch Calvinists regularly credited (following the example of Calvin himself) non-Christian thinkers with having made positive contributions to a proper understanding of reality. But inevitably this kind of admission required extensive explanation on their part, since they had begun with strong endorsements of the ideas of depravity and antithesis.

My own impression is that these efforts at explanation are quite

legitimate. I find the qualified Calvinist endorsement of specific non-Christian philosophical contributions to be necesary and satisfactory. But my point is that Reformed people do have to *work* a bit at providing such explanations. They do not come easily—certainly not automatically. Having arrived at such explanations, after the appropriate Calvinist hard work, it is not pleasant to be required by the antithetical Calvinists on one's rear flank to provide an obvious and convincing Reformed rationale for the philosophical moves that one has made. Again, one may be confident that one has indeed *made* appropriate moves; but it is awkward nonetheless to be asked to trace one's steps from the "T" in TULIP to one's nuanced epistemological proposals. And once one has had to defend these nuances against antithetical *Reformed* opponents, the confrontation with the radical epistemology of many Anabaptists is simply more of the same.

In short, Yoder's historical analysis is given further credence by evidence that Reformed-Anabaptist debates are mere variations on the kinds of disputes that occur *within* the Reformed community. And these intra-Reformed discussions do not result from the importing on the part of some Calvinists of "alien" Anabaptist themes. The themes are generated by the very logic of the Reformed position itself.

Inside the Typology

As Professor Yoder turns to an "internal" discussion of the received typology, his strategy seems to be along these lines: he states what he takes to be crucial Reformed theses—i.e., theses which are necessary for the coherence of Reformed social thought, but which Yoder as an Anabaptist rejects. Yoder shows, however, that his reasons for rejecting key elements of Reformed thought, as contained in these particular theses, suggest a somewhat different set of Reformed-Anabaptist disagreements than the state of affairs dictated by the traditional typology.

For example, on the received reading of the differences between Calvinists and Anabaptists, Calvinists believe that we ought to be transforming culture while Anabaptists adopt an anti-cultural stance; and more specifically, Calvinists urge Christians to participate in civil government while Anabaptists oppose such participation.

But these portrayals of the differences do not capture the way in which Yoder experiences the tensions between Reformed and Anabaptist Christians. He sees Anabaptists as opposing the Calvinist *mode* of cultural transformation. Reformed people act as if the biblical mandate to shape cultural activity in obedience to God's will were a crystal-clear matter, and that it, furthermore, applies with equal weight and clarity to all areas of cultural activity. Anabaptists do not dissent from the notion of a biblical cultural mandate as such, but they do resent having Calvinists tell them exactly what it means to obey that mandate.

The question of involvement in civil government turns out to be a case in point here. If "political involvement" means a willingness to participate in the processes of public administration, or a holy desire to influence public policy in the light of biblical standards of righteousness, then there is no principled disagreement between Reformed and Anabaptist. The real argument gets going only at that point where the Calvinist insists that people who refuse to wield the sword are, by virtue of that refusal, denying the legitimacy of all "political involvement."

Here again, Yoder is correct in his account. At least he is correct in general terms; I am not sure that Reformed Christians have to endorse everything that Yoder claims is required for the "coherence" of the Reformed position. But in general terms he has it right. Indeed, his formulations, if taken seriously, can serve to advance the discussion of substantive issues.

Many of the points which Yoder attributes to the Reformed perspective are endorsed by Abraham Kuyper, when he explains why he refuses to distinguish between "general moral ordinances, and more special *Christian* commandments":

> Can we imagine that at one time God willed to rule things in a certain moral order, but that now, in Christ, He wills to rule it otherwise? As though He were not the Eternal, the Unchangeable, Who, from the very hour of creation, even unto all eternity, had willed, wills, and shall will and maintain, one and the same firm moral world-order! Verily Christ has swept away the dust with which man's sinful limitations had covered up this world-order, and has made it glitter again in its original brilliancy. Verily Christ, and He alone, has disclosed to us the eternal love of Christ which was, from the beginning, the moving principle of this world-order. Above all, Christ has strengthened in us the ability to walk in this world-order with a firm, unfaltering step. But the world-order itself remains just what it was from the beginning. It lays full claim, not only to the believer (as though less were required from the unbeliever), but to every human being and to all human relationships.[2]

If accepting the kinds of emphases embodied in these remarks is required for maintaining a coherent Reformed position, then I am not a very coherent Calvinist. My discomfort has to do with some of the same issues raised by Yoder in explaining why he rejects the Reformed cultural perspective as such. I find Kuyper—in this passage at least—much too confident in his celebration of a "world order" which remains intact since the original creation.

More specifically, I have, first of all, metaphysical qualms about this celebrative mood. The Bible gives us reason to think that sin actually perverted the creation in significant ways. The theology of the "principalities and powers," which Professor Yoder has done much to sensitize North American Christians to, is one important vehicle for understanding this distortedness. More generally, biblical Christianity must promote an awareness of the "cursedness" of the falled creation. To be sure, Jesus came to the creation to lift the curse of sin, a transaction that has been completed in principle by means of the work of the Cross. But as the writer to the Hebrews observes, while God placed all things originally under the dominion of humankind, "as it is we do not yet see everything in subjection" to human beings—"but we see Jesus, . . . crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death" (Hebrews 2:8-9).

Second, Kuyper seems much too confident in this passage regarding our noetic abilities. Suppose, for example, that my first concern was in fact misguided; suppose that the original "world-order" does remain intact, shining as from the beginning in all brilliancy as a testimony to the creator's good purposes. We would still have to reckon with the noetic effects of sin: have not our human minds become so darkened by sin that we are seriously deficient—even blinded—in our ability to grasp this world-order?

And third, Kuyper seems much too sanguine about our volitional capacities; he describes the work of Christ as a "strengthening" of our "ability to walk in this world-order with a firm, unfaltering step." Is *this* the problem that Jesus died to overcome—a mere weakness, a human faltering?

Fourth, all this points to a general Christological weakness in these remarks by Kuyper. As one who considers Kuyper to be a hero, I am loathe to admit that in this particular passage he seems to be breathing the spirit of the very modernism which he so valiantly fought against on other occasions. Modernistic-liberal theology is inevitably led to a weak Christology because of its weak analysis of sin. We cannot properly understand the nature of the proclamation that "Jesus Saves" unless we know what it is that he saves us from. Kuyper, in describing here the work of Christ in terms of a mere "dusting-off" of the original world-order, is treading on dangerous theological ground.

I think that I am pointing here to a very basic and important theological question: Who is Jesus Christ, and how are we to understand his redemptive mission? This Christological question has to be asked against the backdrop of an analysis of the human condition. Out of his experience of the actual tensions between Reformed and Anabaptist thought, Professor Yoder reports items of theological concern which bear on a proper understanding of the human sin which Christ came to confront. And these items, as he spells them out in his response to the Reformed theses, have to do precisely with questions about the metaphysical, noetic and volitional effects of sin, and about our understanding of God's antidote to sin.

In effect, then, the Anabaptists as represented by Professor Yoder are posing questions to Reformed Christians about the radicality of human sin, and about the radicality of the work of the Savior who

came to rescue the creation from the curse of that sin. What did the fall do to the creation? What did it do to human noetic and volitional capacities? What did Jesus accomplish in his redemptive ministry? What does he call human beings to be and do? Suppose, for example, that because of the ravages of sin, God *has* in some sense "instituted" the exercise of the sword in sinful societies. How has the work of the Lamb altered the ways in which disciples of Jesus relate to this work of the sword? How will the "antithesis" manifest itself in Christian political behavior?

It seems obvious—to Professor Yoder and to me—that these are very Reformed questions. But they are also very Anabaptist questions. If so, then the main dispute between the two positions is not a conflict between radically different types. It is a family argument between Christians who claim to take human depravity and the riches of the Gospel seriously—not only in relation to very personal belief and behavior, but to the full range of human social, political and economic activities.

Toward Family Healing

Needless to say, family arguments can get very tense. Even if the traditional typology, then, is abandoned, there is still much for Reformed and Anabaptist Christians to argue about. It may be that Calvinists have been too quick to view the civil order as the quintessence of culure, and the exercise of the sword as the quintessence of the civil order. But even if these mistaken emphases are remedied, one could still hold—as I am very much inclined to do—that it is legitimate for disciples of Jesus to participate under certain conditions in governmentally-sanctioned acts which utilize the means of lethal violence. I am much more inclined to focus on the "politics of Jesus" than many of my fellow Calvinists in attempting to formulate the nature of Christian political obligation. But I am not convinced that a commitment to the Lamb's War proscribes all Christian use of violent means of problem-solving.

Having said that, though, I must also say that I believe that intense dialogue between Reformed and Anabaptist Christians is a matter of highest priority. This belief is nurtured by three concerns.

First, however legitimate and/or understandable the intra-Protestant struggles were in their original sixteenth century context, they are not as pressing today. Even if the received typology were true, it would be strange for Reformed and Anabaptist people, or for Lutherans and Roman Catholics, for that matter, to view each other as the "real" enemy, whom to struggle against is to exhibit faithfulness to the Gospel. The devils who fill the present world are no longer inclined—if they ever were—to disguise themselves as people who confess the Name of Jesus.

Second, whatever the merits of the debates that occurred in the sixteenth century, we have no right to look at those debates today except through the history that has flowed out of those intense disputes. For me this means that I cannot listen in on the discussions between Anabaptists and Calvinists that occurred in sixteenth century Basel and Geneva and Amsterdam without also listening to the cries of Christians whom my Calvinist forebears have brutalized and persecuted in word and in deed. The history of the Reformed-Anabaptist relationship is not merely one of words and ideas; it is made up of the flesh and blood of human suffering.

Third, even if we could ignore the past, we cannot ignore the pressing challenges of the present. It is one thing for a Calvinist to insist that there are and have been situations in which the Christian endorsement of military violence is justified. It is another thing to take an honest look at the ongoing production of weapons of unthinkable destruction. To view the present arms race with an awareness of the complicated self-deceptions of which human beings, even Christian human beings, are capable—deceptions which involve whole nations in idolatrous militaristic and nationalistic schemes—is to realize how desperately we all need the chiding and challenging and mutual correction that can be gained from intense Christian dialogue. May we abandon outworn typologies and get on with that kind of dialogue!

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[1] See James D. Bratt, *Dutch Calvinism in Modern America: A History of a Conservative Subculture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984), Chs. 7 and 8.

[2] Abraham Kuyper, *Lectures in Calvinism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1931), pp. 71–72.

BIBLICAL STUDIES

Qumran and the Hebrew Psalter

by Gerald H. Wilson

Among the thousands of fragments of ancient religious documents discovered nearly forty years ago in caves near the ruins of ancient Qumran and known popularly as the "Dead Sea Scrolls" were numerous fragments of manuscripts containing portions of psalms known previously from the canonical Hebrew Psalter. Of the eleven caves in which manuscripts were found, seven have yielded a combined total of more than 309 different psalm manuscripts. By far the most extensive collections are those of Cave 4 (with 18 distinct manuscripts) and Cave 11 (5 distinct manuscripts). The earliest of these texts were copied in the second century B.C. while the latest are dated by paleographers to approximately A.D. 68.[1]

It is hardly possible to overestimate the importance of these texts for our understanding of the canonical Psalter. In the first place, they represent the earliest known examples of the text of the individual psalms. Before the scrolls were uncovered, our earliest Hebrew Psalter texts were dated to the 9th and 10th centuries A.D. This single find pushed our knowledge of the text of the individual psalms back almost 1000 years! In a number of these Qumran manuscripts, psalms are arranged quite differently than in the canonical Psalter. Some of the canonical psalms are ordered differently in relation to each other, others are entirely absent and, in some manuscripts, "apocryphal" compositions are introduced which are not known in the canonical text.

This variation in the Qumran psalm manuscripts has sparked continuing controversy about the nature of these texts, their authority, and where they fit in a history of the canonical Psalter. For some, the variety of the Qumran texts suggests that the arrangement and contents of the Psalter were still in a state of flux as late as the middle of the first century A.D. Others resist this conclusion and explain the variant manuscripts as liturgical adaptations of the canonical arrangement which was fixed by the 4th century B.C.[2]

Proponents of the late fluidity of the Psalter (especially James A. Sanders who edited the primary edition of the Qumran Psalms Scroll from Cave 11) emphasize the amount of variation encountered in the Qumran manuscripts as support for their views. On the other hand, those who accept the early fixation of the Psalter (most notably the late Patrick W. Skehan who edited the psalm manuscripts from Cave 4) play down the significance of variant data while stressing that the majority of evidence supports the canonical arrangement. A close look at the Qumran scrolls themselves reveals an unexpected circumstance which points up the complexity of the issue and may help us evaluate these conflicting claims.[3]

Evidence for the Arrangement of Psalms at Qumran

First, the amount of evidence which supports or contests the canonical arrangement is not always easy to determine. Most of the manuscripts are extremely fragmentary. To determine the arrangement of a manuscript, one must look for "joins" between psalms, where one psalm ends and the next begins. For example, considering the 150 canonical psalms, there are 149 "joins" between them (ps 1 with 2; 2 with 3; and so on). All the Qumran psalm manuscripts together confirm only 54 of these canonical joins (slightly more than 36% of the total). The other 95 joins (about 64%) are not confirmed. On the other hand, 26 of the 149 canonical joins (just over 17%) are contested by the Qumran manuscripts when psalms are placed in different arrangements or apocryphal compositions

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are introduced. There is no data available for a large number of joins (71 or about 48%).

When all evidence confirming the canonical arrangement is correlated with all data contesting it, there are only *two* instances of conflicting overlap. In other words, of the 26 canonical joins contested by the variant data, only two are among the 54 confirmed by the supportive data. The other 24 contested joins fall among that 64% for which there is no supportive data at all! Because of this lack of overlap, it is difficult to evaluate the significance of supportive data, since, while evidence of variation is unambiguous, it is always conceivable that supportive manuscripts contained variant material in the gaps between their fragments.

Finally, even these two examples of actual overlap have their problems. Both occur in one manuscript from Cave 4 which itself exhibits a major contradiction of the canonical arrangement of the Psalter. It "omits" the whole group of psalms 104-111 and follows psalm 103 immediately by psalm 112. As a result, the confirmation value of this manuscript is weakened and we are left without a single, fully supportive manuscript in direct conflict with evidence of variation.

To summarize up to this point: the amount of evidence for or against the canonical arrangement of the psalms is small and there is even less evidence of conflict between these two bodies of evidence. The value of supportive evidence is somewhat ambiguous since it is taken from fragmentary manuscripts which may have contained variant data in their gaps. Since we cannot fully recover the intent of the editor(s), we cannot know with certainty what relative authority was placed on these conflicting and supporting arrangements. It is dangerous to allow our own knowledge of the present shape of the canonical Psalter to persuade us that the presence of supportive readings necessarily signifies the existence of the fixed, authoritative canonical Psalter. It is quite feasible that supportive readings represent only one *possible* arrangement of the psalms at a time prior to final fixation of the text or (as we will see below) indicate only that certain parts of the Psalter arrangement had been fixed.

The Five-Book Division and the Age of the Manuscripts

Since the limited amount of evidence for support or variation permits no firm conclusions about the history of the canonical text, is there any other way to view the data which illuminates the issue? It has long been accepted that the canonical Psalter is divided into five segments or "books" of unequal size (psalms 1-42; 43-72; 73-89; 90-106; 107-150). Each of these segments concludes with a similar benediction, except for the last in which the concluding collection of five hallelujah psalms (146-150) may serve the same purpose. Recent study of these book sections has demonstrated the existence of different techniques of organization and psalm arrangement in Books Four and Five, as opposed to the earlier three sections. This implies the first three books developed independently of the last two and the final canonical form represents a later marriage of originally separate materials.[4]

In light of this situation, the distribution of evidence of variation from the canonical arrangement over these five books is most interesting. Contested joins, practically non-existent in the first three books (only four of 88 possible joins are contested), increase dramatically in Books Four and Five (22 of a possible 60 joins). This circumstance, while hardly conclusive, is quite consistent with the theory proposed by James A. Sanders that the Psalter only gradually stabilized from beginning to end with the first two-thirds being fixed when the last third was still in a state of flux.[5]

Sanders' theory is further supported by the age of the manuscripts containing variant arrangements. When one arranges all the significant Qumran psalms manuscripts according to the date of origin, a definite correlation emerges between the age of the manuscripts and evidence of support or variation. Variant manuscripts consistently occupy the earliest positions, while fully supportive manuscripts only begin to appear about the middle of the first century A.D., at which time variant arrangements disappear altogether. The general impression is of an early fluidity of psalm arrangement which continued until ca. A.D. 50 and apparently died out soon after.

So, while the Qumran evidence for the arrangement of the psalms is not exhaustive and cannot, therefore, supply a final commentary on the date of the fixation of the canonical text, it clearly suggests a fluidity in the arrangement and content of the latter third of the Psalter continuing long after the traditionally accepted date for its closure. As a result, if we hope to discover the sociological background of the final form of the Psalter and understand its significance, we must look to a period much later than is usually supposed.

What can we say provisionally about the significance of the final shape of the Psalter? One of the first keys is the recognition of two distinct segments within the Psalter (Books One through Three and Books Four and Five) representing two periods in its development. The earlier stage clearly reflects the concern of the exilic period to understand the apparent failure of the Davidic Covenant. The placement of Royal psalms at the "seams" of this early collection (psalms 2, 41, 72, 89) organizes these books around this theme.[6] Such a collection might date to the fourth or fifth century B.C. (the traditional date for the closure of the Psalter) and concludes with a plea to YHWH to fulfill his covenant obligations and restore the Davidic kingdom (psalm 89:46-51).

The subsequent addition of the fourth book (psalm 90-106), with its central celebration of the kingship of YHWH, shifts the emphasis of the whole away from the reestablishment of the human kingdom of David toward the more universal and spiritual kingdom of YHWH. One is no longer to place his trust in human princes who will ultimately fail, but in YHWH who rules on high forever (cf. psalms 91, 92, 103).[7]

The similarity of this viewpoint to the "kingdom of the spirit" which Jesus preached and which occupied the vision of the early Church is intriguing. That they both clearly speak to the same human situation lends credence to a late date for the final fixation of the Psalter. Those whose hopes for political independence from Rome are squashed by the realities of their circumstances are called to the inner kingdom of the spirit where YHWH rules directly over the affairs of humankind.

That this viewpoint came to dominate the central religious cult in Jerusalem, where no doubt the Psalter reached its final form, is not unexpected. In light of the highly charged apocalyptic visions of the Qumran sectarians who actively opposed the central cult in this period—visions which culminated in the development of the even more emphatically Davidic Qumran Psalm Scroll[8] and the

MANUSCRIPT	DATE	RELATIONSHIP TO MT
4QPs^{a}	Mid 2nd C BC	Contradictory
4QPs^{f}	ca. 50 BC	Contradictory
4QPs^{d}	Mid 1st C BC	Contradictory
4QPs^{b}	2nd half 1st C BC	Contradictory
4QPs^{e}	1st half 1st C AD	Contradictory
11QPs^{a}	30-50 AD	Contradictory
11QPs^{b}	1st half 1st C AD	Contradictory
MasPs 1039-160	1st half 1st C AD	Supportive
4QPs^{q}	Mid 1st C AD	Contradictory
4QPs^{s}	50 AD	Supportive
4QPs^{c}	50-68 AD	Supportive
5/6 HevPs	2nd half 1st C AD	Supportive

INCONCLUSIVE MSS

DATE NOT ESTABLISHED	INSUFFICIENT CONTENTS	
11QPs^{c}—Supportive	4Qps^{g}	4QPs^{l}
11QPs^{d}—Supportive	4QPs^{h}	4QPs^{m}
11QPs^{e}—Supportive	4QPs^{j}	4QPs^{n}
4QPs^{r}—Supportive	4QPs^{k}	4QPs^{p}

Qumran Mss Arranged by Date

sectarian War Scroll which detailed the final battle to destroy Roman power and reestablish the Davidic kingdom; in light of the growing Zealot movement which led to open (though futile) conflict with Rome in the years before A.D. 70, the call to reliance on YHWH's inner kingdom must have represented a pragmatic way to encourage religious cohesion and hope without threatening the existing Roman power structures.

While this viewpoint (and the final shape of the Psalter) may have grown out of pragmatic realism in the face of Roman domination and military superiority and the futility of Zealot resistance, the result is a Psalter cut off from specific nationalistic hopes and set free to speak to the spirit of all people everywhere. It is little wonder that the Psalter enjoyed such popularity in Christian circles, being frequently bound as part of early New Testament manuscripts.[9] Also, while it is true that messianic hopes continued both in Judaism and Christianity, the final form of the Psalter certainly played an important role in restructuring thought about the present experience of humanity which is no longer understood as a time in which the kingdom is lost, but a time in which YHWH rules directly over the spirit of humankind. In this light, the psalms become sources of individual meditation on the kingship of YHWH in the inner life of the reader (the insight provided by the introductory psalm 1) rather than communal, cultic celebrations of the nationalistic hopes of Israel.

[1] For a more complete discussion of the evidence, see Gerald H. Wilson, "The Qumran Psalms Manuscripts and the Consecutive Arrangement of Psalms in the Hebrew Psalter," *CBQ* 45 (1983) 377–88; *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985).

[2] Gerald H. Wilson, "The Qumran Psalms Sroll Reconsidered: Analysis of the Debate *CBQ* 47 (1985) [in press].

[3] Sanders has expressed his views in numerous articles, particularly "The Qumran Psalms Scroll (11QPs•) Reviewed," *On Language, Culture, and Religion: In Honor of Eugene A. Nida* (The Hague: Mouton, 1974), pp. 95–6; "Variorum in the Psalms Scroll (11QPs•)," *HTR* 59 (1966) 86–7. Skehan's most recent and persuasive treatment is found in "Qumran and Old Testament Criticism," *Qumrân: sa piête, sa theéologie et son milieu* M. Delcor, ed., (Louvain: Duculot, 1978), pp. 163–82.

[4] Gerald H. Wilson, "Evidence of Editorial Divisions in the Hebrew Psalter," *VT* 34 (1984) 337–52; "The Use of 'Untitled' Psalms in the Hebrew Psalter," *ZAW* xx (1985) [in press].

[5] James A. Sanders, "Cave 11 Surprises and the Question of Canon," *McCormick Quarterly Review* 21 (1968) 288. This article is also available in *New Directions in Biblical Archaeology* D. N. Freedman and J. C. Greenfield, eds. (New York: Doubleday, 1969/71), pp. 101–16; and in *The Canon and Masorah of the Hebrew Bible*, Sid Z. Leiman, ed. (New York: KTAV, 1974), pp. 37–51.

[6] See Wilson, *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter*, pp. 209–14.

[7] Wilson, *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter*, pp. 214–20.

[8] James A. Sanders, "Ps 151 in 11QPss," *ZAW* 75 (1963) 73-86; Wilson, *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter*, pp. 70–73, 129–31, 136–37.

[9] Robert Holmes and J. Parsons, *Vetus Testamentum Graecum cum variis lectionibus*, 5 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1798-1827) cite a number of instances of Psalters bound together with manuscripts of the New Testament.

MISSION

The Missiological Implications of an Epistemological Shift

by Paul G. Hiebert

The current epistemological crisis in science and philosophy has significant implications for western theology (Hiebert 1985). It also affects the integration of theology and science, and our understanding of the missionary task. How we contextualize theology, how we respond to the theological pluralism now emerging in non-western churches, and how we relate to non-Christian religions as systems of thought and to non-Christians as persons are all determined to a great extent by our epistemological premises. At the core, all of these raise the question of how we relate two or more different systems of knowledge.

Systems of Knowledge

When we talk of relationships between systems of knowledge, we must specify their level of abstraction (Figure 1. cf. Kuhn 1970, Schilling 1973, Laudin 1977, and Hofstadter 1980). For our purposes, we will differentiate three levels.

At the bottom are theories. These are limited, low level systems of explanation that seek to answer specific questions about a narrow range of reality, and do so by using preceptions, concepts, notions of causation and the like. Alternative theories may arise which give different answers to the same set of questions. Theories themselves may be on different levels of generality, and broader theories may subsume more limited ones.

Theories are imbedded in higher level systems of knowledge which Kuhn (1970) calls "paradigms," Laudin (1977) calls "research traditions," and I will refer to as "belief systems." In the sciences these would include physics, chemistry, biology and so on. In theology these would include systematic and biblical theology. Belief systems select a domain of reality to examine, determine the critical questions for investigation, provide methods for investigation and integrate one or more theories into a comprehensive system of beliefs. They also mediate between theories and the world view of the culture within which they emerge. In relationship to theories, they set the boundaries of inquiry and determine the legitimacy of problems to be examined. They also generate conceptual problems for theoretical investigation, and serve heuristic and justificatory roles (cf. Laudin 1977:78–120). In relationship to the world view in which they are located, they make explicit its largely implicit assumptions and work out the implications of these assumptions for beliefs and behavior. They also affect changes in the world view by introducing new theoretical constructs, and by mediating changes forced by experiential input.

The specialists who work in a belief system form a community that sets the standards, defines "proofs," and checks their research and teaching. It also controls the training and entry of new candidates into the discipline (Barnes 1982:10).

Others apply the theories of a belief system to life. Thus we have applied physics, engineers and technologists who draw on theoretical physics. Furthermore, sections of the general public may accept the word of specialists as authority. Most Americans, for instance, are confident that physicists have a great deal of true knowledge about the real world because they see and use the technological fruits of their theories. The public is generally unaware of the theoretical debates taking place between specialists within a research tradition.

Finally, a number of research traditions and a great deal of common sense knowledge are loosely integrated in large "world views." These are the most fundamental and encompassing views of reality shared by a people in a culture, the largely implicit assumptions they have about the nature of things—about the "givens" of reality. To question these assumptions is to challenge the very foundations of their world. People resist such challenges with deep emotional reactions, for they threaten to destroy their understandings of reality. As Geertz points out (1979), there is no greater human fear than a loss of a sense of order and meaning. People are even willing to die for their beliefs if these make their deaths meaningful.

Relationships Between Systems of Knowledge

In considering relationships between different systems of knowledge, we must keep these levels in mind. Although it is important to examine in detail how systems on one level relate to those on another (e.g., how theories relate to paradigms, and paradigms to world views), we will not do so here. Rather, we will briefly examine how theories in a paradigm relate to each other, how paradigms within a world view relate to each other, and how world views relate to each other.

How we view the relationship between systems of knowledge on the same level is largely determined by our epistemological foundations (see Hiebert 1985: figure 1). Naive realists and idealists hold that true knowledge must be precise, objective and certain. Both basically hold to a one-to-one correspondence between human knowledge and reality, but for different reasons. The former see knowledge as a photograph or a mirror of reality (Gill 1981:34-36); the latter see it as creating reality. Consequently, both look for a single comprehensive system of knowledge that will encompass all

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reality within it—a sort of Grand Unified Theory. They cannot accept as valid two different views of the same reality. All photographs taken of a hill or tree from the same spot will be the same.

Because of this, naive realist scientists are not willing to accept the validity of theology until it fits into the assumptions of science—hence the need to "demythologize" religion. Naive realist or idealist theologians, on the other hand, refuse to accept the findings of science if these challenge their theologically based views of nature.

A unified theory can be achieved in several ways. Competing theories can be modified to make them compatible, a new theory or belief system can be formulated to replace the old ones, or areas of conflict may be declared unimportant or handed over to another belief system. (Laudin 1977:45-69).

Naive realists and idealists have taken two approaches to the integration of belief systems. One is to separate them into non-overlapping domains. This has been most common in rationalism. For example, many Christians sought to integrate science and theology by assigning them to two realms. This was a legacy of the classical perspective, following Plato, in which reality was divided into two main worlds: the one natural, tangible, and transitory; the other transcendent, spiritual and eternal. Augustine and Aquinas introduced this approach into theology.

The other approach, found particularly in empiricism, is reductionism. Gill notes:

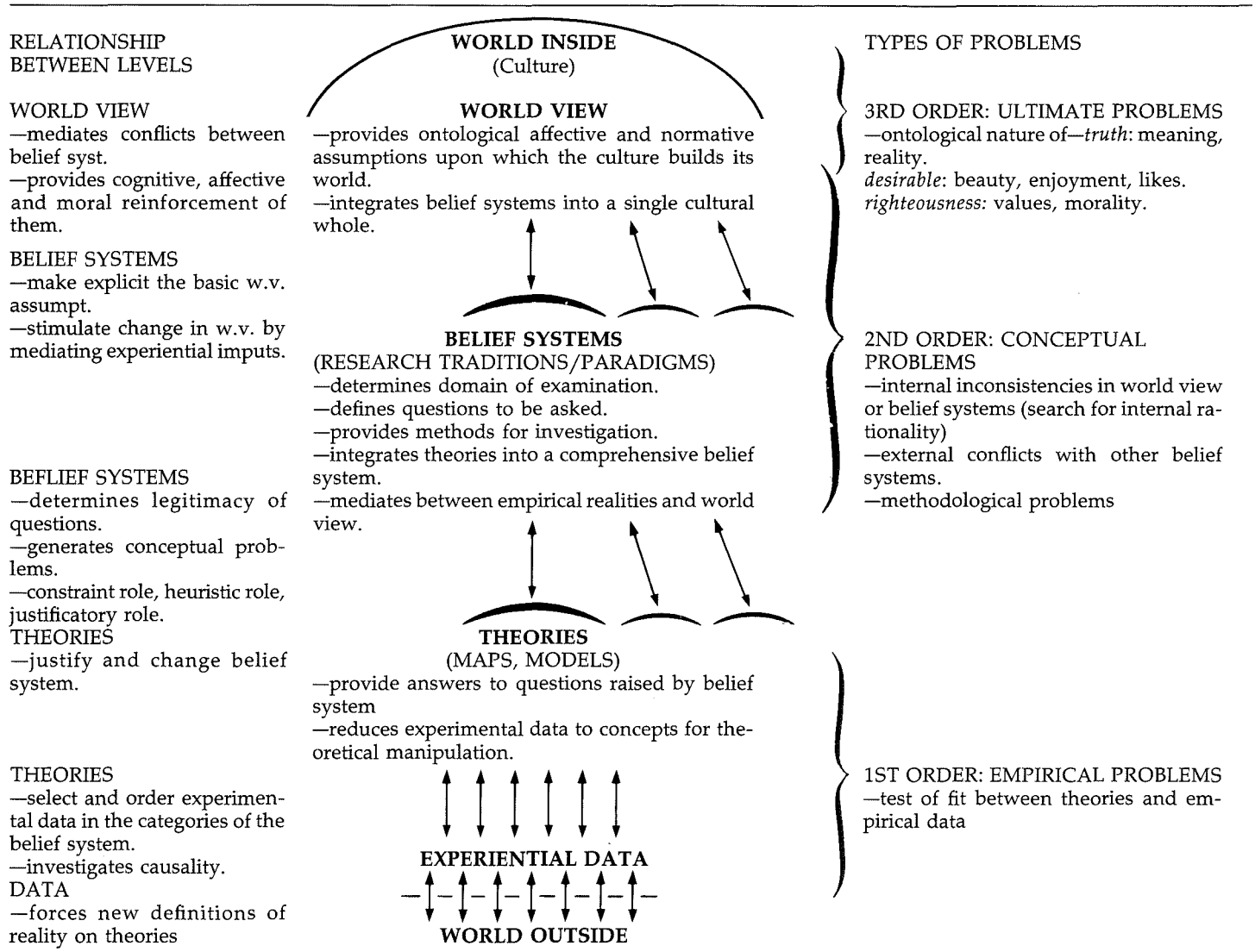
> Materialists claim that all intangibles are nothing but epiphenomena, positivists argue that all value judgments are nothing but expressions of emotion, behaviorists maintain that mind and spirit are nothing but conditioned behavior, and Marxists affirm that culture and society are nothing but reflections of material conditions (1981:29).

Reductionism has been used to integrate the sciences. For example, physical reductionism reduces all phenomena ultimately to fundamental particles such as atoms, mesons and quarks, and to forces. Galileo concluded that the physical world was a perfect machine whose future happenings can be fully predicted and controlled by one who has full knowledge and control of the present motions. This led nearly two centuries later to the famous remark of Laplace, that a superhuman intelligence acquainted with the position and motion of the atoms at any moment could predict the whole course of human events (Burtt 1954:96). The result, observes Harold Schilling (1973:44), was a world that was "closed, essentially completed and unchanging, basically substantive, simple and shallow, and fundamentally unmysterious—a rigidly programed machine."

Similarly, psychological reductionism roots all human realities, including human societies and culture, in psychological theory. Sociological reductionism sees group dynamics as the foundation of all human beliefs and behavior, and leads to a formula approach to changing humans.

Given their commitment to what J. B. Conant (1952) has called "grand conceptual schemes" within which there are fit together smaller theories, naive realists and idealists cannot accept different, complementary views of the same reality. Therefore, they do not speak of different "theologies." To them this is a contradiction in terms. And since they are certain about the truth and objectivity of their own views, they are often closed to changing them, and must

FIGURE 1
LEVELS OF MENTAL CONSTRUCTION



attack other views as false. (A summary of the characeristics of naive realism and idealism, and the ways in which they resemble and differe from other epistemological positions, is given in Figure Two.)

Critical realists and instrumentalists, on the other hand, recognize the finiteness of human knowledge and therefore are open to change, and to the reexamination of their existing beliefs. Conflicting theories force them to test their theories further against empirical and rational criteria. Moreover, critical realists and instrumentalists allow for diverse views of reality, but on different premises. Critical realists claim truth for their systems of knowledge, while instrumentalists do not. This leads them to relate different systems of knowledge in different ways.

Critical realists see theories and belief systems as maps or blueprints of reality. Each may give us some truth about reality. None of them shows us the whole. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the complex nature of reality, we need many blueprints which complement one another. For example, to understand a house, a simple photograph will not do. We need the blueprints of its wiring, plumbing, structural beams and foundations, most of which remain unseen. Reality is far too complex for our minds to grasp in total. We need simplified maps by which we can comprehend it.

At the heart of the integration of theories and belief systems for realists is the theory of complementarity (Grunbaum 1957, MacKay 1958, 1974, Austin 1967, Holton 1970, and Kaiser 1973). Different views of reality can be accepted as complementary so long as they do not contradict one another in the areas of their overlap. If there is disagreement, the discrepancy must be resolved or one or the other must be rejected. We may see things in different ways, but ultimately there can only be one truth within which there is no inconsistency. For instance, if the blueprints show wiring in a wall that does not exist in the structural blueprints, one of them must be wrong.

A critical realist sees the various sciences as potentially complementary. Physics, chemistry, biology, psychology, sociology and anthropology can all contribute insights into the nature of reality which the others do not provide. Each, in a sense, provides a level of analysis not found in the others. Schilling points out that physicists have found

> that the newly discovered strange phenomena and entities (those of the micro-world) differ so fundamentally and categorically from the more familiar ones (of the macro-world),

FIGURE 2
CHARACTERISTICS OF EPISTEMOLOGICAL POSITIONS

IDEALISM	**MENTALISM** (reality is in the mind) —knowledge is itself the object of analysis —we know it with certainty.	**DOGMATIC** (closed to change) —knowledge is exact and cumulative. —declarative in stance. —ahistorical and adultural in nature. —authoritarian. —parent/child approach to others. —learning = memorizing. —teacher and message oriented. —at times arrogant and combatitive. —conversion is radical displacement.	**ABSOLUTES** (affirms that truth can be known) —can know in full.	**CHOICE** (humans reason and choose)
NAIVE REALISM	**REALISM** (reality is the world including the mind. Tests knowledge against experience and history) —knowledge is totally objective. —photograph view of knowledge.		—can know in full. —knowledge is totally objective.	
CRITICAL REALISM	—knowledge is both subjective and objective. —map or model view of knowledge.	**AFFIRMATIONAL** (open to change) —testimonial and irenic in nature. —sees knowledge in cultural and historical contexts. —adult/adult approach. —concern for person and message. —learner oriented. —teach students to think. —more humble attitude. —conversion = a new gestalt.	—know only in part. —knowledge is both objective and subjective.	
INSTRUMENTALISM	—knowledge is totally subjective		**RELATIVISM** (denies that truth can be known) —pragmatism. —test is usefulness and does it work. —anti-conversion.	
DETERMINISM				**DETERMINISTIC** (no human reason or choice)

known earlier, that no theory can possibly describe the newcomers adequately if its concepts and imagery are taken exclusively from the realm of the old. More than that, it became evident that theory in general could no longer be expected to describe reality pictorially, or in one-to-one correspondence to it (1973:78).

He goes on to develop the theory of complementarity between levels of scientific analysis, and suggests that to these can be added theological levels of analysis.

Because critical realists recognize the subjective dimensions of human knowledge, they are also aware that historical and sociocultural contexts influence systems of knowledge. (Because at the deepest levels these context factors have to do with world views, we will examine them later.)

Instrumentalists, on the other hand, see systems of knowledge as problem solving devices. Because neither theories nor belief systems make truth claims, there is no need to integrate them into a single grand conceptual scheme. Nor is there need for complementarity. Mutually contradictory theories and belief systems can be used so long as they best "do the job." Thorough going determinists, on the other hand, see all knowledge as epiphenomenal, as by-products of external forces. It is foolish, therefore, to speak of the integration of knowledge into single or complementary systems. Both of these views, obviously, are unacceptable to committed Christians because they deny any possibility of knowing the truth.

Integration of Theology and Science

Science and theology have emerged as different belief systems in a western world view. How do they relate to each other? Here again the epistemological question plays a key role in determining the nature of the relationship.

It is clear that no real integration can be achieved between an idealist theology and a realist science. The two are built on different foundations, and attempts to build a common structure upon them will inevitably lead to cracks. The two talk past each other, and in the end we will be forced to choose one or the other as our fundamental frame of reference.

It is possible to seek an integration based on different types of realism. Many social scientists take a naive or critical realist approach to their science and an instrumentalist approach to religion. They affirm the truth of their theories and belief systems, but see religion as a useful fiction created by human groups to hold themselves together. For Durkheim, Marx and others, religion is the symbol of a group's authority over the individual. God is merely a projection of the group's power and values on the cosmic screen. Some theologians turn the tables and claim truth for theology, but only practical utility for the sciences. In both cases, one party demeans the other by not taking it seriously.

As the record of the past hundred years shows, integration between a naive realist theology and science was difficult to achieve. Few problems arose in the areas of nuclear physics and chemistry in which theology made no claims. The greatest conflicts arose in areas where the two overlapped, such as in theories about the origin of the universe, about humans, about miracles (Brown 1984), and about the meaning and forces behind history. Each claimed to offer a grand unified theory and attacked the other on points of disagreement. It is not surprising, therefore, that in a naive realist framework, no integration was achieved.

With the collapse of naive realism, the picture has changed. There is a growing acceptance by critical realist and instrumentalist scientists and theologians of each other's disciplines. But the nature of integration differs greatly depending upon the epistemological foundation used.

Integration is unnecessary in an instrumentalist mode. Both science and theology are seen as pragmatic solutions to immediate problems; the only test is results. But instrumentalism undervalues both of them. Few scientists would agree that although astronomy may do a better job than astrology in solving problems, it is no closer to the truth than the latter. Most scientists are convinced that they are discovering truth about nature. Similarly, no evangelical would hold a relativistic view of theology which affirms that Christ is not *the* truth, not even *a* truth, but only a useful way of looking at history.

What would integration look like in a critical realist mode? We must keep in mind that critical realism makes truth claims for its theories and belief systems. Therefore, it calls for a test to evaluate two or more theories formulated to answer a set of questions. For example, we can determine which of two road maps is more accurate and complete. But, as we have seen, critical realism allows for complementary theories that examine the same reality in *different ways*—there may be several types of maps of the same city.

It is possible, therefore, to look for complementarity between theology and science, as long as they share the same world view. This requires a theistic science that accepts the existence of God and seeks to examine the order in the universe he has created. We also need a realist theology that examines God's self-revelation in the history of that world. Both science and theology, then, are based on an examination of real events in history, but focus on different dimensions or levels of reality.

There is a second type of complementarity that we need to explore: that between synchronic and diachronic systems of knowledge. The former seek to understand the structures of reality, how these operate and the functions they serve. For example, a synchronic analysis of a human would include an analysis of the body, its various structures such as the circulatory, assimilative, digestive and reproductive systems, and the way it thinks and moves. It would also analyze the effects of various diseases upon the body.

Diachronic systems of knowledge, on the other hand, look at the history of specific realities. A diachronic analysis of a person would examine her or his life story. It would look at various events in the lives of one or more individuals, and the forces at play and their responses.

This distinction helps us understand the sciences. Most, such as physics, chemistry, biology, psychology, sociology and anthropology, are synchronic in character. They examine the structure of matter, life, persons, groups and cultures. History, and to some extent astronomy, are diachronic.

The distinction also helps us to understand theology. Systematic theology is synchronic. It examines the unchanging nature of God and the fundamental structures of creation. Biblical theology is diachronic. It looks at God's acts and revelation in specific cultural and historical settings. We need both synchronic and diachronic models. They complement each other. We begin with specific experiences in history, and from these we infer the basic structures of reality. And these structural models help us to understand and predict what is going on around us. Normally one is in focus, the other is subsidiary. Synchronic models show us the universal order of things. They do not look at specific events. Consequently, exceptional cases and miracles are out of focus. Diachronic models, on the other hand, look at unique events. Synchronic models help us to *understand* how things operate, but *meaning* ultimately seems to rest in diachronic models—in the story of the universe, of a specific people such as Israel, and of individuals.

Taken together, science and theology, diachronic and synchronic paradigms, provide us with a better understanding of reality (Figure 3). But complementarity does not assure us of integration. We can deal with different belief systems piece-meal, and end with what Clifford Geertz (Hammel and Simmons 1970:50) calls a "stratigraphic approach" to reality. For integration to take place, we need to examine the ways in which complementary belief systems relate to each other. When problems and contradictions arise, we need to examine again our theologies against the biblical data, and our sciences against observational data. The task of integrating the sciences and theology is not simple. But it is easier when we deal with complementarity than with grand conceptual schemes.

FIGURE 3
COMPLEMENTARY BELIEF SYSTEMS

	Diachronic Models	Synchronic Models
Theology	Biblical Theology:	Systematic Theology:
Science	Historical Sciences:	Natural and Social

Epistemology and Christian Missions

What implications do epistemological stances have for Christian missions? Six areas in which epistemology plays a particularly important part in missions thinking are: 1) the way in which the essence of the Gospel is defined, 2) the way in which the relationship of Gospel and culture are viewed, 3) the way in which Christians deal with the contextualization of theology and the resulting theological pluralism, 4) the way in which Christians view non-Christian religions, 5) the way in which Christians relate to non-Christian peoples, and 6) the way in which leadership is developed in younger churches. For lack of space, we can touch only on a few of these.

Cultural Differences and Contextualized Theologies One of the central problems facing all missionaries is how to deal with cultural pluralism. The fact is that people in other cultures put their world together in different ways.

We must recognize the greatness of the early missionaries, their commitment to the Gospel, and the great sacrifices they made. However, for the most part, they were naive realists and idealists. They were convinced that their belief systems were true, and they failed to differentiate the Gospel from their cultural ways. Writing about them, Juhnke (1979:10–11) says:

> They were too confident of the wholesomeness and goodness of their own culture to see the pagan flaws in their own social and political structures. The mission was strongly influenced by nineteenth-century ideas of progress .... Missionaries believed themselves to be participating in a worldwide crusade of human advancement.

For them, too, there could be only one theology. They assumed that their own theology was wholly biblical, and that it was not biased by their cultural and historical contexts.

The consequences of these assumptions were damaging. First, they considered most local customs to be evil and sought to root them out. Little attention was given to the local culture and to the felt needs of the people. Consequently, the Gospel was unnecessarily foreign. In a sense the Gospel is foreign to every culture, for it is God's prophetic voice to sinners and the cultures they create. But to this was added the foreignness of western culture such as dress, buildings, pews, translated hymns, western leadership styles and imported technology. Those who became Christians were often seen as agents of the west.

Second, the missionaries sought to transmit their theologies unchanged to the national church leaders. The relationship was that of parent and child, in which the national leaders were expected to learn the missionary's theology by rote. Much was written about the three selves: self propagating, self supporting and self governing. But little was said about the fourth self: self theologizing. For the most part, national leaders were not encouraged to study the Scriptures for themselves and to develop their own theologies. Deviation from the missionary's theology was often branded as heresy. To young nationalistically minded leaders, this was theological colonialism.

Several forces have changed this picture. The first was the maturation of young churches. First generation national leaders were often simple tribal and village pastors. But the second and third generation ... grew up in Christian settings and were seminary-trained theologians.

The second was the emergence of nationalism around the world. Young national leaders threw off the colonial rule and trappings of the west. Young churches demanded self-rule and the right to study the Scriptures for themselves. This was particularly evident in the independent churches that emerged in many societies.

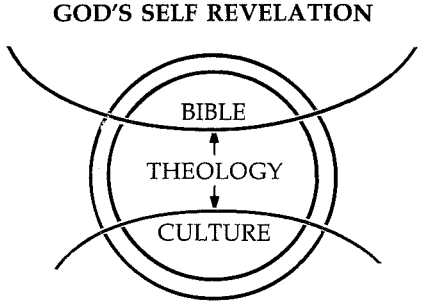
The third was the rise of anthropological thought and the growing awareness among missionaries of the impact of cultural contexts on Bible translations and theology.

Naive realist approaches are becoming untenable in missions, not only because they are no longer intellectually credible, but also because they fail to resolve the problem of theological pluralism that has resulted from missions. Whether we like it or not, young theologians around the world are reading Scripture and interpreting it for their own cultures. To claim that the missionaries' theology is the only correct one can only lead to breaks in the relationships between western missions and the churches they have planted around the world. It also denies the priesthood of all believers, and the work of the Holy Spirit in nonwestern Christians.

Idealist theologies face the same problems, for they, too, are essentially ahistorical and acultural in nature. Moreover, they face the fact that different cultures use different systems of rationality in justifying their beliefs (Luria 1976), so an appeal to universal human reason based on propositional logic is difficult, if not impossible to make.

How would critical realists deal with theological pluralism? First, as realists, they would take the historical and cultural contexts of theology seriously. They see all theology as human interpretations of the biblical revelation within specific contexts (Figure 4). Consequently, different theologies are bound to emerge because different cultures ask different questions, and because they view reality in different ways. For example, Indian Christians must ask what a Christian response to the caste system is, and whether they can use Indian terms such as *deva, Brahman, avatar* and *moksha* for God, incarnation and salvation. These terms are used in Hinduism and normally have Hindu world view connotations. On the other hand, to introduce western or Greek and Hebrew terms makes the Gospel unintelligible to the average Indian. Similarly, Latin American theologians must struggle with the biblical response to the oppression of peasants and the poor.

FIGURE 4
THEOLOGY IS AN UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURES IN A CULTURAL CONTEXT



Second, because critical realists affirm truth in theology, they must deal with these differences. They cannot accept mutually contradictory theological positions. Often different theologies are complementary, for they address diferent needs and situations. But where contradictions emerge, they would be resolved by examining the Scriptures.

But critical realists would also check for cultural biases. Just as we can more clearly see sin in the lives of others, so we can see how the cultural and historical settings of Christians in other lands affects their theology. Conversely, they see the cultural biases of our theology much more clearly than we. Therefore, we need to see the church as an international hermeneutical community, in which Christians and theologians from different lands check one another's cultural biases. In the process, there can emerge out of the current diversity a metacultural and metahistorical theology that is largely freed from the influences of specific human contexts. One benefit of this for western theology would be to free it from its cultural biases, and restore its prophetic voice in the face of modernity. As Linder and Pierard point out (1978), western Christianity is in danger of becoming a civil religion justifying western cultural systems.

All this affects the way critical realists view the training of national leaders. The first missionary task is to translate the Bible; the second is to train national leaders to read and interpret the Scriptures in their own cultural context. While the missionaries are deeply persuaded about their own theological understandings, they must accept the fact that the Holy Spirit also leads national leaders and that the message of the Gospel must be discerned within the community of believers and their leaders, and not by outside leaders alone.

Christianity and Non-Christian Religions How do epistemological positions affect our attitudes toward non-Christian religions? Idealists and naive realists are compelled by their epistemologies to reject other religions as totally wrong, but for different reasons. Both seek to construct grand conceptual schemes, brick by brick, by analyzing discernible *parts* (Gill 1981:20-25, Berger et. al. 1973). For naive realists these are empirical facts; for idealists they are rational propositions. Consequently, other religions and cultures must be radically displaced, not only in their configurational whole, but also in their parts. Old customs, beliefs, and rituals must be destroyed and replaced by new Christian ones. There is little room for reinterpreting them to fit Christianity. Christianity must, therefore, take a combative approach to other religions, and seek to discredit them. The battle must be won on the basis of facts and reason. Conversion, in this epistemological mode, requires a radical change in beliefs and behavior in all their details.

Instrumentalists, on the other hand, see all religions as culture bound, and as serving useful functions in their respective societies. Christianity may be shown to be the best of religions, but it is not unique. Consequently, Christian missionaries should not call for a radical displacement of the old. They should seek to help others better their old religions, and look for an evolutionary movement toward Christianity. Conversion is not central. Helping people to solve their life problems is.

Critical realists fall between these extremes of recognizing only absolutes or relativism. On the one hand they affirm the uniqueness of a Christianity that is faithful to biblical revelation. Consequently, they hold to truth and absolutes, and reject religious relativism. They call for radical conversion to Christ (cf. Kraemer 1938). On the other hand, they recognize that such conversions take place within cultural and historical settings. Young converts cannot totally change the way they see the world. They come with their old categories of thought, and old world view assumptions. These must be changed through careful instruction after conversion. Conversion itself is then not a change in propositional or factual knowledge, it is a change in the overall configuration or *gestalt* in which these are seen; it is a change in allegiance in which Christ is accepted as Lord and the center of their lives. On the synchronic level this means accepting Christ as Lord of all things, on the diachronic level as Lord of history and of the convert's everyday life. The implications of this for the new believer in terms of his or her beliefs, customs and behavior must be worked out daily as the new convert lives under the authority of the Scriptures. The process of sanctification cannot be divorced from that of justification.

Because people live in cultural contexts, the Gospel must be translated into forms and meanings the people understand. But this requries a deep knowledge of other cultures. Missionaries, therefore, must study other religions and dialogue with their leaders, not in order to create a new synthesis between Christianity and other religions, but in order to build bridges of understanding so that the people may hear the call of the Gospel in ways they comprehend without compromising the truth of the Gospel. Because critical realists are concerned deeply about truth, they are aware of the dangers of syncretism and a false Gospel.

Christians and Non-Christians How do epistemological positions influence our attitudes towards non-Christians as persons? Because idealists and naive realists claim certain truth, they often see evangelism as the proclamation of the truth and as an attack on the evils of other religions. This polemical stance often seems arrogant to non-Christians who resent the parent-child relationship implicit within it. Moreover, the emphasis idealists and naive realists place on objectivity and right systems of belief, and their combative approach to other belief systems, often leads to accusations that they are more interested in proving correct doctrine than on winning persons. In both of these positions, emotions, social interaction and other human factors are thought to contaminate reason and truth (Gill 1981:50-52).

Instrumentalists recognize the subjective dimension of human knowledge, and make no claims to truth. Consequently, they accept religious differences uncritically. Often for them, interpersonal relationships and open dialogue are more important than personal convictions.

Critical realists hold to objective truth, but recognize that it is understood by humans in their contexts. There is, therefore, an element of faith, a personal commitment in the knowledge of truth (cf. Peirce 1955). There are several consequences in this. On the one hand, critical realists respect people of other beliefs as thinking adults, and show respect for their convictions. On the other, critical realists have deep convictions about the truth of their belief systems, and bear testimony to these. Missions to non-Christians then begins in witness—in declaring what God has done in their lives through Jesus Christ. They begin with "I believe . . ." and share with others the Good News they have personally experienced (cf. Acts 26:16, 2 Tim. 1:12). Once people have accepted the Gospel, the missionaries can proclaim its authority in their lives. E. Stanley Jones, one of the great missionary evangelists of our time, wrote (1925:141): "When I was called to the ministry, I had a vague notion that I was to be God's lawyer—I was to argue his case for him and put it up brilliantly." After describing his failure in this approach, he continues (1925:141-142):

> This was the beginning of my ministry, I thought—a tragic failure. As I was about to leave the pulpit a Voice seemed to say to me, "Haven't I done anything for you?" "Yes," I replied, "You have done everything for me." "Well," answered the Voice, "couldn't you tell that?" "Yes, I suppose I could," I eagerly replied. So . . . [I] said, "Friends, I see I cannot preach, but I love Jesus Christ. You know what my life was in this community—that of a wild reckless young man—and you know what it now is. You know he has made life new for me, and though I cannot preach, I am determined to love and serve him." . . . The Lord let me down with a terrible thump, but I got the lesson never to be forgotten: in my ministry I was to be, not God's lawyer, but his witness. That would mean that there would have to be living communion with Christ so that there would always be something to pass on. Since that day I have tried to witness before high and low what Christ has been to an unworthy life.

It was on this basis that he later established his effective Round Table method for witnessing to Hindus and Muslims.

Conclusions

I realize that in some ways I have painted a caricature of various epistemological responses to the key missionary questions of our day. But even a caricature can help us to cut through surface impressions to see what lies beneath. Clearly, in a post-modern world we need to reexamine again our epistemological foundations, and to see how they affect our relationships to other people, culture, theologies and religions in a pluralistic world. I am convinced that critical realism is a biblical approach to knowledge (I Cor. 13:12). I am also convinced it is the approach we must take in a post-colonial era in missions in which we must deal with cultural, religious and theological pluralism with deep convictions about the truth, but without arrogance and paternalism.

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THEOLOGY

Karl Barth and Evangelicalism: The Varieties of a Sibling Rivalry

by Donald W. Dayton

In recent years, we have seen a flexing of the muscles of what both insiders and outsiders have come to call "evangelicalism." This current of American religious life is no new phenomenon; what is new is that a culture that apparently thought it had moved beyond taking "evangelicalism" seriously is being forced to reevaluate that easy dismissal. What is true on the cultural level is also reflected in intellectual circles—and in the discipline of theology.

This is perhaps especially true among students of the theology of Karl Barth, where a special affinity between "evangelicals" and Barth has, for example, recently swelled the ranks of the Karl Barth Society with newcomers from a variety of "evangelical" traditions. And the literature on this relationship has so grown that we now have a survey of the discussion, whose title I have appropriated for this article: *Karl Barth and Evangelicalism,* by Gregory C. Bolich (InterVarsity Press, 1980).

But you will notice that I have quickly added to this title my own subtitle, "the varieties of sibling rivalry," to suggest that we are dealing with a matter of greater complexity than we (or Bolich) may at first imagine. Something of the difficulty of the path ahead of us in this article may be suggested by the diversity of "evangelical" opinion about Barth. Reformed theologian Cornelius van Til, on the one hand, has consistently polemicized against Barth in such works as *Christianity and Barthianism* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1962), with an emphasis on the implied dichotomy. In an essay titled, "Has Karl Barth Become Orthodox?" he judged that of all the heresies that have evoked the great creeds as refutation, "no heresy that appeared at any of these was so deeply and ultimately destructive of the gospel as is the theology of Barth."[1] We could survey other such statements—like that of dispensationalist Charles Ryrie who finds "Barthianism" to be a "theological hoax"[2] because it attempts to be both critical and orthodox. But on the other end of the spectrum we find other evaluations that coud hardly be in starker contrast to the judgment of van Til. Donald Bloesch, for example, has insisted that "Karl Barth is himself an evangelical theologian"[3]—though with some qualifications. Between these two extremes may be ranged the variety of "evangelical" judgments on Barth.

But how do we get such diverse readings of Barth from "evangelicals"? From one angle this diversity should be no surprise. Barth has suffered much from his interpreters in all camps. He has often been interpreted from caricature or on the basis of fragmentary readings. Barth is, of course, not without fault in this process. The range of his writings makes the task of adequate interpretation a lifetime task. The dialectical and multifaceted character of his thought means that one is always in danger of reading and extrapolating from one of several facets. And the changes in Barth's thought—especially from the earlier dialectical period to the later Christocentric orientation in which his Christology and the doctrine of incarnation overcome earlier themes—have always provided problems for interpreters. "Evangelical" interpreters have, not surprisingly, shared all these problems.

But there are within the nature of what we call "evangelicalism" itself issues and problems that complicate our discussion. The most profound of these is the "slipperiness" of the term *evangelical.* In the language of W. B. Gallie, it is an "essentially contested concept"[4]—one whose fundamental meaning is at debate. My own efforts to bring clarity to this issue have centered in the development of a typology of the meanings that the term "evangelical" may convey.[5] I would argue that there have been three primary periods in the history of protestantism that have provided content to the word "evangelical." Uses of the word may generally be shown to gravitate toward one or another of these periods or modes of using the word. Let me indicate these meanings:

(1) Many users of the word *evangelical* have in mind primarily the Reformation and its themes, particularly the great *sola*'s (*sola fide, sola gratia, sola Christe, sola Scriptura*) that convey the Reformation call to grace and the centrality of "justification by faith." Usually correlated with these themes are an Augustinian/Reformed anthropology, a doctrine of election, and a predominantly forensic

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view of atonement and salvation. These themes are generally common to the figures of the magisterial Reformation, though we have articulated them in a pattern that may be tipped more toward Lutheranism than Calvinism. But this is in part to reflect the German usage where the word *evangelisch* roughly means "protestant" but particularly Lutheran.

(2) In the Anglo-Saxon world, the word *evangelical* is more likely to gather its connotations from the "evangelical revival" and the "great awakenings." In this period, protestant themes were pushed in new directions and into new configurations. There is an intensification of the soteriological orientation of the Reformation in the turn to a piety of "conversion" that involves a shift of emphasis from "justification" to "regeneration" and often indirectly to sanctification. This orientation flowered in missions, evangelism and the rise of benevolent societies to address every kind of human ill. Nineteenth century revivalism emerged from these currents and accentuated the low church, moralistic and ethical tendencies to be found in this form of evangelicalism. It is important to notice that the preservation of "orthodoxy" is not the major motif of this form of evangelicalism. From the rise of pietism on, it includes an element of protest against orthodoxy in favor of spiritual vitality. The emphasis has been on conversion. The enemy is "nominal Christianity" on the right as much as rationalism and deism on the left. This form of evangelicalism became the dominant form of religion in America for much of the nineteenth century. In Europe it was much more marginal and would have been known in German as *Pietismus* or in its more recent forms as *Neupietismus*, or as the *Erweckungsbewegung*.

(3) Especially since the Civil War and particularly in the USA, there has been a growing split in American Protestantism that culminated in the twentieth century fundamentalist/modernist controversy. Since World War II, a more intellectually articulate and socially and culturally engaged wing of the fundamentalist party has also appropriated the label "evangelical." It is this use of the word "evangelical" that has become the dominant one in our own time. The word in this context refers to a mixed coalition of a variety of theological and ecclesiastical traditions that have found common cause against the rise of "modernity" and the erosion of older forms of orthodoxy under the impact of biblical criticism, the rise of Darwinianism, and, perhaps even more fundamentally, the relativism occasioned by the impact of the social sciences and historical consciousness. In this use of the word, the primary thrust is "conservative" and is concerned with the preservation of "orthodoxy"; the consistent "enemy" is "liberalism" in a variety of forms. The German language was not well prepared to describe this current, but in the last decade or two it has taken over from the English a neologism *evangelikal* with a "k," to represent the post World War II post-fundamentalist evangelicalism that in the wake of the Lausanne Congress of the early 1970s has also become a force in Europe.

This, then, is my typology of uses of the word *evangelical*. Like all typologies it has its problems. Many currents fall between my periods and types. Calvin's emphasis on regeneration, for example, puts him somewhat between types one and two. Some wings of type two were close to the classical Reformation. And type three includes groups also shaped by the earlier currents. Even though one may discern certain continuities by emphasizing one strand or another, I find it both helpful and necessary to distinguish between these various connotations of the word *evangelical*—and to argue that they are finally irreducible. Strict advocates of type one will lump large segments of types two and three with liberalism and Roman Catholicism as fundamentally in error in tending toward "Pelagianism." Similarly, strict adherents to type two will deny the label "evangelical" to many classical expressions of type one and some of the more confessional expressions of type three. Some of the ironies in the modern post-fundamentalist use of the word may be seen in the emerging neo-Catholic movement among evangelicals, whereby holding a commitment to "orthodoxy" and "traditionalism" constant, an evolution into a new sacramentalism is possible. There is a tendency to use the label "evangelical" to describe all sorts of cultural and theological reasons, no matter what the fundamental issue at stake.

The value of this typology will be demonstrated as we turn more fully to examine Barth's relationship to evangelicalism. We must distinguish these usages of the word, because in each case the shape of the discussion with Barth is quite different. But in each case, we will find the relationship ambiguous—sharing Barth's commitments to various degrees but also differing in the appropriation of themes. It is for this reason that we have subtitled this article "the varieties of a sibling rivalry"—to emphasize both the close relationships and the tensions present. With this background let us briefly examine Barth's relationship to each of these currents.

Evangelicalism as Fidelity to Reformation Themes

It is the first version of evangelicalism that is most congruent with Barth's fundamental commitments. The movement of which he was a determinant force has been called "New Reformation Theology." An early British *Festschrift* for Barth was entitled *Reformation Old and New*. In his contribution to that volume, John McConnachie suggested that "no one has done more to reinterpret, transform, and illumine the issues of the Reformation for our day as Karl Barth."[6] It was in many ways the rediscovery of the Reformation that launched Barth on his new theological direction. Eberhard Busch traces this development at Göttingen largely in the words of Barth himself.

> In Göttingen things changed almost at a stroke. Barth now felt that his previous theological view was really a pre-Reformation position .... "Only now were my eyes properly open to the reformers and their message of the justification and the sanctification of the sinner, of faith, of repentance and works, of the nature and the limits of the church and so on. I had a great many new things to learn from them." At that time "I 'swung into line with the Reformation,' as they used to say," not uncritically, but certainly with special attention.[7]

These hints from early in the theological career of Barth were echoed at his retirement when in his final lectures, repeated on his American tour, he did not hesitate to use the word *evangelical* to describe his theology.

> The theology to be introduced here is *evangelical* theology. The qualifying attribute "evangelical" recalls both the New Testament and at the same time the reformation of the sixteenth century. Therefore it may be taken as a dual affirmation: the theology to be considered here is the one which, nourished by the hidden sources of the documents of Israel's history, first achieved unambiguous expression in the writings of the New Testament evangelists, apostles, and prophets; it is also, moreover, the theology newly discovered and accepted by the Reformation of the sixteenth century.[8]

This, at least, was the basic theological intention of Barth: to recover and restate the Reformation recovery of the New Testament gospel. In this Barth would be in accord with our first type of evangelical. But, of course, this congruence of intention does not answer all questions. There is much room for debate about precisely how to retrieve and articulate the Reformation message for our own times. Barth himself was clear about the need to revise Reformation theology at several points:

> Having in the 1920s swung in clearly behind the 'Reformation line,' "I soon saw that it was also necessary to continue it, to arrange the relationship between the law and gospel, nature and grace, election and christology and even between philosophy and theology more exactly and thus differently from the patterns which I found in the sixteenth century. Since I could not become an orthodox "Calvinist," I had even less desire to support a Lutheran confessionalism."[9]

Barth also understood that in each case the basic reason for his reformulation was the same: the pressures of what he called his "Christological concentration." We cannot take time to work out the implications of this move for each of these themes. Let me merely indicate how this concern leads Barth to revise what is generally seen to be the center for Reformation faith (especially for Luther), justification by faith.

> The *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae* is not the doctrine of justification as such, but its basis and culmination: the confession of Jesus Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col 2:3); the knowledge of His being and activity for us and to us and with us. It could probably be shown that this also was the opinion of Luther. If here, as everywhere, we allow Christ to be the center, the starting point, we have no reason to fear that there will be any lack of unity and cohesion, and therefore of systematics in the best sense of the word.[10]

I find this move of Barth's not only appropriate, but a necessary revision of the patterns of thought in Reformation theology. I suppose other implications of Barth's Christological concentration might appear more problematic for some—especially in the doctrine of election, where the revisions seem much more radical. (I shall leave that debate to experts in the Reformed tradition.) I shall only note as an outsider that one sees, for example in the book by James Daane, *The Freedom of God* (Eerdmans, 1973), the pressure, in what might be called evangelical circles, to move in a similar direction as Barth (though interestingly enough in this case without real acknowledgment of the apparent impact of Barth himself). From my vantage point, these questions of Barth seem entirely appropriate and well within the range of the necessary for any "orthodox" retrieval of the Reformation tradition for our own time. And I would concur, for example, with Colin Brown that

> The basic difference between Karl Barth and traditional protestant theology lies, therefore, not only in his doctrine of the word of God. Barth has, in fact, more in common with traditional Protestantism on this score than is sometimes imagined. Whilst there are vital differences, there are things that evangelical theology could learn from Barth without any surrender of vital principle. The basic difference lies in Barth's understanding of the significance of Christ. It is summed up in the contrast between the older idea of the two covenants—the covenant of works and the covenant of grace—and Barth's idea of the single, all-embracing covenant of grace in Christ.[11]

It is in these areas that the discussion ought to be pursued.

If we were to look for a representative of evangelicalism that has most pursued the dialogue with Karl Barth from a commitment to my first paradigm, it would have to be Donald Bloesch, who has found himself increasingly drawn toward Barth as a result of his commitment to the faith of the Reformation.[12] Perhaps we are now in a position to understand better his judgment that Barth is indeed an "evangelical theologian."

Evangelicalism as Expressed in the Pietist Traditions

Our second paradigm of evangelicalism was that expressed most fully in the pietist and awakening traditions. When we turn to this paradigm we are immediately faced with an historical anomaly. Even though it could be argued that this paradigm has been the most influential in the Anglo-Saxon world, there has been almost no English literature of discussion with Barth from this perspective. (The major exception would be the work of Donald Bloesch, who, because he tends to see the rise of "evangelical pietism" as the fulfillment of the Reformation, has engaged Barth from issues that arise from the pietist vision. This can be seen particularly in his book *Jesus is Victor: Karl Barth's Doctrine of Salvation* with its concentration on Barth's soteriology.)

Ironically, we must turn to Germany for the major discussions with Barth from this second paradigm. This is in part because the German counterpart of what we would call evangelicalism in this country is less shaped by fundamentalist concerns and more by themes of nineteenth century revivalism and what is called *Neupietismus*. In part this is because of the dominance of what is called the *Gemeinschaftsbewegung*, a "fellowship" and "higher life" movement that has many affinities with what we call in the Anglo-Saxon world the "Keswick movement." As a result (as I discovered on a recent sabbatical term in Germany), evangelicalism in that context has a distinctly different character than in America—though the scene is becoming increasingly muddied by recent American imports. Thus the German counterpart to the American InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, the *Studenten Mission Deutschland*, is less troubled by apologetics, the concern to preserve orthodoxy, and the American "battle for the Bible," and more fully defined by its concern for the cultivation of the devotional life and its commitment to evangelism and mission. There is a growing interest in Barth in these circles, often mediated by Otto Weber, whose dogmatic work has served as a bridge from the concerns of pietism into contemporary theology.

Slightly before the publication of Bolich's volume in America, there was a counterpart in the German discussion, *Karl Barth und die Pietisten* (Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1978), by Eberhard Busch, the biographer of Barth and one of his last *Assistenten*. Busch has deep family roots in the leadership of the *Gemeinschaftsbewegung*. His book is concerned primarily with the early Barth, the critique of pietism in the early editions of Barth's commentary on Romans, and the responses to it by writers in the various journals of the *Gemeinschaftsbewegung*. (This discussion has been extended in a series of articles by Busch on "Karl Barth und der Pietismus" and a response by editor Ulrich Parzany entitled "Die Pietisten und Karl Barth" that appeared in *Schritte* (July-Sept 1980), a magazine representing roughly a cross between *His* and *Eternity* in this country.)

This dialogue immediately takes a different character because of a special burden not present in other forms of evangelical dialogue with Barth—Barth's own intense polemic against pietism as merely another form of the anthropocentric orientation that manifested itself in liberal neo-Protestantism. In entering this discussion we are immediately drawn into the question of Barth's ambivalent relationships with Schleiermacher and Kierkegaard, both of whom, it has been argued, may have some claim to being a theological articulation of pietist themes. What is primarily at stake in these discussions is Barth's so-called "objectivism," with its concern to ground salvation in a cosmic, external event that is prior to and the ground of any experiential appropriation of it. As he put it in the first edition of the commentary on Romans:

> The Holy Spirit in us is no subjective experience concealed in mystic darkness but is the objective truth that has disclosed itself to us .... It is our life-basis, not our experience.[13]

Two themes regularly occur in Barth's critique of pietism. One of these is related to one of the structural features of the fourth volume of the *Church Dogmatics* where ecclesiology takes precedence over the treatment of the response of the individual Christian. Barth attacks what he sees as the individualistic tendency of pietism in which the experience of God's grace *pro me* obscures the priority of the *pro nobis*. Thus in IV/1, after almost 600 pages of theological foundations—primarily Christological—Barth devotes only 40 pages to the act of faith. In doing this Barth is self-consciously setting himself against both the *Glaubenslehre* tradition and pietism.

> In the last centuries (on the broad way which leads from the older Pietism to the present-day theological existentialism inspired by Kierkegaard) the Christian has begun to take himself seriously in a way which is not at all commensurate with the seriousness of Christianity. . . . From the bottom up we can neither approve nor make common course with this procedures. We shall give to the individual Christian and his faith the attention which he demands, but it must be at this point—not at the beginning of our way, but very briefly at the end.[14]

The other side of Barth's critique of pietism we have already indicated is grounded in his so-called "objectivism." Barth is concerned to maintain the priority of the salvation wrought for us *extra nos* in the work of Christ. He fears that the *pro me* and *in me* of pietism may obscure the *extra nos* as well as the *pro nobis* and *in nobis*. As Barth put it in dialogue with Methodist pastors: "I do not deny the experience of salvation. . . . But the experience of salvation is what happened on Golgotha. In contrast to that, my experience is only a vessel."[15] We know this to be a fundamental theme in Barth, one that stretches minds shaped by more traditional theologies most with the difficult claim that all are not only *de jure* justified but also sanctified in Christ prior to any *de facto* appropriation or acknowledgement of that fact.

Here we are very close to the disputed question of how best to understand the universalistic themes in Barth. This issue arises in

any "evangelical" discussion with Barth, though with different concerns in each of the three paradigms. From the pietist or second paradigm, the focus is less on election or eternal destiny and more on the efficacy of grace and Barth's relativizing of the boundary between believers and unbelievers. Busch reports that this has been the major unresolved issue in Barth's dialogue with representatives of pietism.[16] Far be it from me to attempt to resolve these issues here. I am convinced, however, that Barth is often caricatured on this issue and that his denials that he is a universalist need to be taken more seriously than they often are. And several readings of IV/2 have convinced me that Barth posits more difference between believers and unbelievers than the awareness of the former of the salvation wrought for all. But the very difficulty of establishing that and the "slipperiness" of Barth's language in dealing with these themes indicate that there is a real issue here between Barth and the pietists.

On the other issues—the priority of the *extra nos* and the *pro nobis* over the *pro me*—I have more difficulty seeing that the issue is one of genuine substance. It seems to me that Barth reads pietism through its most decadent forms. I do not think that classical pietists, at least, really understood themselves to actualize salvation so much as to fully appropriate it. And even if we grant a tendency toward individualism in this evangelical vision, we should also note that this vision has been exceedingly creative of communal forms of Christian life and piety—from the *collegia pietatis* of pietism to the bands and societies of Methodism. At this point, there is clearly a difference of emphasis between Barth and representatives of this evangelical vision.

Barth's relationship to pietism is not fully grasped by noting only his correctives to it. Busch points out the pietist influences in Barth's own background. One cannot help but notice Barth's appropriation of and praise for pietist exegesis (cf., for example, his use of Bengel on I Corinthians 13 at the end of IV/2). Nor are we prepared by Barth's polemic for his growing appreciation for Zinzendorf and his piety. Barth discovered several of his basic themes in Zinzendorf, and came to see him as "perhaps the only genuine Christocentric of the modern age (fools would say Christomonist)."[17] In dialogue with modern Moravians, Barth shared increasing fascination with Zinzendorf's linking of Christ as Savior and Creator, his tending to speak of our sanctification as fulfilled in Christ, and his tendency to polemicize against less Christocentrically oriented representatives of pietism.

Nor may we forget the impact of the Blumhardts on Barth and the significance of the slogan *Jesus Sieger* that emerged in the much discussed "exorcism" in Möttlingen. Barth is inclined to appreciate themes from this event as mediated by the younger Blumhardt and Leonard Ragaz in the religious socialist movement, with the implication that this movement toward a world-transforming understanding of grace is a decidedly "unpietistic" emergence from pietistic roots. I am coming to the position that it is of the essence of pietism's shattering of the Lutheran *simul justus et peccator* with a strong doctrine of regeneration that soon overflows into culture and society. A similar movement has taken place in Methodism and elsewhere. And even though Barth's appropriation of "Jesus as Conqueror" and "Overcomer" may be given a new content by his "objectivism," it may well be that in this—one of his most central themes—Barth is more dependent on pietist currents than he realizes. If so, Barth's relationship to this form of evangelicalism is more dialectical than his polemics would at first suggest.

Evangelicalism as the Defense of Orthodoxy

Finally, we turn to the last paradigm, the one that is probably the most common use of the word *evangelical* in our own time. As we have already suggested, here we have less a movement that can be defined in terms of its positive commitments and more of a complex coalition in opposition to a common enemy—liberalism or perhaps modernity in general. It is a much disputed question whether fundamentalism, or evangelicalism in this sense, can be more precisely defined theologically. Ernest Sandeen, for example, has argued in his *Roots of Fundamentalism*, that the movement must be seen theologically as the rise of premillenialism in the nineteenth century and its coalescence with the so-called "Princeton theology" of the same period—the bridge being the view of Scripture, specifically the doctrine of inerrancy. Thus we see the effort of the Evangelical Theological Society, for example, to build its coalition since World War II on a single platform—the doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture.

Any means of describing the character of fundamentalism will inherently be reductionist and one-sided. To focus our discussion, however, we need to pick out one discernible tradition for analysis. Probably the most useful for our puposes is the "Princeton theology," already mentioned. This theological tradition, especially its doctrine of Scripture, has become influential beyond its normal confessional boundaries. The struggles at Princeton that led to the founding of Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia are in many ways the classic illustration of the fundamentalist/modernist controversy. The shape of this theology could be described in several ways, but for our purposes we may note that it attempted to preserve the theological formulations of Protestant scholastic orthodoxy—particularly at the point of the doctrine of Scripture. The importance of orthodoxy in this sense for modern evangelicalism is confirmed by Bernard Ramm in *The Evangelical Heritage* (Word, 1973), where he defines "evangelical" in terms of this movement and recognizes the influence of Princeton even upon his own Baptist tradition. I find this way of describing evangelicalism highly inadequate, but do agree that this is the dominant theological construct in the post-fundamentalist evangelical experience that is epitomized in Westminster and Fuller seminaries, for example, or in the pages of *Christianity Today*. And most of the modern "evangelical" dialogue with Barth in this country has been out of this theological tradition.

We can also see in this paradigm the basis for both attention and revulsion between Barth and this variation of evangelicalism. Barth emerged in the twentieth century as the most powerful critic of "liberalism," the *bête noir* of modern evangelicalism. Yet his standpoint was one of a "neo-orthodoxy" that broke the categories of the older orthodoxy. Barth attempted to articulate a biblical starting point, but his appropriation of Scripture was "post-critical" while most modern evangelicals were still committed to a largely "pre-critical" position that could only see such an agenda as a "theological hoax" (again to use the words of Charles Ryrie).

Barth even reappropriated the traditions of protestant orthodoxy, while at the same time recasting them in new forms and conceptualities. This last point is worth further elaboration. Protestant orthodoxy has by and large had bad press in modern theology. Yet it was the rediscovery of this orthodoxy that played a crucial role in the emergence of Barth's own *Church Dogmatics*. Barth describes this and his relation to orthodoxy in a preface to Heppe's *Reformed Dogmatics*.

> I shall never forget the spring vacation of 1924. I sat in my study at Göttingen, faced with the task of giving lectures on dogmatics for the first time. No one can ever have been more plagued than I then was with the problem, could I do it? and how? . . .
>
> Then it was that, along with the parallel Lutheran work of H. Schmid, Heppe's volume just recently published fell into my hands; out of date, dusty, unattractive, almost like a table of logarithms, dreary to read, stiff and eccentric on almost every page I opened . . .
>
> I read, I studied, I reflected; and found that I was rewarded with the discovery, that here at last I was in the atmosphere in which the road by way of the Reformers to Holy Scripture was a more sensible and natural one to tread, than the atmosphere, now only too familiar to me, of the theological literature determined by Schleiermacher and Ritschl.
>
> At the same time I was also aware that a return to this orthodoxy . . . could not be contemplated.[18]

We may see in this quotation epitomized the frustration that Barth evokes among evangelicals. He seems to veer toward them and to share fundamental commitments, but at the last moment he moves off in a new direction that is beyond their comprehension. We could pursue this discussion from many angles. (Fortunately much of the evangelical dialogue with Barth is summarized in Bol-

ich.) Let me allude to only two of the most basic issues—Barth's doctrine of Scripture and whether his view of history allows the resurrection to occur in time and space.

The evangelical debate about Barth's view of Scripture has produced numerous articles and at least one full monograph on *Karl Barth's Doctrine of Holy Scripture* (Eerdmans, 1962) by Klaas Runia. On the most fundamental level, as we have already indicated, the clash is between pre-critical and post-critical use of Scripture. As Barth comments in the first preface to his commentary on Romans, if forced to choose between the older doctrine of verbal inspiration with accompanying modes of interpretation and the products of modern critical interpretation, he would go with the former. But Barth, of course, refuses to be captured by that way of putting the question and frustrates observers on both sides by using Scripture in a manner continuous with the classical theological traditions of the church while reflecting a critical consciousness. We cannot hope to resolve an issue that the church has struggled with for at least a couple of centuries. I will only comment from my own perspective that the pre-critical option still maintained by many, if not most, modern evangelicals is, at least for me, impossible. The significance of Barth for this issue is primarily that he transcends the evangelical way of putting the question.

Another point at issue in the evangelical dialogue with Barth is expressed in the accusation that for Barth, the Bible is not the word of God written and therefore objectively authoritative but only *becomes* the word of God in the moment of reading under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit or according to the subjective whims and predilections of the reader. My own reading of Barth finds this to be a caricatured and one-sided understanding of Barth, though it may point to a tendency of Barth's "actualism" and his unwillingness to permit a totally objective, absolute authority in the Bible as such. Perhaps I am too shaped by pietist and Wesleyan exegesis—which, for example, in the interpretation of I Timothy 2:16, has also, over against the orthodox concern for the once-for-all process of inscripturation in the past, emphasized the present "inspiring" work of the Holy Spirit. But I must confess that I find it almost ludicrous to accuse Barth of rampant "subjectivism"—especially in view of our earlier discussion of the pietist concern with Barth's rigorous "objectivism."

More to the point are the implications of Barth's christological concentration. For Barth, Christ is the epistemological hinge; for the evangelicals, it is the Bible. Most evangelical formulations answer the question of our knowledge about God by some version of "God wrote a book" that makes Christ epistemologically irrelevant. For Barth this generates the "irremediable danger of consulting Holy Scripture apart from the centre, and in such a way that the question of Jesus Christ ceases to be the controlling and comprehensive question."[19] From the evangelical side, Barth's position reduces the Scripture to the role of a mere witness to the revelation of God and not the revelation itself. The level of absoluteness that the evangelicals invest in the text itself is obviously another reason for their reluctance to have that text open to critical analysis. Barth's shift of the fundamental hinge is one reason he can be more open to criticism. Those questions cannot be resolved here, and I would only reveal my own prejudices in indicating any further that I find Barth's formulations to be vastly superior. Suffice it to say that the evangelical grasp of Barth's doctrine of Scripture is becoming more subtle and appropriate,[20] and that Bolich argues that it is at the point of Scripture that Barth has the most to contribute to modern evangelicalism.

A second major point of evangelical discussion with Barth has revolved around his views of history. Several evangelicals, including Cornelius Van Til, John Warwick Montgomery, and Fred Klooster, have acused Barth of splitting history into two realms, *Historie* (the realm of actual, factual history) and *Geschichte* (the realm of meaningful history and God's transcendent action) so that, for example, the crucifixion happens in *Historie*, but the resurrection only in *Geschichte*.[21]

The range of questions involved here is very complex and the issues much debated, within and without evangelical circles. Evangelicals have not been the only ones to accuse Barth of splitting history in this way. Whether or not one accepts this particular criticism of Barth, it is clear that this aspect of Barth's thought—his views of history, historical method, their relation to revelation, etc.—is at least problematic and perhaps the Achilles heel of his theological program. It is clear that the theological problems of both Wolfhart Pannenberg and Jürgen Moltmann, as different as they may now be seen to be, both were launched to some extent against Barth at some of these points.

It has become increasingly clear that the earlier evangelical critique of Barth (that his view does not allow the resurrection to be an "historical" event in the normal sense) cannot be sustained. In volume IV of the *Church Dogmatics* Barth became increasingly clear about his affirmation that "the event of God's loving" described in John 3:16

> did not take place in heaven, but on earth. It did not take place in secret, but it can be known (i.e. not as a purely spiritual process, but as something which according to I John 13:1, can be heard and seen with our eyes and touched, yes, handled with our hands).[22]

And of the resurrection, Barth has insisted that "it happened in the same sense as his crucifixion and his death, in the human sphere and the human time."[23]

What is really at stake in the discussion with Barth at this point is an issue of historiography and historical method—whether there can be an "historical" or "apologetic" *proof* of the historicity of the resurrection. Barth is quite clear in his denial of this:

> There is no proof, and there obviously cannot and ought not to be any proof, for the fact that this history did take place (proof, that is, according to the terminology of modern historical scholarship).[24]

There is a genuine issue here—one described well by evangelical New Testament scholar George Eldon Ladd:

> The basic problem for the modern theologian is this: Shall we insist upon a definition of history broad enough to include such supra-historical events as the resurrection; or shall we accept the modern view of history as a working method but insist that there is a dimension within history which transcends historical control? The latter is the method of Karl Barth, and even though it calls down the wrath of Rudolf Bultmann . . . it appears to be the only adequate explanation.[25]

Since Ladd wrote these lines, the debate has proceeded along different lines and the first option has been powerfully defended by Pannenberg. The point to be made here is that the genuine debate that Barth raises here is not one between orthodoxy and heterodoxy or between evangelicalism in this sense and a position that is not "evangelical"—but an issue that faces all modern theology and one that has thus necessarily become also an "intra-evangelical" debate.

The evaluation of the evangelical debates about Barth's views of history and the resurrection perhaps illustrates how Barth has become the bridge for many evangelicals into contemporary theological discussion. The fact that Barth is in many ways no longer at the center of contemporary theological struggles which have often moved on in different directions may limit the significance of this "bridge." But in the present historical situation, with its inherited chasms between the grandchildren of both fundamentalists and modernists, we may need to value any bridges that are available. It may well be that the ecumenical significance of Barth's thought has as yet unexplored aspects. Barth's dialectical and ambivalent relationship to the varieties of currents that claim the label "evangelical" may be a means of drawing them all into closer theological dialogue not only among themselves but also into the broader theological world, hopefully for the mutual edification of all concerned. There is certainly extensive evidence that this has already taken place and that it is, among "evangelicals," gaining force. I would not wish to attempt to predict the future, but we should not ignore the significance of the continuing discussion between "Karl Barth and Evangelicalsim" even amidst the confusing but sometimes illuminating complexities occasioned by the "varieties of a sibling rivalry."

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[1] Cornelius Van Til, "Has Karl Barth Become Orthodox?" *Westminster Theological Journal* XVI

(May, 1954), 181.
[2] Charles C. Ryrie, *Neo-orthodoxy* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1956), p. 62.
[3] Donald Bloesch, "A Reassessment of Karl Barth," chapter IV of *The Evangelical Renaissance* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973), p. 81.
[4] Cf. Colin Brown, "The Concept of 'Evangelical,'" *Churchman* 95 (1981), 104-9, and William J. Abraham, *The Coming Great Revival* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984).
[5] This typology was first developed in "The Social and Political Conservatism of Modern American Evangelicalism," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 32 (Winter, 1977), 72-74, but also in "Whither Evangelicalism" in Theodore Runyan (editor), *Sanctification and Liberation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1981).
[6] John McConnachie, "Reformation Issues Today," in F.W. Camfield (editor), *Reformation Old and New: A Tribute to Karl Barth* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1947), p. 103.
[7] Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth: His Life from Letters and Autobiographical Texts* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), p. 143.
[8] Karl Barth, *Evangelical Theology: An Introduction* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963), p. 5
[9] Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth*, pp. 210-11.
[10] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV/1, pp. 527-8.
[11] Colin Brown, *Karl Barth and the Christian Message* (London: Tyndale Press, 1967), p. 139.
[12] This attitude is most fully evidenced in Donald Bloesch, *Jesus is Victor: Karl Barth's Doctrine of Salvation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1976).
[13] P. 114 as translated by James D. Smart, *The Divided Mind of Modern Theology: Karl Barth and Rudolf Bultmann, 1908-1933* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), p. 85.
[14] *Church Dogmatics*, IV/1, p. 741.
[15] Reported by Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth*, p. 447.
[16] Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth*, pp. 445-6.
[17] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV/1, p. 683.
[18] From Barth's foreword to Heinrich Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1950), pp. v-vi.
[19] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV/1, p. 368.
[20] Cf. for example the work of Howard Loewen, of which there is an early report in Karl Barth's "Doctrine of Scripture," *Studia Biblica et Theologica* I (March, 1971), 33-49.
[21] Cf. Fred H. Klooster, "Karl Barth's Doctrine of Jesus Christ," *Westminster Theological Journal* XXIV (May, 1962), 137–172; John Warwick Montgomery, "Karl Barth and Contemporary Theology of History," *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theology* VIII (Winter, 1965), 39–49; and the various writings of Cornelius van Til, especially those mentioned above.
[22] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV/1, p. 70.
[23] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV/i, p. 333.
[24] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV/1, p. 335.
[25] George Eldon Ladd, "The Resurrection and History," *Dialog* I (Autumn, 1962), 56.

CHURCH HISTORY

The Decade (1973-1982) in Pentecostal-Charismatic Literature: A Bibliographic Essay

by Cecil M. Robeck, Jr.

The past decade has seen a substantial increase in the number of books which have addressed issues related to the history, theology, and practices of charismatic renewal. This article, while by no means intending to provide a list of all such publications, is a short bibliographic essay outlining some of the more important books along these lines. They include studies undertaken by authors who represent a variety of theological positions. Some studies are clearly directed toward the subject of charismatic renewal while others are more obliquely related. It is hoped this essay will serve as a reference work for future use.

The present charismatic renewal's relationship to historic or classical Pentecostalism goes almost without saying. Much of its theology and practice has been greatly influenced by that of classical Pentecostalism. Several books have been published within the past decade which trace the origins of classical Pentecostalism, enabling us more fully to understand the relationship between it and the contemporary charismatic renewal.

Virtually all classical Pentecostal denominations around the world trace their origins to the Azusa Street Mission revival in Los Angeles, California, between 1906 and 1909. Two accounts written by first hand observers recently appeared. The first, Frank Bartleman's *Azusa Street* (Plainfield: Logos, 1980) is a reprint of his *How "Pentecost" Came to Los Angeles*, originally published in 1925. Long out of print and indeed quite rare, this diary of events appears in unabridged form edited by Pentecostal historian Vinson Synan who has provided an extended introduction which placed the book in its broader context. A.C. Valdez's *Fire on Azusa Street* (Costa Mesa: Gift Publications, 1980) provides a second eyewitness account of what went on at the mission during those important years.

The photographic reproduction of the first thirteen issues of "The Apostolic Faith" in Fred T. Corum's *Like As of Fire* (1981) provides a valuable resource on Azusa Street history. Published between September 1906 and May 1908 from the Azusa Street Mission, these papers, now available from the Gospel Publishing House in Springfield, Missouri, outline the influence of that mission, including sermons and articles by those in leadership at the mission, reports of worldwide revival and letters written from those who had passed through the mission during its formative years.

Joining Vinson Synan's authoritative study of American Pentecostalism, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), is social historian Robert Mapes Anderson's *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism* (New York: Oxford Press, 1979). This is a skillful analysis of the tradition, tracing its history from reformed holiness roots, outlining key doctrines and providing a rare perspective on early leaders through the 1920s. David Edwin Harrell Jr. has chosen to trace the history of healing and charismatic revivals in modern America in *All Things Are Possible* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1975). He provides much data and traces connections between various healing revivalists who sometimes turned their disadvantages into opportunities for personal advantage while also ministering to multitudes.

Walter J. Hollenweger's worldwide survey *The Pentecostals: The Charismatic Movement in the Churches* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1972) has been particularized by a number of regional and Third World studies. Friendship Press of the World Council of Churches has reprinted Christian Lalive d'Epinay's *Haven of the Masses: A Study of the Pentecostal Movement in Chile* (1969). Cornelia Butler Flora has contributed *Pentecostalism in Colombia* (East Brunswick: Fairleigh Dickinson University, 1976), and G. C. Oosthuizen has given us *Pentecostal Penetration into the Indian Community in South Africa* (Durban, 1975). These volumes provide historical, theological, and sociological assessments. Anthropologist Stephen D. Glazier has edited a collection of anthropological case studies on Caribbean and Latin American Pentecostalism in *Perspectives on Pentecostalism* (Washington D.C.: University Press of America, 1980), while James E. Worsfold has given us an extensive *History of the Charismatic Movements in New Zealand* (Bradford, U.K.: Puritan Press, 1974).

Ethnic issues have not been ignored in this decade. The prolific Walter J. Hollenweger has offered his short *Pentecost between Black and White* (Belfast: Christian Journals Ltd., 1974) which deals, among other things, with Black and Hispanic manifestations of Pentecostalism. The late Victor de Leon has provided *The Silent Pentecostals* (privately published, 1979), a survey of American Hispanic Pentecostalism. He aimed to provide a biographical history of the Pentecostal movement among Hispanics, but dealt with the subject largely within the context of the Assemblies of God.

Three sociological studies, two of them dealing with ethnic issues, bear mention as well. The University of Pittsburgh Press has given us Melvin D. Williams's *Community in a Black Pentecostal Church* (1974), while the University of Massachusetts Press has recently published Arthur E. Paris's *Black Pentecostalism: Southern Religion in an Urban Setting* (1982). The third sociological study deals with neo-pentecostalism and the socioeconomic deprivation theory. It is Cecil David Bradfield's *Neo-Pentecostalism: A Sociological Assessment* (Washington D.C.: University Press of America, 1979). Two volumes appearing within the past decade are composed largely of papers originally given at meetings of the Society for Pentecostal Studies. Vinson Synan edited the historical *Aspects of Pentecostal-Charismatic Origins* (Plainfield: Logos, 1975) including articles by Martin Marty, Donald Dayton, Larry Christenson, Edward O'Connor and an array of Pentecostals. Russell P. Spittler edited *Perspectives on the New Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1976), including studies by Walter Hollenweger, Clark Pinnock, Kilian McDonnell, J. Rodman Williams, William Smarin, Donald Gelpi, Morton Kelsey and others. It provides historical, theological

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and reflective articles relevant to the charismatic renewal.

Two other edited volumes are the result of denominational studies on the subject. The papers presented at the Fifth Oxford Institute on Methodist Theological Studies held in 1973 appear in Dow Kirkpatrick, ed., *The Holy Spirit* (Nashville: Tidings, 1974). Similarly, the papers presented in a series of Lutheran discussions held between 1974 and 1976 in a study project of the Division of Theological Studies of the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A. are available in Paul D. Opsahl, ed., *The Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1978). A third edited volume of importance is Edward D. O'Connor, C.S.C., ed., *Perspectives on Charismatic Renewal* (South Bend: University of Notre Dame, 1975) which among other things provides a 40-page bibliography on "The Literature of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, 1967-1975." Michael P. Hamilton has edited a similarly helpful volume called *The Charismatic Movement* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), complete with a record of speaking in tongues, while J. Elmo Agrimson, president of the American Lutheran Church's Southeastern Minnesota District, edited *Gifts of the Spirit and the Body of Christ: Perspectives on the Charismatic Movement* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1974).

It is clear that classical Pentecostalism and the charismatic movement have spoken often of the importance of the Holy Spirit's presence and ministry in the church. A number of works written on the Spirit within the past decade warrant mention. George T. Montague, S.M., former editor of the "Catholic Biblical Quarterly," has offered a technically competent and instructive work called *The Holy Spirit: Growth of a Biblical Tradition* (New York: Paulist Press, 1976) in which he analyzes the principal canonical texts on the subject and shows how the people of God grew in their understanding of the Spirit. Building upon his important work on *Baptistm in the Holy Spirit* (Naperville: Allenson and Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970), James D. G. Dunn has given us his sometimes controversial but equally stimulating *Jesus and the Spirit: A Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976). Michael Green, editor of the "I Believe" series, has written the popular, balanced and practical *I Believe in the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975). Classical Pentecostal Stanley M. Horton has given us his thoughts in *What the Bible Says about the Holy Spirit* (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1979). Presbyterian charismatic J. Rodman Williams, professor of theology at the School of Biblical Studies, CBN University, has contributed yet another book on the subject titled, *The Gift of the Holy Spirit Today* (Plainfield: Logos, 1980).

Eduard Schweizer has produced a small but important work, *The Holy Spirit* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), in which he analyzes the biblical evidence theologically and proceeds to address its implication in the life of the church. Edward Malatesta, S.J., edited *The Spirit of God in Christian Life* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977) dealing with issues of sanctification. Methodist Kenneth G. Greet's "Cato" lectures delivered at the last General Conference of Australasian Methodism prior to the formation of the Uniting Church of Australia, addressed the subjects of Pentecostalism and charismatic renewal in *When the Spirit Moves* (London: Epworth, 1975). Finally, the results of a symposium sponsored by the Institute for Theological Research, held at the University of South Africa in 1980 have appeared in W. S. Vorster, ed., *The Spirit in Biblical Perspective* (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1980).

The subject of baptism in the Holy Spirit has remained more or less dormant since the works of Dale Bruner and James Dunn appeared in 1970—with two notable exceptions. Anthony A. Hoekema's two volumes on tongues (1966) and Spirit baptism (1972) have been re-issued in a single volume titled *Tongues and Spirit Baptism: A Biblical and Theological Evaluation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981). Charismatic Thomas A. Smail, editor of Britain's "Theological Renewal," has addressed the subject with some freshness in *Reflected Glory: The Spirit in Christ and Christians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975).

Gifts of the Spirit have received a great deal of attention, unfortunately not all of it helpful. Robert L. Thomas of Talbot Theological Seminary has provided a well written study of 1 Corinthians 12 through 14 from a modified dispensational perspective called *Understanding Spiritual Gifts* (Chicago: Moody, 1978). Kenneth Kinghorn of Asbury Theological Seminary and John Koenig of Union Theological Seminary have provided helpful works on gifts, the former giving us a popularized *Gifts of the Spirit* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1976), the latter providing a more substantial biblical theology, *Charismata: God's Gifts for God's People* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978). Roman Catholic Francis A. Sullivan, S.J., has written a short yet impressive work, *Charisms and Charismatic Renewal: A Biblical and Theological Study* (Ann Arbor: Servant, 1982), while Fuller professor C. Peter Wagner has attempted to link the subjects of spiritual gifts and church growth in *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* (Glendale: Regal Books/Gospel Light, 1979). Finally, William J. Sneck has provided a scholarly phenomenological analysis of several gifts in his *Charismatic Spiritual Gifts* (Washington D.C.: University Press of America, 1981).

Specific gifts receiving treatment during the past decade are several. Healing and prophecy have received the most attention, but other studies need to be mentioned as well. On healing are Father Francis MacNutt's classics *Healing* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria, 1974) and *The Power to Heal* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria, 1977), the latter being available since 1979 as a Bantam paperback. These two works have received wide circulation within the Catholic charismatic renewal movement. Anglican Bishop Morris Maddocks has writtten *The Christian Healing Ministry* (London: SPCK, 1981), while classical Pentecostal Hugh Jeters links healing to the atonement in *By His Stripes: A Biblical Study on Divine Healing* (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1977). InterVarsity has published the pastorally-oriented work of Roy Lawrence, *Christian Healing Rediscovered* (Downers Grove, 1980).

Morton T. Kelsey has produced an important work on the subject called *Healing and Christianity* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973) in which he surveys the history, theology and praxis of healing in the church. More recently, Klaus Seybold and Ulrich B. Mueller have provided a thoughtful biblical theology on the subject of *Sickness and Healing* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1981). Of particular interest to those involved in the integration of science and theology is physician John Wilkinson's *Health and Healing: Studies in New Testament Principles and Practice* (Edinburgh: Handsel, 1980). Finally, two books on inner healing which have found widespread use in charismatic renewal circles have been Ruth Carter Stapleton's *The Gift of Inner Healing* (Waco: Word, 1976) and John A. Sanford's *Healing and Wholeness* (New York: Paulist Press, 1972).

During the past decade, the gift of prophecy has received the most intense study of any of the gifts. No fewer than eight major monographs or books have been written in a variety of languages on this subject. The best available in English are: David Hill, *New Testament Prophecy* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1979), and the massive work of David Aune, *Prophecy and Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), which deals with every major prophetic oracle through the mid-Second Century. Those wishing to do more in-depth study of this gift will benefit from three other works in English: E. Earle Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978) which also has much to say on words of wisdom and of knowledge; J. Panagopoulos, ed., *Prophetic Vocation in the New Testament and Today* (Leiden: Brill, 1977), and Trinity's Wayne A. Grudem's revised Cambridge Ph.d. dissertation *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians* (Washington D.C.: University Press of America, 1982). M. Eugene Boring has recently added a monograph to the field called *Sayings of the Risen Jesus: Christian Prophecy in the Synoptic Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982) in which he gives a major treatment to the question of "how the post-Easter Jesus continued to speak to his church through Christian prophets." Bruce Yocum, active in the Catholic charismatic renewal, has given us a very helpful book on how the gift is generally defined, used and tested in Pentecostal and charismatic contexts in *Prophecy: Exercising the Prophetic Gifts of the Spirit in the Church Today* (Ann Arbor: Word of Life, 1976).

The gift of tongues, long overdue for major biblical and theological study, has received some treatment in recent publications. William J. Samarin has undertaken a fine linguistic study of speaking in tongues in his *Tongues of Men and Angels* (New York: Macmillan, 1972). Felicitas D. Goodman, *Speaking in Tongues: A Cross-Cultural Study of Glossolalia* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1972), on the other hand, has looked at the subject as an anthropologist

interested in linguistics and psychology. David Christie Murray's *Voice from the Gods: Speaking in Tongues* (London: Routledge & Keagan Paul, 1978) addresses the subject phenomenologically, for the most part, and spends too much space on the phenomenon in Spiritualism. Another phenomenological study, much more helpful in its treatment of this gift in the Christian context, is Cyril G. Williams's *Tongues of the Spirit: A Study of Pentecostal Glossolalia and Related Phenomena* (Cardiff: University of Wales, 1981). Its chief drawback is its price of $50.

Two other books deserving mention include the collection of essays from a variety of perspectives (psychological, historical, pastoral, etc.) edited by Watson E. Mills, *Speaking in Tongues, Let's Talk About It* (Waco: Word, 1973). Robert Gromacki's 1966 work, *The Modern Tongues Movement*, has been revised and is distributed by Baker. Its perspective is decidedly dispensational.

Fuller Graduate School of Psychology professor H. Newton Malony and psychology alumnus A. Adams Lovekin have co-authored a book on speaking in tongues from the perspective of the behavioral sciences which will be issued later this year as *Glossolalia: Social and Psychological Perspectives* (New York: Oxford Press, anticipated May 1985).

Other books devoted to the study of specific gifts which merit attention include Thomas C. Campbell and Gary B. Reierson, *The Gift of Administration: Theological Bases for Ministry* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1981). Leopold Sabourin, while not dealing with the gift of miracles as such, has written an outstanding work called *The Divine Miracles Discussed and Defended* (Rome: Catholic Book Agency, 1977). Martyrdom is addressed in William Horbury and Brian McNeil, eds., *Suffering and Martyrdom in the New Testament* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1981), the article by G.W.H. Lampe, "Martyrdom and Inspiration," being exceptionally appropriate in light of the early Christian understanding of martyrdom as a gift of the Spirit.

Gifts of leadership are addressed by Martin Hengel in *The Charismatic Leader and His Followers* (New York: Crossroad, 1981) particularly as related to Jesus. Historians will find Paul Jonathan Fedwick's *The Church and the Charisma of Leadership in Basil of Caesarea* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1979) provides an equally intriguing case study. Catholic theologian Edward Schillebeeckx has written *Ministry: Leadership in the Community of Jesus Christ* (New York: Crossroad, 1981) where, among other things, he discusses celibacy as a charisma. Christian leadership in the persons of evangelists and teachers are expounded in David Watson's *I Believe in Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976) and Joseph A. Grassi's *The Teacher in the Primitive Church and the Teacher Today* (Santa Clara: University of Santa Clara, 1973).

The all-important question of discernment of spirits has been the objective of study in Casiano Floristan and Christian Duquoc's interesting and provocative book *Discernment of the Spirit and of Spirits* (New York: Crossroad, 1979). Morton Kelsey has also addressed himself to this subject in *Discernment: A Study in Ecstasy and Evil* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978).

Several works have appeared since 1973 which address the subject of the charismatic renewal within various traditions. All of the major formal statements on the subject which have been issued by church bodies around the world since 1960 have been collected by Kilian McDonnell in his three-volume work *Presence, Power, Praise* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1981).

Calvin H. Chambers has addressed himself to the subject of charismatic worship in the Reformed tradition in his book *In Spirit and in Truth* (Ardmore: Dorrance and Co., 1980). Erling Jorstad wrote *Bold in the Spirit: Lutheran Charismatic Renewal in America Today* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1974), which has since been joined by Larry Christenson's *The Charismatic Renewal Among Lutherans* (Minneapolis: Lutheran Charismatic Renewal Services, 1976). Eusebius A. Stephanou has written on *Charismatic Renewal in the Orthodox Church* (Fort Wayne: Logos Ministry for Orthodox Renewal, 1976).

Charismatic renewal in the Roman Catholic tradition has been the subject of several authors. Following the publication of Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan's pioneering works *Catholic Pentecostals and As the Spirit Leads Us*, published by Paulist in 1969 and 1971 respectively, were two other important works. Edward D. O Connor, C.S.C., produced an historical and theological work called *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria, 1971), and Donald L. Gelpi gave an outstanding theological critique and statement in *Pentecostalism: A Theological Viewpoint* (New York: Paulist Press, 1971). Since that time, three books of importance have been published. Kilian McDonnell has edited a work which looks at a variety of important theological questions in the movement under the title *The Holy Spirit and Power: The Catholic Charismatic Renewal* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1975). Catholic charismatic lay leader Ralph Martin has compiled *The Church and the Spirit* (New York: Paulist Press, 1976), said to provide a personal and documentary record of the renewal in the Catholic Church. French theologian Rene Laurentin has produced the third volume of importance which weaves together both history and theology, *Catholic Pentecostalism* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1977).

It must be recognized that there are differences of opinion of the value of charismatic renewal today. John F. MacArthur Jr. published a series of sermons in which he attempted to deal with what he saw as problems confronting the church as a result of charismatic renewal. It was called *The Charismatics: A Doctrinal Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978). A much more objective analysis has been provided by Robert H. Culpepper, *Evaluating the Charismatic Movement: A Theological and Biblical Appraisal* (Valley Forge: Judson, 1977).

Four markedly irenic books on the subject have appeared which should, perhaps above all others, be congratulated for the spirit which they exude: Peter E. Gillquist, *Let's Quit Fighting about the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974); Michael Harper, *Three Sisters: A Provocative Look at Evangelicals, Charismatics and Catholic Charismatics and Their Relationship to One Another* (Wheaton: Tyndale, 1979); Eric Houfe, *Vision for Unity* (Eastbourne: Kinsway Publications, 1980); and Charles E. Hummel, *Fire in the Fireplace: Contemporary Charismatic Renewal* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1978). Each of these authors calls for a renewed level of Christian charity and understanding as it relates to charismatic renewal.

Several other books have appeared in recent years which look at Pentecostalism and the charismatic renewal from an ecumenical perspective. Simon Tugwell, Peter Hocken, George Every, John Orme Mills and Walter Hollenweger have collaborated on *New Heaven? New Earth? An Encounter with Pentecostalism* (Springfield, IL: Templegate, 1976). Kilian McDonnell has given us two important works. The first, *Charismatic Renewal and the Churches* (New York: Crossroad, 1976), looks both at history and psychology, using the data available in these disciplines as objects for theological reflection. His second work, *The Charismatic Renewal and Ecumenism* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), is an attempt to futher the ecumenical task providing a number of pastoral suggestions for Roman Catholics in particular.

The World Council of Churches has published two works on charismatic renewal in the past five years. Rex Davis, *Locusts and Wild Honey* (Geneva: WCC, 1978), provides an interesting survey on the subject. The second book is the outcome of a major consultation in Bossey, Switzerland, in 1980. Edited by Arnold Bittlinger, *The Church is Charismatic: The World Council of Churches and the Charismatic Renewal* (Geneva: WCC, 1981) provides a variety of papers presented at the consultation and its two preparatory sessions and makes recommendations on how WCC churches should relate to charismatic renewal.

Three theological works, all by Roman Catholics, are intended to provide some direction in the task as well. Herbert Muhlen has written *A Charismatic Theology: Initiation in the Spirit* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), an exciting work which he describes as "the fruit of Catholic/Protestant solidarity." Charismatic Jesuit theologian Donald L. Gelpi has set forth his rigorous and rewarding *Charism and Sacrament: A Theology of Christian Conversion* (New York: Paulist Press, 1976), in which he studies conversion and gifts of the Spirit against a sacramental backdrop. His more recent work *Experiencing God: A Theology of Human Emergence* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978) provides a somewhat elaborate "foundational theology" that can be used to interpret and explain the experience of Christian worship. Gelpi's attempt is a heady one designed to encourage "critical self-understanding and theological sophistication" among those involved in charismatic renewal.

While many pastoral issues have in one way or another been addressed in a number of works already, three volumes deserve mention in their own right. Sheila Macmanus Fahey has provided a very encouraging word on social action in her *Charismatic Social Action: Reflection/Resource Manual* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977). It is a "must" for those who wish to see charismatic renewal reach out into other areas of Christian service. Charles Farah Jr., professor of theology and history at Oral Roberts University, has turned his attention to a very practical problem of "faith-formula" teaching in the book *From the Pinnacle of the Temple* (Plainfield: Logos, no date). Finally, Thomas A. Smail in *The Forgotten Father* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) has focused on what he perceives to be a trinitarian problem. The charismatic renewal has concentrated on the Holy Spirit and the Son whom the Spirit glorifies, but has at times overlooked the role of the Father. His book is a genuine challenge to rethink this frequent oversight.

Finally, it would be appropriate to mention a few of the many journals which regularly address issues which have been mentioned in this article. "Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies" is the newest and perhaps the most academic of such journals. Issued semi-annually, it addresses biblical, theological, historical and practical issues related to charismatic renewal. It is edited by William W. Menzies of the faculty of the Assemblies of God Graduate School in Springfield, Missouri. "Pneuma" may be ordered by corresponding with Russell P. Spittler, a member of Fuller's faculty and secretary of the Society for Pentecostal Studies. "Paraclete," a quarterly publication dedicated to exploring the person and work of the Holy Spirit, may be ordered from Hardy W. Steinberg, editor, 1445 Boonville Ave., Springfield, Missouri 65802. From Britain comes "Theological Renewal" edited by Thomas Smail. This journal comes in a joint subscription with the more popular magazine "Renewal" and is available by writing to Grove Books, Bramcote, Nottingham, NG9 3DS, United Kingdom. A Roman Catholic periodical worthy of consideration for its practical treatment of pastoral issues is "Pastoral Renewal," P.O. Box 8617, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107.

NEWS

Diversity Marks Wheaton Conference

by Douglas Jacobsen

For three days in March (20–22), The Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals (located at Wheaton College) hosted a rambling, yet surprisingly coherent, conference on "Christian Theology in a Post-Christian World." Thirteen presentations, each followed by a formal response and general discussion, were grouped under three major themes.

The first, entitled "Image-Maker and Images," addressed issues of connections and distinctions between the human and the divine, or, expressed more concretely, between God and human beings (presenters: J. I. Packer, Cornelius Plantinga, Stephen Evans). The second, "Revelation and Its Reception," explored different aspects of the nature and scope of human knowledge available to Christians in light of the reality of God and the limitations of human existence (Gabriel Fackre, Thomas Morris, Anthony Thiselton, Clark Pinnock). A third session—the longest of the three—dealt with more pragmatic and particular concerns (e.g., culture, work, secularization, science, the poor, and the future) and was entitled "Creation and Restoration" (Donald Bloesch, Paul Marshall Klaus Bockmuehl, David Livingstone, Richard Mouw, David Wells). John Stott presented a biblical meditation at the beginning of each of these major sessions, and it was the expressed desire of the organizers of the conference that these homiletical talks should set the tone for and context of the discussions that followed—i.e., that of the worship of the God of the universe.

The genius of the conference was its format. It was designed as a well organized bull session. Papers were distributed in advance and were not reread at the conference. Time in meetings was spent talking, and the conversational aspect gave life to the proceedings. Another boon was that professional theologians did not dominate the landscape. Instead, evangelical thinkers from a range of academic disciplines were represented, and that too added to the creative flavor of the conversation.

The result was a pleasing overview of the state of the art of evangelical religious thinking. No broad evangelical consensus was reached by the conference. In fact, diversity was at least as prominent as agreement. But uniformity was not the aim of the gathering. Rather, the desire was to provide an initial platform from which further creative collaboration on important issues could continue. Mark Noll, one of the organizers of the conference, expressed his reaction in terms of guarded optimism: "The conference may or may not have contributed a great deal to Christian thinking on any particular subject. . . . Yet, the opportunity to observe both theologians and non-theologians talking together . . . may be a harbinger of a more refined evangelical thought for the days ahead."

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BOOK REVIEWS

Individualism and Social Ethics: An Evangelical Syncretism
by Dennis P. Hollinger (University Press of America, 1984, 284pp., $12.50). Reviewed by Richard V. Pierard, Fulbright Professor, Universität Frankfurt.

American Evangelicalism is now receiving the scholarly attention that it has long merited. One need only mention the books by Robert Booth Fowler, James D. Hunter, and George Marsden,, the Hatch-Woodbridge-Noll collective work, *The Gospel in America*, and the formation of the Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals, all of which came about in the last five years, to provide evidence of this. Dennis Hollinger's study of Evangelical social ethics is a welcome and significant addition to the literature.

A professor at Alliance Theological Seminary, Hollinger possesses an understanding of the inner dynamics of Evangelicalism that makes his critique all the more trenchant. He goes beyond what some of us have done in explicating the alliance with conservative politics and the lack of social concern to get at the root of these external manifestations of the flawed evangelical philosophy. His thesis is that individualism is the most basic motif of Evangelical social thinking.

He begins by defining individualism and Evangelicalism, both historically and theoretically. He then makes a content analysis of *Christianity Today*, the chief theological voice of the Evangelical movement, during the period 1956-76 in order to determine how much of an individualistic social philosophy is to be found there. The topics he explores are personal versus social ethics, social change, economic thought, and political views. He concludes with a sociological and theological analysis of the findings.

Hollinger defines individualism as: 1) a metaphysic with an atomistic world view; 2) a value system that heralds freedom, privacy, autonomy, and self-sufficiency, and most importantly 3) a social philosophy which stresses personal morality over social ethics, individual transformation as the key to social change, the laissez-faire approach to economic matters, and a political theory extolling the freedom of the individual and a limited state. He sees modern Evangelicalism as a movement preaching historic Christian orthodoxy but without the rancor and excesses of Fundamentalism. It seeks to recapture the spirit of cooperation and openness that characterized nineteenth-century Evangelicalism, places more value upon intellectual pursuits, and emphasizes social involvement.

The book is rich in insights, of which the most helpful may be his explanation of how Evangelicalism's ineffectiveness in the social realm results from its belief that the individual, not the church, is to act; social problems are magnified personal problems; the regeneration of individuals (not reformation of institutions or revolution) is the proper strategy to achieve change; and God's standards apply to the spiritual kingdom while the realm of the world is under natural law and we can do little about things here. The unfortunate stance on economic and political questions taken by many writers in *Christianity Today*, which Hollinger copiously documents, flows naturally from this underlying

individualism. Using sociological analysis he shows convincingly that their individualism is rooted not in Scripture and Christian theology but inherited ideological presuppositions and American middle class culture.

The author does see a ray of hope in the so-called "new breed" of Evangelicals beginning to make their presence felt who work from a conception of community that goes beyond the old antithesis of individualism/collectivism. Whether they will gain the upper hand in the near future is an open question, but they do offer an alternative to the individualistic ethic that holds back American Evangelicalism from being the force in the world that it could and should be.

Building God's People in a Materialistic World
by John H. Westerhoff III (Seabury Press, 1983, $8.95). Reviewed by Craig M. Watts, minister, First Christian Church, Carbondale, IL.

It has virtually become a cliche to say that stewardship is not just a matter of finances, but is an approach to life which involves all that we own. John Westerhoff has taken us a step further by explaining that stewardship pertains first of all not to what we have but to who we are. It shapes our identity before it touches our activity. Stewardship begins with the recognition that we are God's people, and not our own. In view of this, Westerhoff writes, "Stewardship is nothing less than a complete lifestyle, a total accountability and responsibility before God ... Thus our stewardship is multidimensional ..." (p. 15). His study is dedicated to expanding upon this insight.

The author, professor of religion and education at Duke University, does not limit himself to applying the concept of stewardship to our talents, our use of time, or even our politics. He also deals with other crucial facets of Christian existence which are too rarely viewed from the perspective of stewardship. Westerhoff focuses his attention on Christian education as it pertains to worship, morality, spirituality, and pastoral care, examining all of this through the lens of stewardship. He contends that the church needs to learn how to integrate the various aspects of its work and thought into a more unified whole lest the church's life and ministry be damaged through fragmentation and specialization.

Unexpected insights permeate this volume as Dr. Westerhoff speaks of baptism, the Lord's Supper, community and even abortion in terms of stewardship. For instance, in connection with the Lord's Supper he observes that in partaking of the Eucharist we are to become what we eat. We are to ask ourselves what form our lives are to take in relation to others, in view of the fact that we receive spiritual nourishment from the body and blood of Christ. "Thus the Eucharist offers a judgment on our consumer society and its values, a society in which we deny the physically hungry the food they need because we ourselves are not spiritually fed" (pp. 71-72). Both the Lord's Supper and the offering are symbolic acts pointing to how we intend to live the rest of our lives.

Two observations which fundamentally challenge our typically Western view of life echo throughout the book. The first of these is that we do not absolutely own anything in creation. We are caretakers of God's wealth. Thus sharing wealth with others who are in need is not just a matter of mercy or charity but a matter of justice and responsible stewardship. The second observation is that human life is communal rather than individualistic. This goes gainst the grain of a people who have over-stressed independence and self-reliance. Westerhoff maintains that we reflect the nature of the caring, Triune God as we live together within community.

In order to foster a vision of life from the perspective of stewardship, says Westerhoff, the life of the church must be structured so as to provide experiences and opportunities for reflection on what it means to know God and to live with God for the sake of the world. But the reflection which is most needed is not abstract. Rather it must be concrete: providing people with insight and occasions to become faithful stewards of God.

Building God's People in a Materialistic Society is not a "how to" book, and it will disappoint anyone who picks it up in hope of finding a clear-cut technique for meeting the church budget. Nor is this a paper theology which lays dead on the page. John Westerhoff supports and illustrates his positions by pointing to situations where they are incarnate in the life and practice of various churches. In a diversity of ways he reminds us that the church is to be a community of faith, hope and love which opens the way for people to experience compassion, wholeness, freedom and reconciliation.

In the postscript John Westerhoff explains that he set out to write a book on stewardship from an Anglican perspective. But what he has written is a study which has much to offer all of us. Unfortunately, he does from time to time use a theological vocabulary and refer to traditions which may not be familiar to non-Anglicans. Nevertheless, the wealth of his insights and the vividness of his stories and examples more than make up for this slight obstacle.

Jesus, Son of Man
by B. Lindars (Eerdmans, 1984, 244 pp., $9.95). Reviewed by Dr. P. Maurice Casey, Dept. of Theology, University of Nottingham, England.

This book further increases our knowledge of Jesus' use of the term "son of man." Building on earlier work by G. Vermes and the reviewer, Lindars argues that Jesus made idiomatic use of the Aramaic term bar *(e)nash(a)*, "son of man," or "man." By means of this idiom, the Aramaic speaker "refers to a class of persons, with whom he identifies himself" (p. 24). This idiom properly required the definite state *bar (e)nasha*: the definite state was more or less the Aramaic equivalent of the English definite article "the," but Lindars argues that in this idiom it was used generically, and Jesus' use of the definite state led the Gospel translators to the Greek translation *ho huios tou anthropou* with both definite articles.

Lindars finds nine examples of this idiom in the teaching of Jesus, and his most important contribution lies in his discussion of the interpretation of these sayings. That of the unforgiveable sin is especially useful. Lindars brings out the original setting in controversy with the Pharisees, and against this background shows how "we can see that the saying is both a general statement and a particular defence of Jesus himself .... Jesus refuses to allow any suggestion that his commission does not come from God himself. To slander him as a man would be pardonable, but to slander the Spirit who inspires him and works through him is far more serious" (p. 37). Thus the saying emerges in its original cultural context as a vigorous defence of Jesus' ministry, without the use of any Christological title. Anyone not fully familiar with the proposed operation of this idiom in the teaching of Jesus will also find the discussions of Matt 8:20//Luke 9:58, Matt 11:16–19//Luke 7:31–35, Mark 2:10, Matt 10:32f//Luke 12:8f (cf Mark 8:38), Mark 19:21 and Mark 10:45 interesting and helpful.

Lindars' second significant contribution is his redaction-critical analysis of the use of "son of man" by each of the four evangelists (chs 6–9; ch 5 deals with Q). This is the first substantial piece of its kind, and it has many correct insights. Further discussion may, however, show that the conventional assumptions of redaction criticism have led Lindars to attribute more thought, care and editorial activity to the individual writers than they in fact exercised. The final chapter draws all the material together into a developmental pattern, with Jesus' ironical references to himself as authentic and the definite titular usage produced by the early church on the basis of Daniel 7.

The major weakness of this book lies in the handling of the Aramaic evidence. It is clear that a fresh examination of the Aramaic sources as a whole has not been carried out, and no complete new reconstructions of authentic sayings of Jesus are offered. At the center of the description of this idiom, there is no adequate discussion of what is meant by "generic," either in terms of the use of generic sentences in other languages or in the Aramaic sources. This leads to the assertion that this idiom properly requires the definite state, an assertion contrary to our Aramaic sources, which show no such discrimination. This means that the proposed explanation of the presence of the articles in *ho huios tou anthropou* is inadequate. Further, when he deals with sayings of Jesus, Lindars has no clear concept of how small a group of people may be in view for the idiom to continue to function. This is especially unsatisfactory in dealing with the passion predictions. Lindars suggests an original beginning *ithmesar bar enasha*, "A man may be delivered up ..." This, however, does not appear to be true in any generic or general sense ("may" is produced in the translation and is not clear in the Aramaic), so that the indirect Aramaic expresion in it should be *hahu gabra*.

There are also a number of details where Lindars' view may be considered doubtful or unconvincing. For example, his dating of the Similitudes of Enoch after A.D.70 is extremely precarious, and his reasons for rejecting Mark 2:28 as an example of this idiom could be overthrown by detailed study of Mark 2:23–28 against the background of first century Jewish culture.

Much therefore remains to be done. In the meantime, this book is the best available discussion of several examples of this Aramaic idiom in the teaching of Jesus, of the understanding of "son of man" by the four evangelists, and of the Christological implications of results of this kind. It should be read by anyone seriously interested in the Jesus of history and/or in New Testament Christology.

Easter Enigma: Are the Resurrection Accounts in Conflict?
by John Wenham (Zondervan, 1984, 162 pp., $6.95). Reviewed by Tom Schreiner, Assistant Professor of New Testament, Azusa Pacific University.

It is well-known that there are seemingly insoluble contradictions in the differing resurrection accounts. John Wenham, in this fascinating book, attempts to weave the resurrection accounts into a coherent and consistent narrative. The book is basically divided into two parts. In the first part Wenham attempts to identify the major characters who played a significant role in the resurrection narratives, while in the second part of the work he attempts to harmonize the resurrection accounts. The two different parts of the book are not necessarily connected. In other words, the credibility of the harmonization of the resurrection narratives is not indissolubly linked with Wenham's attempt to identify the central characters.

Some of Wenham's conclusions regarding the identity of major characters in the resurrection narratives are quite interesting. It is argued in some detail, for example, that Mary Magdalene is the same person as Mary of Bethany, the sister of Lazarus. Salome is identified as the mother of the sons of Zebedee and the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus. The "other" Mary is the wife of Clopas and

the mother of James the younger and Joses. The identification of Clopas is rather complex. Clopas has already been identified as the husband of the "other" Mary, and Mary's son is James the younger, i.e., according to Wenham, the younger James in the apostolic circle. But in the gospels and Acts, James the younger is consistently said to be the son of Alphaeus; Wenham says that Alphaeus is probably a different Aramaic version of the name Clopas, and therefore the two are the same person. Indeed, Clopas can be identified with Cleopas to whom Jesus appeared on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24). Furthermore, Eusebius says that Clopas was the brother of Joseph, and as a result this person (Clopas/Alphaeus/Cleopas: different names for the same person according to Wenham) is the uncle of Jesus!

The second part of the book sets forth the story from Good Friday to the ascension of Jesus. This portion reads like a fascinating detective story as Wenham tries to show that the different accounts are complementary and not contradictory. Indeed, because Wenham has identified all of the characters with such precision, he can postulate with some plausibility (given his assumptions) the specific location and role each character played in the drama.

Methodologically, Wenham's main point seems to be that none of the gospel accounts is exhaustive, i.e., technical precision was not the intention of the gospel writers. Nevertheless, the lack of precision in the gospels does not imply historical inaccuracy. What the gospel writers include is true and reliable, but it is not complete. For example, how many angels were there at the tomb: one (Matthew, Mark) or two (Luke, John)? Wenham sees no contradiction here because if there were two angels, then it is certainly not inaccurate to say there was one angel. It would only be inaccurate if a gospel writer denied that there were two angels present, not if he simply chooses to focus upon only one angel. In John's gospel Mary Magdalene seems to come to the tomb alone, whereas the synoptics indicate that she was with other women as well. John's focus on Mary Magdalene does not imply that he was unaware of the presence of the other women. Indeed, there are hints of their presence ("*we* do not know where they have laid him" 20:2) in John's account. John is not giving an exhaustive description of what happened but is recounting the event in a selective way. How does Wenham account for the fact that in John (20:1-2) Mary Magdalene flees and tells Peter and John about the empty tomb, while in Luke all the women inform the disciples (24:9-11)? He argues that Luke is telescoping the story and not giving the reader all the details. What probably happened is that Mary Magdalene fled immediately from the empty tomb to tell the apostles about what had happened. The other women stayed behind and encountered the angels and then returned to tell the apostles.

I think Wenham's attempt to harmonize the resurrection accounts is basically successful. Even if one does not concur with all the particulars of his reconstruction, many of his proposals are credible and do not force the text into a preconceived mold. For instance, Wenham's notion that Luke is telescoping his story of the resurrection is quite probable, for Luke never intended to give an exhaustive description of the resurrection, although the account he gives is not thereby falsified. Again, the failure to mention both angels in some of the resurrection accounts is not problematic unless one requires that the gospel writers tell us all they know, and this is clearly asking too much. Some of the problems, of course, are more difficult. Wenham's attempt to reconcile the Markan and Lucan accounts of disbelief/belief at the return of the two from Emmaus is not completely satisfactory, although it may be an accurate representation of what happened. Even here Wenham does not force the narratives into a procrustean bed but respects the intention of each account. His reconstruction of the movements of Mary Magdalene is fascinating, but due to the limited nature of the evidence it is hard to judge the validity of this proposal.

Other elements of this book are less convincing. I think it is quite improbable that Mary Magdalene and Mary of Bethany, the sister of Lazarus, are the same person. Of course, such a view is possible but rather unlikely since the identification is never made in any gospel, and Wenham's attempt to account for this silence in Luke is not very credible; for even if Mary is not the focus of the stories, it is probable that Luke would have indicated identity if such were the case. The linkage of Alphaeus/Clopas/Cleopas is even more improbable. Here Wenham builds hypothesis upon hypothesis until he finally concludes that this person was Joseph's brother! Some of these character identifications have a romantic attraction, but they are so speculative that they are scarcely convincing. Nevertheless, these identifications do not damage Wenham's central thesis, although they do cast doubt on some of the dramatic touches present in the book. To sum up, Wenham builds a good case here for harmonizing the resurrection narratives, and despite a few improbabilities he shows that harmonizing can be done in a sensible and convincing way.

The Cosmic Adventure: Science, Religion and the Quest for Purpose
by John F. Haught (Paulist Press, 1984, 184 pp., $6.95). Reviewed by Richard H. Bube, Professor in the Department of Materials Science & Engineering, Stanford University.

The author, an Associate Professor of Theology at Georgetown University, addresses himself to the fundamental question of whether the universe has any purpose. From the perspective that "the central core of religious consciousness is a fundamental trust, primordially expressed in symbols and stories, that reality is ultimately caring," he asks the question, "Is this intuition of cosmic care consistent with the findings of modern science? And if so, how?"

In his consideration of these questions, the author seeks to refute scientific materialism, and by building on the thought of Michael Polanyi and Alfred North Whitehead to provide a framework

within which to consider these issues, he attempts to show that "being a Christian is an acceptable way of endorsing and fostering the scientific discoveries of modernity."

There are many insights provided by this book that are helpful to the Christian. The relationship of what are called "chance" events to the emergence of novelty in the world; the explication of a hierarchical view of the universe in which lower levels are essential for the existence of higher levels, but in which the properties of the higher levels emerge from the specific interactions of lower levels in such a way that higher levels cannot be comprehended in terms of lower levels only; the concept of the "beauty" of creation as a critical balance between chaos on one side and triviality and monotony on the other, providing aesthetic criteria for evaluating the concept of purpose in the universe—these and other insights may profitably be integrated into the worldview and philosphical perspective of the evangelical Christian.

Unfortunately, the author does not provide us these helpful insights within the framework of biblical evangelical Christianity. In almost half of the book he is reluctant to use the term *God*, preferring instead such circumlocutions as a *morphogenetic field*, and he does not specifically refer to Christian thought until his final chapter. Although the subject index has an entry for Buddhism, it has no entry for Christianity. By the time the final chapter is reached, it is clear that the author, following also Teilhard de Chardin, has no place for biblical concepts of sin and evil. Indeed, he is anxious to replace an "ethical" view of the universe by an "aesthetic" view on the grounds that the presence of purpose can be defended on the latter basis whereas it cannot on the former. Jesus of Nazareth becomes "the primary symbol through which the ultimate meaning of the universe becomes transparent to the believer." Jesus is such a symbol, not because of His ethical teachings, but because of "his relativizing of the ethical by his proclamation of a higher goodness that embraces both good and evil, the moral and the immoral."

When the model of a hierarchical structure is carried to an extreme so as to include the attributes of God as the emergent properties of the highest level of such a structure, we have the limited God of process theology. Still, even here, the reader can be touched and even learn from Haught's vision of the "crucified God" as an essential point in the biblical message that is often passed over by the Christian in the effort to defend an omnipotent, transcendent God.

It is frustrating to have so many good ideas so mingled with concepts that violate the biblical perspective and are not really essential for the argument being advanced. Certainly we can agree with the author when he summarizes by saying, "Science is a mode of knowing adequate to grasp what lies below consciousness in the hierarchy . . . . Religion, on the other hand, complements science by relating us to fields, dimensions or levels that lie above, or deeper than, consciousness in the cosmic hierarchy."

This is a good book for discriminating and mature theological students to read and discuss together. It represents a mode of thought and an approach that is certainly a common one for people who take modern science seriously as an insight into truth and at the same time wish to maintain the relevance and authenticity of a religious perspective.

The Reformation and the English People
by J. J. Scarisbrick (England: Basil Blackwell, 1984). Reviewed by Donald Smeeton, Associate Dean of the International Correspondence Institute, Belgium.

This book is much like a prescription medicine. It is useful to treat a particular abnormality but can be dangerous if used indiscriminately. Having proved his skill in his study of Henry VIII (1968), J. J. Scarisbrick again undertakes to study the English Reformation and to prescribe a remedy for an unhealthy understanding of these events.

His principle thesis is that the English Reformation was primarily a governmental affair which imposed a religious change upon a people who, for the most part, were reluctant to be reformed. In other words, many who had tasted both old wine and new preferred the former. Although Scarisbrick ranges the length of the sixteenth century to gather data and illustrations, his argument is most strongly supported by evidence drawn from wills, account books, and lay fraternities. He concludes that there was little discontent with the religion of Rome on the eve of the Reformation and, for that matter, throughout the period. Evils were seen, of course, but accepted—rather than provoking the anticlericalism and iconoclasm of the continental reform. The book challenges the assumption that the religious tumult was a triumph for the laity over the clergy. Certainly any assumption that the great multitudes of lay people fled the old order to commit themselves to the new needs a remedial balance.

Scarisbrick's strong treatment was prepared for the Ford Lectures (1982). Therefore, the chapters "sound" well and are for the most part unencumbered by notes and references; but this form of presentation robs the material of the nuances of a study that might have equaled the detailed care of research.

Scarisbrick's thesis is weakened by generalizing from a few examples, by arguing from silence, and by stressing the consistent good in Catholicism. Few would want to claim, for example, that the Protestantism of the Tudor Kings and Queens was untainted by political and economic motives, not to mention plain greed. But, on the other hand, neither was Mary's Catholicism. The changes which occurred during the period cannot be understood apart from the total social mobility, the economic changes, the value shifts and the political realities. Secularism and indifference took root before the Reformation, and continue to the present.

Scarisbrick does not attempt to refute the contrary evidence such as the desire for and rapid dis-

semination of Tyndale's translation of Scripture. Nor does he consider the perseverence of early Protestantism in face of political pressure. By contrasting lay fraternities with some of the more oppressive elements of puritanism, Scarisbrick concludes that "the Reformation caused the pendulum of influence to swing against the laymen" (p. 168). This position ignores the concerns expressed in the pre-Reformation literature that decadent priests escaped justice by claiming clerical privilege and that laymen were tried in church courts beyond the supervision of any laymen, even of the crown. The abundance of unanswered evidence lingers on and challenges Scarisbrick's interpretation. His medicine should be mixed carefully with wisdom, or the cure could be worse than the disease.

Primary Speech: A Psychology of Prayer
by Ann and Barry Ulanov (John Knox Press, 1982, 178 pp., $9.95). Reviewed by Gary R. Sattler, Assistant Professor of Christian Formation and Discipleship, Director of the Office of Christian Community, Fuller Theological Seminary.

The title of this book is a bit misleading, in that the book hardly qualifies as "a psychology of prayer." Rather, one discovers how prayer and emotional/psychological issues are intimately, and therapeutically, related, yet without at all getting the sense that prayer is just one more potentially helpful tool in the arsenal of mental health. Apart from this unfortunate decision concerning the title, however, there is little about *Primary Speech* which is problematic. The Ulanovs seem to have a good feel for the difficulties and joys of prayer experienced by those who see it as more than a "demand and delivery" process by which the just receive what they want and those of little faith get what they deserve, or get nothing at all. They also go beyond their promised topic and delve into the (mainly interior) Christian life with prayer as the unifying theme. Hence chapters on "Fantasy and Prayer," "Prayer and Aggression," and (of course) "Sexuality and Prayer."

Once one gets past the infelicitous first sentences ("Everybody prays. People pray whether or not they call it prayer"), one discovers a fine book which is less likely to seize one with the force of its intellectual argument than captivate with insights which may evoke responses such as, "I surely know those feelings," or, "So that's how I can handle this!"

The reader may have theological or philosophical reservations about the Jungian bias of the book or the attempt to integrate depth (rather than pop) psychology with Christian spirituality. I encourage such a reader to demythologize the Ulanovs' message, as it were, and glean from *Primary Speech* the valuable lessons it contains concerning the absolutely crucial role of honesty and courage in prayer. One would do well, too, to pay heed to the critical but non-judgmental attitude the authors exhibit toward pray-ers' often difficult, or even infantile-appearing, first efforts at praying. In this book one finds a refreshing lack of dogmatism about forms of, preparation for, and anxieties about "proper" prayer.

The critical reader may also have some difficulty with the Ulanovs' rather uncritical use of historical figures. Too frequently names such as Eckhart, Simone Weil, Suso, and Ruysbroeck appear within one breath, the implication easily being drawn that they all are saying basically the same thing and/or are starting from the same point. While this may on occasion be the case, the authors do not need a hodge-podge of names from the mystical past and present to justify their opinions. This sort of willy-nilly name-dropping is all too common in recent books on spiritual things. One finds as well the obligatory nod to the "triple way" of purgation, illumination and union which, however "inexorably drawn" to it one might be (p. 110), belongs to St. Bonaventure only because he stands in its tradition, not because (as the reader may infer) he started it.

All this carping notwithstanding, *Primary Speech* is a book which should be read by anyone who takes his or her Christian life seriously; that is, by anyone who is willing to risk the transformation that comes with acknowledging (as is acknowledged throughout the book) that everything starts with God. From this point the reader is challenged to pray with brutal honesty, to own his or her gifts and weaknesses, and to sacrifice them all to God. This element of giving oneself over to God in prayer is too often lacking in books combining Christianity and "psychology," in which one finds self-acceptance and justification to be virtually the same thing. The freedom, indeed necessity, to be oneself in prayer, combined with the rigor of submitting self-discovery *coram deo* to be a tool of transformation, provides a healthy and perhaps even life-changing

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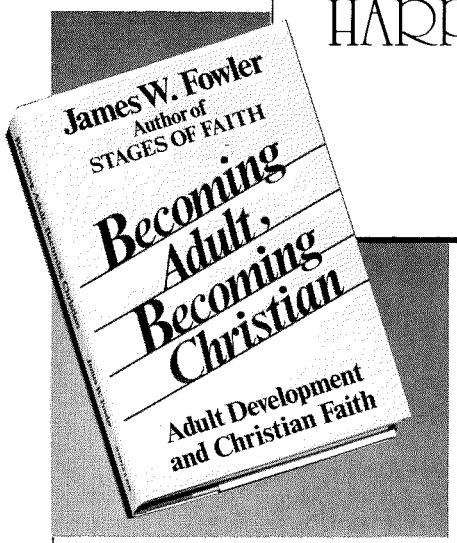

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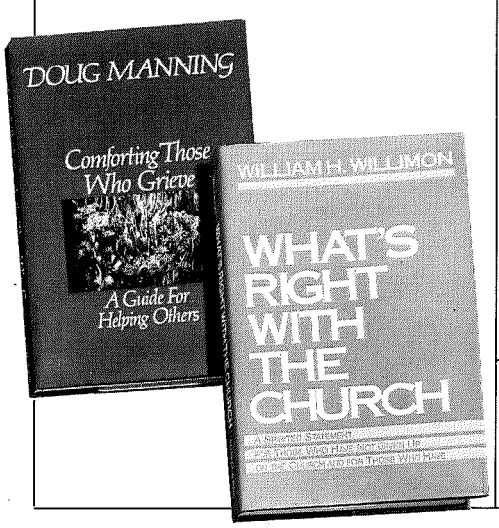

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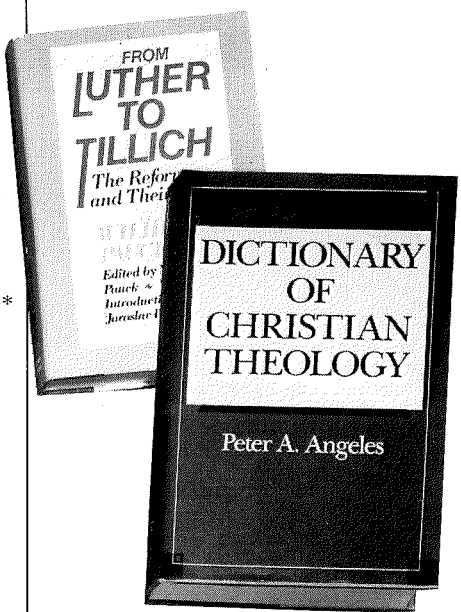

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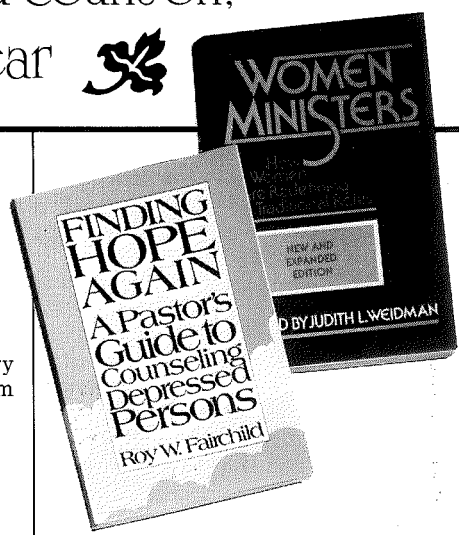

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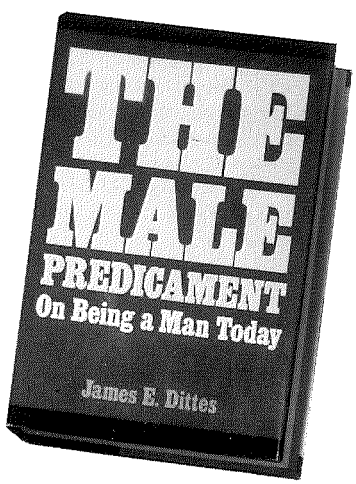

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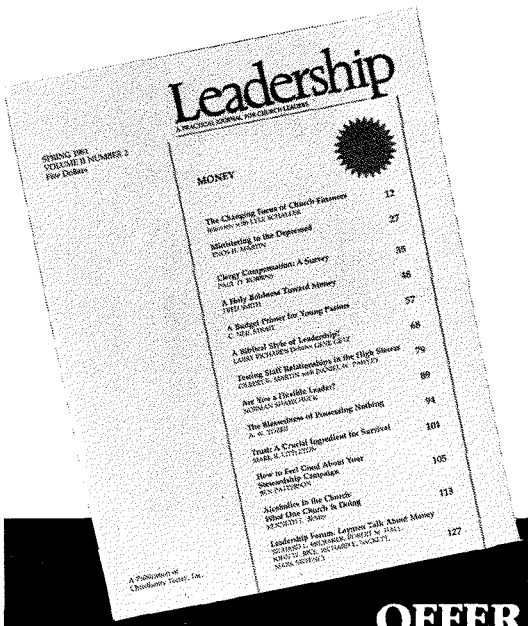

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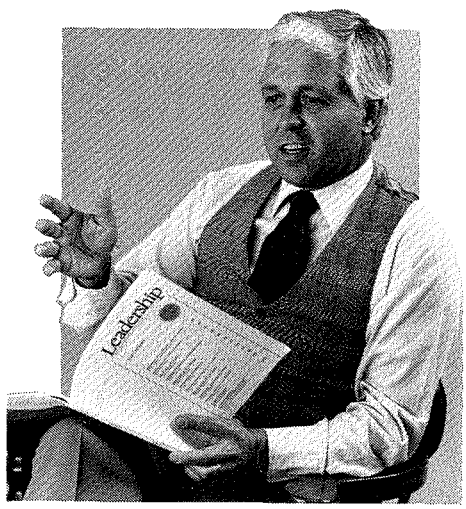

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This is a nice little book which should be read through more than once and would be an excellent book through which to work in a small group of close friends.

Women and Priesthood
edited by Thomas Hopko (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1983, 190 pp., $7.95). Reviewed by James Stamoolis, IFES Theological Students' Secretary.

This collection of essays examines the Eastern Orthodox Church's position on the ordination of women. While described in the introduction as a "beginning of an answer, however tentative and fragmentary," the reader will be impressed with two things. The first is the theological perspective displayed as the essays go deeply into the theological tradition of the Orthodox Church. For someone who has little knowledge of the mechanism of the Eastern Orthodox theological framework, this work will serve as a partial introduction. The strong emphasis on worship and the Church as primarily a worshiping community permeates the entire volume. Indeed, the arguments for the necessity of a male priesthood are based in large part on the theology behind the liturgical forms.

This leads to the second thing that will impress the reader, which is the intransigence manifested on the question of women's ordination. All the contributors categorically disagree with any concept of women priests. To be fair to the involved theological argumentation, the serious student must read the book. However, in the end all the arguments can be reduced to two: 1) the tradition of the Church has never known women priests, and 2) the priest is an icon of Christ and as such must be a male.

The honesty and determination of the writers are to be admired, even if the reader cannot accept the conclusions which are drawn. One case in point is the essay of Thomas Hopko, which originally appeared as an article in the *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* (1975). The essay is printed with criticisms made by Hopko's students and others. He seeks to respond in a thoughtful manner to his critics. This reviewer appreciated the humility of Hopko's approach in this section. In another essay, Hopko interacts with Paul Jewett, *The Ordination of Women*, and Carrol Stuhlmueller, ed., *Women and Priesthood*. This essay clearly shows the Orthodox perspective on the subject.

The discussion of the ministry of women (apart from the ordained priesthood) is quite good and certainly an advance on certain Christian bodies which see little role for women's ministry. Especially good is the discussion on women deacons in the early Christian centuries, an order that in part disappeared because of the increase in infant baptisms which made the deaconess' role in adult female baptism unnecessary (p. 88).

The denunciation of women's ordination by the Orthodox is accompanied by an extremely high view of the role of women in society and the church. Several women in Orthodox church history have been honored with the title "equal to the Apostles" and are so commemorated in the liturgical services of the church. A recurrent theme in the essays is the identification of the Holy Spirit with the feminine gender. This corresponds to the identification of Christ with the masculine gender and in Orthodox thinking represents a complete humanity. Whether or not the reader accepts as valid the conclusions offered, the volume is an interesting and important study of the current debate from a different perspective.

The Life and Thought of Michael Sattler
by C. Arnold Snyder (Herald Press, 1984, 260 pp., $19.95). Reviewed by James C. Juhnke, professor of history, Bethel College (Kansas).

Michael Sattler, author of the 1527 Schleitheim Articles, was among the most significant of the early Anabaptist leaders. His martyr death by fire shortly after the Schleitheim meeting, and the relative paucity of information about his earlier life, have made him an attractive figure for both scholars and popular writers. Arnold Snyder's book, first written as a doctoral dissertation at McMaster University, is a carefully crafted revisionist study which goes well beyond earlier work in filling in the gaps for a coherent picture of Sattler and his contribution. Snyder freshly assesses both the biographical details of Sattler's life and the appropriate contexts for understanding the sources of his thought.

The initial context is Benedictine monasticism. Sattler served as prior of the St. Peter monastery in the Black Forest before becoming an Anabaptist. Here he participated in a "Bursfeld" reform, which endeavored to recapture the more rigorous disciplines of early monasticism as well as to adopt a simplified and meditative form of liturgical observance. Benedictine themes which appear in Sattler's writings as an Anabaptist include fellowship in community, imitation of New Testament life, and costly discipleship.

Snyder illuminates the interrelationships of economic upheaval and religious reform. Reformed monasteries, such as St. Peter's, were more strict in their collection of feudal taxes on their extensive landholdings. In March of 1522 the margrave invaded the monastery, allegedly to protect his peasant subjects against unfair monastic taxation. In 1525 both margrave and abbott were beseiged in the Peasants' War, a revolt which gained exceptional cohesion from a divine law ideology rooted in Reformation doctrine. Sattler learned the new ideas, according to Snyder, from contacts with invading peasants in 1522 and 1525. His decision to leave the monastery in 1525 resulted from a Peasants' War which was "part and parcel of the Reformation" (p. 65).

The fledgling Anabaptist movement in the Zurich area did not intend to separate church and state, in Snyder's view, but rather hoped to have civic religious leaders cooperate in reform as locally autonomous communities (not centrally directed from Zurich as Zwingli proposed). Sattler became an Anabaptist by mid-1526, *after* the territorial option had failed and after the Peasants' movement had collapsed. Sattler's influence upon the movement was in favor of an inflexible separatism, a position crystallized in the Schleitheim Articles of essential Anabaptist practice in February, 1527. The separatism of Schleitheim, a document of surpassing significance for subsequent Anabaptist and Mennonite development, came less from the initial vision of Zwingli's radical followers in Zurich (Greb, Manz, and Blaurock) than from Sattler's unique and creative synthesis which dialectically resolved the contradictions between his monastic background and the peasant revolt against monastic privilege.

Snyder reviews Sattler's teachings under four rubrics: Scripture, Christology, Salvation, and the Church. In each category he endeavors to sort out the elements Sattler learned from his various sources—Benedictine, the peasants, the Protestant Reformers, the Anabaptists. The conclusions are fascinating: Though he left the monastery, Sattler interpreted Scripture in a monastic manner (p. 149). Anabaptist teachings modified, but did not erase, Sattler's monastic ascetic themes of renunciation, obedience, and suffering (p. 169). His soteriology was a synthesis of Catholic and Protestant elements, although he was on the Catholic side of the question of justification by grace through faith alone (pp. 181–82). His view of the church paralleled the Benedictine view "at all important points" (p. 185). Most significant of all for Sattler, according to Snyder, was his "fundamental and pervasive Christocentrism," also derived from the Benedictine tradition (p. 196).

Members of the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition in North America in recent years have been attracted by the formulation, "Anabaptism: Neither Catholic nor Protestant," popularized by Dr. Walter Klaassen, one of Snyder's mentors. Snyder echoes this theme by characterizing Sattler's thought as "neither Protestant, nor Catholic, nor monastic: it is Anabaptist." The statement may also be put positively. Anabaptism was both Protestant and Catholic—and more. This meticulously researched and closely reasoned study puts new emphasis upon the Catholic sources, while insisting upon the importance of peasant socioeconomic concerns in emergence of this strand of Anabaptism.

Scholars who find their work revised on these pages may find the book overly self-conscious in its revisionism. Some may be unconvinced by Snyder's conjectures at critical points where historical data is slender. But few will deny that this is a brilliant work of scholarship and exposition.

The Coming Great Revival
by William J. Abraham (Harper & Row, 1984, 114 pp., $12.95). Reviewed by William D. Ellington, Ph.D., United Methodist Minister, Director of Field Education, Coordinator of Methodist Ministries, Fuller School of Theology.

This fine book is an analysis of contemporary evangelical orthodoxy, exposing its theological impasses and offering corrective recommendations. The weaknesses of contemporary evangelicalism are caused in part by its inseparable relationship to 20th century fundamentalism which identifies tradition with divine truth, failing to see the rightful human factor in all theology. By centering dogmatically on a few sacrosanct doctrines (e.g., inerrancy), contemporary evangelicalism has lost its freedom to be confronted by Scripture, tradition, and the ongoing realities of life again and again so that it might *receive* an adequate vision of God and Christian discipleship.

Abraham invites contemporary evangelicals to shake the narrowness of fundamentalism by constructing its theology within the context of the greater evangelical history and exemplars, e.g., Au-

gustine, Luther, Calvin, and Wesley. In Wesley, especially, Abraham finds an evangelical tradition and theology which can enrich modern evangelicalism by correcting some of its inherent negative dynamics. Wesley: 1) places the *content* of Scripture above all limiting rationalistic paradigms, e.g., the doctrine of inerrancy; 2) places God's love and grace on the side of people and history, thereby refuting an excessive negativism about humanity and history; and 3) embraces a loving, catholic spirit toward all Christians, thereby denying a pugnacious attitude toward those with whom one differs. Abraham believes the Wesleyan theological method would lead contemporary evangelicalism beyond the turgid scholasticism within which it is languishing.

Abraham's historical analysis and call to theological correction are informing and stimulating. From my own experience, however, he overstresses the return of contemporary evangelicalism to fundamentalism, failing to see the broadening of theological method taking place in many Christians, evangelicals, catholics, liberals, and pentecostals, who are eager to reject self-justifying academic and institutional traditions in order that the church might hear the word of God through the Holy Spirit and be made alive.

I am also concerned by Abraham's belief that the Wesleyan theological method is broad enough to include the contemporary witness of the church to the work of God. Calling us back to tradition is a risky way to gain such an inclusion. It can create a Wesleyan scholasticism. His proposal needs to include a specific plan for hearing the witness of the church concerning the NOW saving work of God. Without it theology will always be boring.

There is not much said about "the coming great revival" in this book. Its title may be prophetic, however. Abraham hopes (and so do I) that Wesleyan theology can help shape a revival. But, as Abraham states, revival will be the work of the Holy Spirit and those who move with the Spirit. I believe this book to be the product of the Spirit's nudge. It will help. May we be moved!

BOOK COMMENTS

Josephus: The Historian and His Society
by Tessa Rajak (Fortress, 1984, 245 pp., $24.95).

Tessa Rajak has written an illuminating study of Josephus that succeeds admirably in accomplishing her purpose of setting the most famous of all Jewish historians in the context of the political, cultural and social history of first century Palestine. Too many studies of Josephus, she claims with some justification, approach Josephus with the purpose of deriving from his writings evidence tangential to his own central purposes. This Rajak seeks to correct by focusing on Josephus as a participant in the violent and confusing political and social upheaval that overtook Palestine in A.D. 66-70.

In the course of her monograph, three main themes emerge. First, as has been suggested, Rajak is particularly interested in analyzing the socio-economic aspects of the great revolt. She portrays Josephus as an upper-class "conformist," unhappy with the radicals who force the issue, an unwilling collaborator wiwth the revolt movement when resistance becomes useless. In this, Josephus mirrors many of the class conflicts within Palestine that played so crucial a role both before and during the War with Rome. Josephus' own description of the social tensions within the revolutionary camp fits nicely into contemporary social paradigms of such movements—providing some vindication for Josephus' accuracy as an historian.

This last point becomes the second major theme of the book. Rajak consistently defends Josephus' historical reliability. Of course, Josephus makes mistakes, and his *Jewish War* (with which Rajak is mainly concerned) is not without bias. In general, however, Rajak argues that Josephus is not nearly as partisan as many of his detractors have claimed. Even the Flavian patronage that Josephus enjoyed should not be seen as a dominant motive in Josephus' work.

And this, in turn, brings us to the third motif. Josephus, like many Jews of his era, was torn between loyalty to his ancient tradition and loyalty to the political reality of his day, Rome. While many portraits of Josephus have him virtually abandoning his "Jewishness" in order to make his way in Rome, Rajak succeeds in showing that, in the end, it was the Palestinian, Jewish influences that outweighed the Greco-Roman ones.

Not being a Josephus scholar, I can offer few substantive criticisms. On the whole, Rajak argues her thesis clearly and convincingly; and, if nothing else, the book is a gold-mine of information about first century Palestinian society and culture. I suspect that her defense of Josephus' reliability may err a bit in being too strong; but, even so, she provides a healthy balance to the other extreme.

—Douglas Moo

I've Seen the Day
by George M. Docherty (Eerdmans, 1984, 308 pp., $19.95).

Here are the memoirs of a transplanted Scots preacher, the major part of whose 40-year ministry coincided with one of the most troubled eras in American sociopolitical history. The early chapters tell of his humble Scottish origins, his education and ordination in the Church of Scotland (1938), and of a nascent career, promising enough but complicated by his wartime pacifism.

The second half of the book, set in the United States, covers the rest of Docherty's lifework in the quarter-century after 1950. That year, at age 39, he succeeded fellow-Scot Peter Marshall at the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C. Historically, the congregation, three blocks from the White House, had included presidents, cabinet officers, congressmen, high military officers, and other top government officials. But by the late fifties, the author found himself pastor of a deteriorating inner-city parish, its membership in

decline. He recounts how many of his affluent parishioners, rather than flee to the suburbs, chose to stay and help turn traditional ways of witnessing into programs of social action.

The main focus of this half of the autobiography, however—which features a laudatory, insightful chapter on Billy Graham—is the author's militant activism beginning with the 1960s. He made his highly visible pulpit—and church—a center of agitation on Civil Rights, Vietnam, and Watergate. His narrative of those times, placed in a national scene, is interspersed with perceptive, sometimes provocative, cameos of their dramatis personae. Docherty retired from the "Church of Presidents" in 1976, a remarried widower, to live in St. Andrews, Scotland.

This moving record of one man's long and eventful ministry will prove a source of inspiration to clergy and laity alike. Richly anecdotal, its pages reveal the agonies and bliss of the pastoral calling, and, in this case, the personal struggles and successes of one who gloried in preaching. No less a part of the story is that host of men and women in the pew who, in their individual ways, stood by his work over the years, sharing his prophetic vision of compassion and justice.

—Earl C. Kaylor, Jr.

The Atonement
by Leon Morris (Leicester, England: IVP, 1983, 206 pp., $6.95).

Dr. Morris' book is a study on the Old Testament background concerning the atonement and the key words in the New Testament which bring out the meaning of the atonement. These key words are *redemption, reconciliation, justification,* and *propitiation.* The book is an expansion of the Apostle Paul's stated desire "to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (I Corinthians 2:2). This writer found it readable for a serious lay person and still challenging for the minister. The book fills a great vacuum in Christian literature today, so much of which bypasses the centrality of the cross to the Christian faith. The author is an evangelical in the classical strain, but this does not mean he succumbs to the temptation to rely on the time-worn cliches of the standard interpretations of the cross.

Dr. Morris brings out many new insights. For example, the term *blood* in the Old and New Testaments is used mainly as *violent death* and not just *life.* He aptly reminds us that Holy Communion is that service which places us in a position constantly to remind ourselves of the Lord's death and His return. Each of the eight chapters end with a set of study questions that help the reader review the main points of the chapter.

My two disappointments are that the book did not include a chapter on the Person of Christ, and secondly that the author spent too much time in chapter seven attempting to expose the problems with Dodd's argument which neglects the biblical implications of propitiation.

The book has a marvelous epilogue which shows that truly the atonement is central to a biblical theology and is a gracious act of God that brought guilty sinners into a place of freedom and right-standing with Him. The last four pages are a great challenge to the world as well as the church. The cross speaks to a self-centered world today! This book shows the relevance of the cross to our lives and challenges us to become what God intends us to be.

—Stewart Drake

Christianity and World Religions: The Challenge of Pluralism
by Sir Norman Anderson (InterVarsity Press, 1984, 216 pp., $6.95).

This book is a substantially revised and expanded edition of Anderson's *Christianity and Comparative Religion* which is now out of print. It is significantly different and better. If you have his earlier work, don't put off getting this book. He points out that there have been a large number of excellent publications recently dealing with the ongoing debate about the world's great religions and their relation to the Christian and to Christianity. We are not discussing a philosophical position but a foundation for or against evangelism. We are dealing not only with people's minds and hearts but also their souls and eternal destiny. If I believe that all religions are basically valid even though Christianity has "an edge," what will be my response to mission? Mission is both over there (wherever that is) and over here. My mission field is comprised of those I live with and come into contact with—my co-workers, neighbors, and students. These include Moslems, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, and many others. In my county there is an Islamic Center, a Buddhist Temple, a Hindu Temple, a Zoroastrian Temple, "gurus" of various types, and, of course, the various Christian heresies such as Mormons, Christian Scientists, and Jehovah's Witnesses. If I believe that those religions may contain some God-given truth but also much that stands condemned by the gospel, I must be a missionary.

But why should I be different from others who turn down a mission? Should I risk my neck and reputation, in order to witness? Yes. This book will help you be a credible witness in that you will now have greater knowledge about the other religions. Unlike other books of this type, Sir Anderson does not deal with particular religions but instead deals with themes. I think that this is a wise choice. The chapters are: "Introduction," "A Unique Proclamation?" "A Unique Salvation?" "A Unique Disclosure?" "No Other Name?" "Proclamation, Dialogue, or Both?"

This book is well worth the time and effort it takes to read it.

—Charles O. Ellenbaum

Philippians
by Gerald F. Hawthorne (Word Biblical Commentary; Word Books, 1983, 232 pp., $18.95).

Philippians requires of the commentator a warm heart as well as a keen mind. In this recent addition to the Word series, Hawthorne, a professor of Greek at Wheaton College, proves himself to be equal to the challenge as he energetically attacks exegetical difficulties and sensitively portrays the personal side of Paul as revealed in this document. He has produced a genuinely helpful volume which makes a real contribution toward a better understanding of one of the most appealing of Paul's letters.

The introduction is the weakest part of the book, in that it is somewhat uneven. The excellent discussion of provenance (Hawthorne opts for Caesarea, ca. A.D. 59-61), e.g., contrasts sharply with the weak treatment of the integrity of the letter (on which cf. H. Gamble, *The Textual History of the Letter to the Romans* [Eerdmans, 1977], 137-146).

The comments, however, which follow useful remarks regarding form/structure/setting, *detailed* bibliographies (four full pages on 2:5-11 alone!), and the author's own vigorous translation are consistently good and occasionally brilliant. The treatment of 1:28 is especially impressive. The contrast, Hawthorne argues, is not between "*their* destruction" and "*your* salvation" (cf. NIV), but between two perceptions of the Philippians' faithfulness: the opponents view the stubborn loyalty of the Philippians as a sign of the Philippians' destruction, but to the Philippians themselves, it is a sign of their own eventual salvation. With regard to the vexing issue of the "background" of the hymn in 2:6–11, he suggests that the question is impossible to answer. The language utilized is so allusive that reflections of "any or all" of the numerous proposals may be found in the hymn. Hawthorne roots the hymn in one incident in the *Gospel* tradition: the footwashing episode in John 13. Similarly provocative (but less convincing) is his proposal that the opponents denounced in 3:2ff are Jews, not "Judaizers." While "Judaizers" would have a *different* Christology than Paul, Jews would have *no* Christology at all, and it is not clear how such a message would have any appeal to the Philippians.

Overall, in light of the high standards established by the three earlier New Testament volumes in the Word series (by F.F. Bruce, R.J. Bauckham, and P.T. O'Brien), it is no small thing to say that the present volume maintains the level of quality we are coming to expect from this series. Hawthorne has written one of the best commentaries on Philippians today.

—Michael Holmes

Faith and Reason
by Richard Swinburne (Oxford, 1981, paperback ed. 1984, 206 pp., $9.95).

This important work is the last volume in a trilogy in philosophy of religion by the professor of Philosophy at the University of Keele. The first two controversial books were *The Coherence of Theism* (1977) and *The Existence of God* (1979).

Swinburne begins by arguing that belief means believing something to be more probable than its alternatives (e.g., p is more probable than q, r, or -p). Belief, he tells us, is involuntary. I cannot will to believe that the earth is flat, or that this year is AD 1504. He then examines the criteria for rational belief, and concludes that there are different types of rationality (five to be precise!). While one cannot morally insist that someone subject her or his beliefs to the highest criteria of rationality, religious beliefs ought to be so subjected since truth in this area is of vital importance. A central chapter argues that while faith is more than belief in propositions, faith also includes belief in some propositions; or, as he puts it, faith involves a creed and a way. The "way"—that is, the religious and moral life—is central. The "creed" is important only as a general guide to proper living and acting. In a final chapter Swinburne argues that "creeds," or religions, can be compared and decided upon on the basis of their overall probability or rationality.

This is obviously an important book if only because it argues against the general tenor of much of contemporary philosophy of religion and comparative religions. I wish he had considered the symbolic-expressive concept of faith (as in Tillich). And his chapter on comparing the creeds is really too brief. But in general I recommend this book as a better, more sophisticated, and closer to correct view of reason in religion than what is usually found in evangelical circles on the one hand, or liberal Protestantism on the other.

—Alan Padgett

Excavation in Palestine
by Roger Moorey (Eerdmans, 1983, 128 pp., $6.95).

Excavation in Palestine is an attractively designed small paperback which is part of a series entitled "Cities of the Biblical World." The author is Senior Assistant Keeper of the Department of

Antiquities of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford.

The book is written for the person who has "little or no archaeological knowledge." After an introductory chapter which may be difficult for the person with "little or no archaeological knowledge" to comprehend, Moorey moves through a series of topics which are basic and essential for gaining an understanding of archaeology. In chapter two Moorey provides an overview of the development of the discipline. Chapter three introduces the student to the many factors to be considered in the selection of the site. The multifaceted procedures involved in the excavation itself are discussed in chapter four. Chapters five and six explain the tasks the director faces after the excavation, namely, the establishment of a chronology for the site and the study and interpretation of the structures and the small artifacts unearthed during the excavation. Equally important is chapter seven, "After Excavation: the use and abuse of archaeology in biblical studies," in which Moorey discusses the constant temptation to draw conclusions on the basis of anticipated answers rather than rigorous cross-examination of the materials at hand.

Moorey's *Excavation in Palestine* is informative and valuable. The book has much to offer the person who takes biblical history and the discipline of archaeology seriously. The work is marked by honesty and integrity. A wealth of resources is found at the end of each chapter in the notes and bibliographical entries. Perhaps the major weakness of the book is that in places the reading may be difficult. A prior knowledge of the discipline would be helpful.

–LaMoine DeVries

The Meaning of Icons
by Leonid Ouspensky and Vladimir Lossky (St. Vladimir's Press, revised 1982, 221 pp., $25.00).

The book is an attempt to communicate the language and meaning of Byzantine icons to western readers. It is a revision of the 1952 edition, conducted by St. Vladimir's Press and Ouspensky. It includes sixteen new color plates along with new illustrative material, textual modifications, indices and a selected bibliography. Each photograph of one of the most popular icons used today is accompanied by a theological, liturgical, biblical and spiritual explanation of its meaning. This constitutes the major layout of the text, which makes the book more of a reference tool than a thematic study of iconic theology.

The book would have been more valuable to westerners, however, if St. Vladimir's Press would have included an article to offer a biblical view in support of the legitimacy of icons. Although biblical passages are cited throughout the text, there is no attempt to provide a biblical foundation for the modern-day acceptance of icons in worship. It is difficult to overlook this deficiency, since credible dialogue with the biblical text has been barren in virtually all modern Orthodox literature.

–Bradley L. Nassif

BOOK COMMENT CONTRIBUTORS

The following have contributed book comments in this issue: LaMoine DeVries, Dept. of Religious Studies, Southwest Missouri State University; Stewart Drake, Pastor of Community Presbyterian Church, Strasburg, Colorado; Charles Ellenbaum, Professor of Anthropology and Religious Studies at the College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn, IL; Michael Holmes, Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies at Bethel College, St. Paul, MN; Earl C. Kaylor, Jr., Charles A. Danan Professor of History, Juniata College; Douglas Moo, Assistant Professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL; Bradley L. Nassif, student at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Seminary; Alan Padgett, pastor of the United Methodist Church, San Jacinto, CA.

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