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THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS FELLOWSHIP

Theological Students Fellowship is a professional organization dedicated to furthering the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We provide context and content for theological reflection and spiritual formation in the classical Christian tradition. TSF 1) supports local chapters at seminaries and universities, providing students, pastors and professors a context for encouragement, prayer and theological reflection; 2) publishes *TSF BULLETIN*, offering biblical and theological resources of classical Christianity necessary for continued reflection on and growth in ministry; 3) provides reprints, bibliographies, longer monographs, books and tapes on topics relevant to persons seeking to minister with integrity, in light of biblical faith in today's complex milieu.

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Introducing This Issue

Appropriately as a new academic year is beginning, the *Bulletin* launches into a new year of publication. You are now reading Vol. 10, No. 1, which means that for ten years this journal has been serving as the voice of the Theological Students Fellowship. From its embryonic days as a sort of news-sheet, it has evolved into what in my opinion is a deservedly respected forum for the creative discussion of issues important to the whole Christian community. Evangelical in commitment yet irenic and ecumenical in spirit, the *Bulletin* owes an immense debt of gratitude to its editorial pioneers, Mark Lau Branson and Thomas McAlpine. I am merely building on the foundation they laid with the help of unpaid associates and contributors.

You who are acquainted with past issues will, of course, notice a radical change in our masthead. The personnel, I am most thankful to point out, remains essentially unchanged except for some additions and a few resignations necessitated by sheer overload. Our former Associate Editors are now listed under an Advisory category. That new category has been augmented by, alphabetically, Edith Blumhofer, Church History; Ed L. Miller, Philosophy; Greg Spencer, Cultural Studies; John Vayhinger, Counseling and Psychology; and Marvin Wilson, Jewish Studies. We are planning in future issues to give some biographical data regarding these outstanding individuals who have consented to be *TSF Bulletin* coworkers. Our other colleagues in this cooperative enterprise have been designated, as you will note, Resource Scholars. We have also included the names of Student Contributors and International Contributors who will help us develop a global outlook.

As for the contents of this issue, I think the brief meditation by Carlyle Marney, who was both an ecclesiastic gadfly and a sensitive pastor, will strike a resonant chord with many readers who chafe at the provincialism of their churches and denominations. It reminds me of a classic First World War cartoon, depicting two quarreling British soldiers who are cowering in a crater under a barrage of bursting shells, one angrily telling the other, "If you know a better 'ole, go to it." Marney would have appreciated that straightforward advice.

Since Karl Barth was born in 1886, this year Christians of every persuasion, even those sharply critical of Barth's theology, have been appreciatively commemorating his centennial. Though the May/June *Bulletin* was primarily a tribute to the Basel titan, it is surely fitting that we carry a few more articles on one of the all-time theological greats. Hence the splendid contributions of Torrance, McKim, and de Gruchy.

Writing from a Third World perspective, Thomas Hanks enables us to see much more penetratingly some of the implications of biblical faith for the social and political struggles of our time—yes, and the need for Christians to make their (our!) faith a matter of praxis rather than mere theory.

As technology provides means of travel and communication which obliterate the barriers of space and time, thus shrinking our planet to a global village, the question of religious pluralism inescapably confronts us. Historian Arnold Toynbee in the recent past and philosopher John Hick in the present day have argued against the biblical affirmation that Christianity is not simply a unique and superior faith but the one exclusive, redemptive gospel. Can we, then, insist with Jesus that he is "*the* way, *the* truth, *the* life," and that nobody comes to the Father except by him? Harold Netland, a missionary with the Evangelical Free Church of America, who is presently ministering with KGK (Kirisutosha Gakusei Kai), the Japanese branch of Inter-Varsity, probes this crucial problem in depth, persuasively arguing the case for Christian exclusivism.

Once again we include a rich selection of book reviews. And then we share some of the correspondence which reaches us. Perhaps the two letters to this editor will inspire you to express your own opinions and reactions as a reader of the September/October *Bulletin*.

On Ecclesiastical Provincialism

by Carlyle Marney

The awful sadness, the conviction for sin, the curse of that provincialism that throttles a man, is in part the reflection of his awareness that his church does not yet know to whom it belongs, nor from where its only source rises, so he longs for the kingdom of God and rebels against the confinement of his provincialism and stands with his chest against the fence wanting freedom to seek this beatitude of universal love on his own.

Why does he stay where he is? How can one stay within a framework he has already discovered to be provisional and provincial? By what processes of compromise and death does a man remain a member of a limited communion when with all his soul he longs for membership in the larger frame?

He knows, first, that any escape that will come to him will provide release only to another, perhaps larger, but limited pasture. He knows any escape is therefore abortive, temporary, and provisional. Should he abandon wholly the frame within which life first found him, he knows that his escape from this immediate delimitation of community will only subject him to newer, more subtle, and even more vicious provincialisms. That is to say, he knows the relative nature of any release and finds even in this a consciousness of kinship with all those men of other confessions, creeds, and nations who stand pressed against their fences, too. He stays where he is because he learns that there is no place to go. He feels the agony of confinement native to finitude and, therefore, joins the human race, where he is.

He can stay where he is, second, because he knows that there are values and potentials trapped within the lower form, his own community. He is aware of submerged worthwhileness, of hidden possibilities that must not be forgotten or destroyed. He sticks around to be used in the saving of the salt. He will not go outside and throw rocks from a larger pasture. He knows there are values hidden here that are worth his life to preserve and in spite of his despair, he has come to love the place.

Third, he senses, then comes to know, the presence of other climbers on the wall, other travelers on the road. He stays because he is drawn to them by the common agony and delight of the seeking and finding. A new church happens for him. Communion comes in a touch of the hand, a flick of the eye, and frequently, on this road, a confession of the heart late at night. There is constituted for him a most holy, most secret, most intimate personal church. In its light and strength and communion he lives his life, knowing he belongs simultaneously to these and to this, and that this fellowship with other climbers exists only because there is a climb to be made.

All this is to say that a man can stay in a framework he knows to be provisional and provincial because he knows all the time that he belongs to a higher community. To this higher community both his institutional framework and his "fellowship of other climbers" belong and exist as a reflection. In this awareness of belonging always to the higher, he finds ability to live. More, he feels the call of the higher community to come and to stay. He does both; he comes and stays, knowing all the time that this kind of call will split him. He knows all this and comes to know that this is what it means to live on a cross, for the cross means here the tension that maintains between the higher good and the local potential. Yet on every day's journey he feels the invasion of the higher into the lower community in that penetration of love that will not leave us as we are and gives us friends for our journey.

The late Carlyle Marney was a well known preacher and prolific writer. He served as senior pastor at Myers Park Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, leaving there to become director of Interpreter's House, an ecumenical center at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina.

Karl Barth: 1886–1986

by T. F. Torrance

Karl Barth was unquestionably the greatest theologian that has appeared for several hundred years. Protestants honor him among the real giants of the Church: Athanasius, Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin. Pope Paul went so far as to say that he was the greatest theologian since Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century. That was a surprising tribute from a Roman Pope, for Barth's critical analysis of Roman dogmas was as sharp as it was profound, although he also found much to appreciate in Roman Catholic theology. Yet perhaps it was not so surprising, for Karl Barth, one man, had a greater impact upon the Roman Catholic Church than four hundred years of Protestantism!

Born in a Swiss Manse in 1886, Karl Barth entered the ministry of the Reformed Church, serving first in Geneva and then in Safenwil, Argau. Very soon he found himself struggling hard to be faithful to his divine call to expound the Bible week by week, preaching the Gospel "in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit." How could he, a mere man, speak *the Word of God* to others? The seriousness with which he took his ordination plunged the young pastor into a deep spiritual crisis, for he found a "strange new world within the Bible" that conflicted sharply with what he had been taught in the Theological Faculties of Germany.

What was it all about? Karl Barth discovered that the Holy Scriptures don't just speak about God, for in them God himself speaks directly and personally to us. God speaks to us in the Bible as a person speaks to his friend, and yet in such a way that as we listen to his voice we know that we are face to face with the sheer majesty and mystery of God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. If that is what the Bible is, then the Theological Faculties had got it all wrong; for the Bible must be treated in an utterly different way. When he tried to come to terms with his discovery in a commentary on St. Paul's Letter to the Romans, in which he called upon the Church to *let God be God*, the book exploded like a bomb among the theologians of Europe, and provoked screams of anger from some of his most famous teachers!

T. F. Torrance held for 29 years the Chair of Christian Dogmatics at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland.

It was "the Godness of God in his Revelation" that Barth had discovered. What God reveals in the Bible is none other than *himself*: not just something divine, not something like God, not something coming from God. "No, God himself is the content of his revelation." Divine revelation is so utterly unique that it cannot be put on the same level as anything else. "As a man can have only one father; as he is able to look at one time with his eyes into the eyes of only one other man; as he can hear with his two ears the word of only one man at one and the same time; as he is born only once and dies but once—so he can believe and know only one Revelation." That is what happens, Barth held, when we meet Jesus Christ and know that he is the Way, the Truth and Life, and that there is no other way to the Father but by him.

When he made that discovery, Barth resigned from the Social Democratic Party, for he did not want to mislead his congregation by confusing the Gospel with politics. That did not mean that the minister of the Gospel must refrain from proclaiming the Word of God *to* politics, but it did mean that he must address moral, social and political problems *solely on the ground of God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ.* That was the stand Barth took up as a professor in Nazi Germany, when he wrote the famous "Barmen Confession" which galvanized the confessing Church in its resistance to Hitler. It is on the Gospel of the sole Lordship of Jesus Christ, Barth taught, that all the powers of evil and tyranny must shatter themselves as on a mighty "Rock of Bronze." When he refused to take the oath of loyalty demanded by the Nazis, Karl Barth was deposed from his Chair in the University of Bonn and deported back to Switzerland.

After the war Barth was more convinced than ever that it was the loss of the Godness of God in his revelation that brought about the secularization of the church in Germany—which was still rampant in all our churches where a secularizing ministry confuses moral and social renovation with the Gospel of redemption through the cross and resurrection of Christ. It was of supreme importance for the Church again to take up the battle for the essence of the Gospel that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, and that there is no other revelation and no other salvation than that embodied in him. That was the supreme truth for which the early Church had struggled in its great theological crisis when the Nicene Creed was born, and for which the Reformers had struggled when the doctrine of justification by grace was at stake. What God freely gives us in grace is not just something which might be controlled and dispensed by the Church, but his very own Self incarnate in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of mankind.

That is what Karl Barth's theology is all about: *the uniqueness and centrality of Christ and his Gospel.* It is through Christ and in his Spirit alone that we have access to authentic knowledge of God, and through the blood of Christ alone that sinners are reconciled to him in forgiveness and rebirth. If we really believe in Jesus Christ, we cannot place Christianity alongside some other religion, or engage in some sort of interfaith approach to God; for God's unique self-revelation in Christ tells us that there is no other revelation of God and no other possibility of being reconciled to him except through the cross. It is at this very point that the Church today urgently needs to be warned against watering down the Gospel, and secularizing the ministry of the Word of God!

Karl Barth's own commitment to Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life makes him subject the foundations of human knowledge and culture to the most radical examination. In Jesus, God has become one with us *as we are.* He has taken our actual human nature and made it his own, with all its sin and guilt, misery and death, in order to heal us in the dark depths of our human existence, not the least in the twisted state of our alienated minds. That is why Karl set himself to think out in a quite unparalleled way the nature of human reason in the light of God's revealing and saving activity in Jesus Christ, and to show how God means us to use it in understanding the truth of the Gospel and its implications for all human activity and behavior. In so doing he has given us in his *Church Dogmatics* an account of the Christian faith second to none in the whole history of Christian theology, and one that I find excitingly relevant for our modern, scientific era.

What Shakespeare is to English literature, and Mozart is to classical music, Karl Barth is to Christian theology today. Anyone still unfamiliar with Barth today must be judged theologically illiterate! But what I like most about his theology is that it is evangelical to the core, for it is utterly faithful to the Gospel and its message of the reconciling love and grace of God in our Lord Jesus Christ.

How Karl Barth Changed Their Minds

by Donald K. McKim

1986 is a vintage year for centennials in the theological world. Most notably this is the 100th anniversary year of the birth of two of the 20th century's "giant" theologians—Paul Tillich and Karl Barth.

A couple years ago, when I realized the Barth centenary was coming up, I conceived the project of enlisting prominent contemporary theologians to reflect on how they have dealt with Barth's thought in their own theological development. To do this, I suggested a twist on the rubric made famous by the series of articles in the *The Christian Century* for a number of years, called "How I Changed My Mind." To this series, Karl Barth himself contributed three times. But to have contemporary people reflecting on their interaction with Barth through the years would be of interest right now, I believed. For it would show not only what elements in Barth's life and thought had made lasting impacts on people but would also indicate how some of the shapers of contemporary theology have either accepted, rejected or remained unmoved by Barth's theological views. In that sense we would have a kind of "freeze-frame" of contemporary theology showing where theologians are now, 100 years after Barth's birth. So I solicited essays from a number of people, not all of whom are able to contribute. I asked them to write short, personally-oriented pieces instead of formal "scholarly" ones and to be honest in their assessments of their dealings with Barth's thought whether he had actually "changed their minds" or not. I have now assembled 26 essays that are being published by the Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company this fall with the title, *How Karl Barth Changed My Mind.*

This has been an intriguing project which has also been lots of fun. Many revealing "Barth stories" emerged. I sought a variety of contributors and am fortunate to have essays from Barth's two sons, Christoph and Markus, as well as from a

Donald K. McKim is Associate Professor of Theology at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary.

number of Barth's students who shared their memories of *Carolus magnus* as he was called. Eberhard Busch, Barth's biographer and assistant, also granted an interview. The given titles of some of the essays are interesting. Paul Lehmann writes of "The Ant and the Emperor," a reference to Barth's description of his many visitors to his vacation hideaway in 1950 who came, as he said, "like a procession of ants." Dietrich Ritschl calls his piece "How to be Most Grateful to Karl Barth Without Remaining a Barthian." That these essays do not turn out to be merely "puff pieces," praising Barth with no demurs, is seen in the titles by Donald Bloesch, "Karl Barth: Appreciation and Reservations" and by John Cobb, "Barth and the Barthians: A Critical Appraisal."

Of course, it's impossible to summarize the diverse contributions short of going through all the essays. But I would like to indicate some general topics where Barth's influence has been appropriated in this sampling of theologians and then some areas as well where divergencies and critiques arise.

APPROPRIATIONS

Dogmatics

In the realm of dogmatics generally, Paul Lehmann has argued that Karl Barth "delivered theological language and conceptuality from bondage to propositional logic and joined them once again to poetry." This he did, says Lehmann, by exploring "the metaphorical content and meaning of the language of Dogmatics." Barth himself, according to Lehmann, was not fully aware he was doing this. Yet by his "pioneering a metaphorical interpretation of the knowledge and obedience of faith," Barth was brought "to the transforming edge of the world of today and the church of today and tomorrow in their need and search for 'an essential metaphor.'" This was probed by Barth's continual turning to the *analogia fidei*, his description of the task of dogmatics as reflection upon the agreement between the church's language about God and the revelation of God attested in Holy Scripture, and more specifically in his "evocative and provocative re-appropriation of the Chalcedonian *vere Deus-vere Homo*" desription of Jesus Christ. Lehmann sees Barth's appropriation of this formula in its metaphorical meaning as illuminated by the conundrum from a friend which asks: "'When is an analogy not an analogy?' to which the answer is: 'When it is a metaphor.'" This, according to Lehmann, is what the Chalcedonian formula has been and is all about. And it was Barth's contribution to recognize this in order to regain a poetical perspective.

At the same time, Geoffrey Bromiley, Barth's major English translator, sees Barth as having rendered a twofold service in theology.

> First, he has called theology back to its proper object of God and given it a more truly scientific basis under the control of this object, who is always also subject. In so doing he has restored to theology its integrity as an academic discipline in its own right which need not disguise itself among the humanities. But second, he has also related theology firmly to the church's mission. Theology for Barth is no mere academic exercise. It does not serve only to satisfy intellectual needs or to provide apologetic arguments. It brings the whole life and proclamation of the church under scrutiny, subjecting them to testing by the Biblical norm, pointing out the need for addition, correction, or subtraction as the church lives out the Christian life and proclaims the Christian message in the diverse cultures and shifting circumstances of the world. In this sense Barth treats theology as itself a form of ministry, for its scrutinizing is not an exercise in domination but an act of service which protects the church against error and secularization, which helps it to achieve a purity of teaching and preaching and which first and supremely and continuously theology must also render in exemplary fashion to itself.

This emphasis of Barth's on God as the object and the subject of theology is also expounded by T.F. Torrance. He tells of showing Barth how Barth's own approach to epistemological preconceptions in theology paralleled that of Einstein in physics. "In theology as well as in natural science," says Torrance, "theoretical and empirical components in knowledge always operate inseparably together: the only true epistemology is that which is embodied in and is natural to the material content of knowledge." "What is needed," Torrance says, is "an epistemological structure that is indissolubly bound up with the essential substance or positive content of knowledge. That is why the epistemology offered by Barth is not presented in abstraction or detachment from the material content of knowledge, but in the heart of his dogmatic theology, as in *CD* II.1 where it is bound up with the doctrine of God as he has made himself known to us in space and time through Jesus Christ his Incarnate Son."

Martin Marty pays tribute to Barth's doctrine when he writes that "what remains above all, however, is the confidence he gave us that we must, and perhaps can, speak of and about and to God."

God

Barth's doctrine of God with its focus also on the Incarnation of Jesus Christ is highlighted in T.H.L. Parker's essay. Parker writes that "from Barth I learned (gradually, no doubt) the central truth of all truths, that the objectivity of God, the otherness of God, the Sovereignty which [God] will not give to another, is not to be separated from his becoming one with [humanity], from [God] becoming the one who serves [humanity] and even puts himself at their disposal. These are not two contradictories or even two counter-truths to be held in balance, but as Christ is one, the sovereign Lord who is the Servant, the Servant who is the sovereign Lord, so these are one. It is not an *either-or*, not even a *both-and*, but it is *simul . . . et simul*. In being the one [God] is at the same time the other."

Martin Marty also pays tribute to Barth's doctrine of God when he writes that "what remains above all, however, is the confidence he gave us that we must, and perhaps can, speak of and about and to God." While the language analysts, symbolic logicians and philosophers can readily point out the problems in God language, Marty cites Saul Bellow's comment: "Being a prophet is nice work if you can get it, but sooner or later you have to talk about God." And Marty goes on to say: "It has been my experience that in the contexts of agnostics, secular-minded pluralists and those suspicious of the claims of faith, it is expected that this be sooner, not later. Ancillary theological themes can be postponed, made part of trivia quizzes. Theme Number One, *theos+logos*, God-thought, God-language, most efficiently and focally comes up first. Barth

certainly is not the only model when this agenda comes up, and he may not even be the best. But no twentieth century serious thinker more consistently pressed it to the front of thought, writing and preaching than did he. For that, he will live as fashions come and go."

Jesus Christ

Barth's theology is often said to be Christocentric. As Robert McAfee Brown points out: "No Christian theology worthy of the name can be other than Christocentric, and whatever else Barth's theology is, it is Christocentric. God did something, Barth constantly reminds us, in a narrow strip of history on a narrow strip of land, in Palestine and we are forever bound to respond to the nature and the content of that action. If the 'early Barth' stressed the theme of Koheleth that 'God is in heaven and you are on earth,' the mature Barth sings praises to the God who is also on earth as well."

In the realm of dogmatics, Paul Lehmann has argued that Karl Barth "delivered theological language and conceptuality from bondage to propositional logic and joined them once again to poetry."

Barth's Christological interpretation of the doctrine of predestination was another of his important contributions. For Brown, as a Presbyterian, this allowed him to reclaim the doctrine of election. For him, "it was 'II/2' that emancipated me. It was liberating to read Barth's comment that when he approached this topic he had expected to follow his master Calvin, and then discovered that in faithfulness to Scripture he had to break with Calvin, and declare that the doctrine of election was not a doctrine of impenetrable darkness but of indescribable light, God's ultimate 'yes' to humankind. The Scriptures, Barth affirmed, proclaim God's unconditional choice *for* us rather than against us, the preeminence and prevenience of God's grace, the God who has already chosen us before the foundation of the earth." As Béla Vassady noted in this regard, "Only a consistent Christocentricity can secure and guarantee a thoroughly non-speculative character for our theocentric theology."

Barth's focus on election and Jesus Christ leads to what Langdon Gilkey has found to be "the most 'modern' aspect of Barth, paradoxically united to what is most traditional—i.e. the centering of all salvation on Jesus Christ." This is the aspect of what Gilkey calls Barth's "universalism." He writes: "I find his clarity and breadth, and absolute originality, here endlessly inspiring. To me, something like this represents the only possible way to interpret Christian faith, that is in terms of the universality, the priority, the all-encompassing character and the triumph of God's redeeeming love. It is also the only basis on which a Christian can genuinely enter into dialogue with other religions—although this was (I am sure) hardly what Barth had in mind! The paradoxical greatness of the man is brightly illuminated here. At the very point where today his theology seems most 'parochial': explicitly centered in and concerned for the Biblical history, its tribulations and triumphs, at that *same* point it suddenly bursts into transcendence and glory and includes, as few other viewpoints do, the furthest reaches of God's creaturely domain."

Politics

A word should also be said about the influence of Karl Barth on politics according to some of the contributors. This issue is touched on at a number of points but is brought out most clearly in the essays by Lehmann, Brown, and specifically Harvey Cox who titled his piece, "Barth and Berlin: Theology at the Wall." Cox tells of his year living and working in Berlin in 1962 and how in his trips across to the Eastern side, pastors, teachers and lay people most of all wanted copies of Barth's *Kirchliche Dogmatik* to read. Cox tells of how Frederich-Wilhelm Marquardt argued that Barth's whole corpus had to be read from the perspective of Barth's perspective to socialism as Barth's *sitz im leben*. Barth was writing, said Marquardt, a kind of political theology. Then Marquardt pointed Cox to a section in *Church Dogmatics* II/1 (p. 386) where Barth in referring to Amos 5:24 said that "God always takes his stand unconditionally and passionately on this side and this side alone: against the lofty and on behalf of the lowly; against those who already enjoy right and privilege and on behalf of those who are denied and deprived of it." Living in Berlin, Cox found that the real life and death question for all people there was not the question of Bultmann, of how modern persons should understand themselves or of the disappearance of the mythical world-view. It was rather the question of Barth—the question of justice and peace. When Cox then later encountered the theology of Liberation and the writings of Gustavo Gutiérrez, he writes, "I had been made ready by the Barth I got to know in the shadow of the Wall, from the pastors and ordinary Christians who lived in Berlin bravely during those hard but heady days and who seemed to know with some wonderful assurance that they were just where God wanted them to be. For me, the step from Barth to Liberation theology was a natural and easy one."

Barth's relation to Liberation theology is also mentioned in Brown's essay and, interestingly, the same passage from *C.D.* II/1 (p. 386) is cited. Brown argues that there are some "mutually reinforcing convictions" between Barth and the Liberationists including among other things the fact that "neither position starts *de novo*." Barth was a socialist even before he read the Epistle to the Romans in a new light, and Gutiérrez defines theology as a "second act" which is a "critical reflection on praxis in *the light of the Word of God*." Thus, says Brown, "If Barth brings an implicit praxis to his examination of Scripture, Gutiérrez brings an implicit Biblical orientation to his examination of praxis." Brown sees the Biblical rootedness of Barth's theology as the source of Barth's "courage to issue a clear 'No' to Hitler" and that likewise this Biblical rootedness "gives Latin American Christians the courage to say 'No' in their own situations of tyranny."

In this regard also, there was a story in *The New York Times* in November 1985 which I cite in the "Introduction" to the volume. It was about Dr. Nico Smith, a white man and formerly a professor of theology at the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa and now pastor of a Black Dutch Reformed Church in Mamelodi, South Africa, who told of the "enormous influence" Karl Barth had on him and his attitudes toward apartheid. In 1963 Smith had met with Barth and Barth asked him, "Will you be free to preach the Gospel even if the Government in your country tells you that you are preaching against the whole system?" Smith said, "That made a deep impression on me," and it subsequently helped shape his decision to leave his theology professorship and now live in a black township near Pretoria. So Barth's influence in political matters contin-

ues to have an effect.

Divergencies

As I mentioned, many of the contributors not only have appropriated much from Barth, but they have also diverged from him as well. A few of these divergencies can be mentioned.

Hendrikus Berkhof tells of how he had to widen his pneumatological thinking to include the realm of experience which Barth had rejected. He writes: "I could not agree with those Barthians for whom experience was a dirty word. I never had believed that Barth's 'No!' to Brunner's 'Nature and Grace' could be the last word. If the Spirit is active both in creation and in redemption, the Spirit must also be conceived as the bridge-builder between these two realms."

Dietrich Ritschl is critical of Barth's developed theology as done "entirely within the categories of Continental Protestantism and Catholicism. To put it more strongly," writes Ritschl, "I think that Barth never in his life had a conversation in depth with a truly non-religious communist, an atheist, a Muslim or a Hindu." When Ritschl told Barth near the end of Barth's life that his (Ritschl's) ambition was "to be a good player in the orchestra of theologians," Ritschl says, Barth "quite strongly disagreed and smilingly admonished me to play a solo-instrument." "I thought and I still think," says Ritschl, "that the time for this is over."

Donald Bloesch finds Barth's "denigration of human virtue" disturbing. He believes Barth "underplays the Scriptural injunction that apart from our striving after holiness we will not see God (Heb. 12:14; Rom. 6:19; Mat. 5:8). The call to sainthood, which is an integral part of the tradition of the church catholic," says Bloesch, "is sadly neglected in his theology."

One of the most sustained critiques of Barth is from John Cobb. Cobb rejects Barth's rejection of a "natural theology" in favor of, in Cobb's terms, a "Christian natural theology." He sees Barth's approach as at the root of what led to the "death of God" movement—an unwillingness to speak of God in terms other than those of the Bible and not in terms of "this world." Cobb questions Barth's concept of "nature" and believes his theology down plays ecology and therefore all the problems related to the rape of the environment.

Barth Today

Enough has been said to see how some of the contributors have viewed Barth, both positively and negatively. There is much more in the book and from other contributors whose names have not been mentioned. For many, Barth has been a starting point, a norm, a way of doing theology by which other systems and other thought can be evaluated. Yet even those whose theology today moves in an orbit other than Barth's do acknowledge his contributions and can find points at which he has been helpful personally. As John Cobb concluded his essay: "So what of Barth? That I could not follow him does not mean I cannot admire him or appreciate much of his legacy. That appreciation can best be shown today, not by becoming Barthians, but by responding as creatively to our situation, as we understand it, as he did his, as he understood it." For a theologian who always said he did not intend to found a "school," Karl Barth in this centennial year of his birth would perhaps be gladdened by that perspective.

Karl Barth: Socialism and Biblical Hermeneutics

by Steve de Gruchy

In Search of the Strange New World in the Bible

In the period 1916 to 1921, while a pastor at Safenwil, Karl Barth discovered and began to give expression to a new understanding of the Bible and its interpretation. It is our contention that major elements of what became of Barth's mature hermeneutic as expressed in *Church Dogmatics 1* were articulated in this "early" period. Barth entered academic work not with the intention of discovering a new understanding of the faith, but to articulate and provide a theological foundation for what he had already discovered.

What Barth had discovered, and what he voiced in a lecture in 1916, was "the Strange New World within the Bible." The first concern evident here is his belief that the content of the Bible is God's Word to us rather than history, morality and religion.

> It is not the right human thoughts about God which form the content of the Bible, but the right divine thoughts about men. The Bible tells us not how we should talk with God, but what he says to us; not how we find the way to him, but how he has sought and found the way to us. . . . It is this which is in the Bible. The Word of God is within the Bible.[1]

A second concern is the role of faith in interpretation. Barth makes himself clear: in spite of all our human limitations, Holy Scripture will interpret itself for us if we "read it in faith."[2] One can only understand the Bible if it is read in faith because really to understand it means to recognize that it "makes straight for the point where one must decide to accept the sovereignty of God. . . One can only believe . . . or not believe. There is no third way."[3]

Two years later, in August 1918, the "Strange New World" exploded on the wider public in the form of Barth's first commentary on *Romans*. We meet a third concern here: to have the Bible speak with importance in the twentieth century.

> What was once of great importance is so still. What is today of grave importance . . . stands in direct connexion with that ancient gravity. If we rightly understand ourselves, our problems are the problems of Paul; and if we be enlightened by the brightness of his answers, those answers must be ours.[4]

This concern led Barth to assign the historical-critical method to its "place" as mere "preparation of the intelligence," and to admit that were he driven to choose between that method and the classical Reformed doctrine of inspiration, he would "without hesitation adopt the latter."[5] This concern surfaces again in another lecture in 1920. Once again Barth wants to assign historical-critical work to a preliminary stage: "For it is clear that intelligent and fruitful discussion of the Bible begins when the judgment as to its human, historical and psychological character has been made and put behind us."[6]

Just before Barth left Safenwil, the second and wholly revised edition of Romans was published. While he saw fit to re-write the commentary, the concerns were still there. In his

Steve de Gruchy is a graduate of the University of Cape Town, South Africa.

foreword to this edition, he responded to the basic criticism that he was an enemy of historical-criticism by arguing that he was more critical of others because he took concern of the text as his fundamental key to interpretation. In this context he uttered his famous comment that "the critical historian needs to be more critical!"[7]

Also in this foreword, he explicitly refers to a fourth concern, the responsibility of biblical theology and hermeneutics toward the life of the Church and its proclamation:

> I myself know what it means year in, year out to mount the steps of the pulpit, conscious of the responsibility to understand and interpret, and longing to fulfill it; and yet utterly incapable . . .[8]

What Barth had discovered, and what he voiced in a lecture in 1916, was "the strange new world within the Bible."

The fifth concern that is evident at this period is expressed in the lecture mentioned above, "Biblical Questions, Insight and Vistas." Here Barth said, "The Bible tells us more, or less, according to the much or little that we are able to hear and translate into deed and truth."[9] The application of the Word of God to the world around one is fundamental to the interpretation of the Bible.

It is clear then that five crucial and vital elements of Barth's biblical hermeneutic were already expressed while he was a pastor at Safenwil, in the two lectures and the two editions of *Romans*. This is not to say that we meet here his mature and articulated thoughts on the matter. Indeed, Barth had still to make his "false start," to read Anselm and most importantly to discover a trajectory within the thought of Calvin and the Reformation that would provide him with a framework to express that hermeneutic.[10] Nevertheless we are justified in saying that the discovery of this hermeneutic and its fundamental concerns had already been made.

Socialist Praxis at Safenwil

The work of Karl Marx has decisively influenced the way we understand human thought. "Consciousness," he tells us, "can never be anything else than conscious existence,"[11] and historical materialism "does not explain practice from the idea, but explains the formation of the idea from material practice."[12] In other words, who we are and what we do—particularly in relation to the material production in society—determines what we think and specifically how we understand the world around us. This is equally true of religious as it is of political or economic theories that attempt to *understand the world*. All attempts at understanding—i.e., all hermeneutics—are decisively influenced by the social praxis of the interpreter.

Nowhere in the field of biblical hermeneutics is this understood better than in liberation theology. Using the insights of Marx, liberation theologians raise questions about the relationship of the interpreter to society, grounding what Heidegger and Bultmann called the hermeneutical circle and pre-understanding in *real history*. Weir has commented that:

> Form criticism has taught us to seek the *sitz im leben* of the text. The hermeneutics of Liberation Theology are challenging scholarship to discuss the *sitz im leben* of the interpretation.[13]

The liberation theologians make clear that there is no possibility of coming to the biblical text with a *tabula rasa* because we all bring our own agendas to the study of the Bible. Miguez Bonino has commented:

> What Bultmann has so convincingly argued concerning a *pre-understanding*, which every man brings to his interpretaion of the text, must be deepened and made more concrete, not in the abstract philosophical analysis of existence, but in the concrete conditions of men who belong to a certain time, people and class, who are engaged in certain courses of action, even of Christian action, and who reflect and read the texts within and out of these conditions.[14]

As these insights are applied to the way the Bible has been interpreted in North Atlantic countries, we became more and more aware that its message is captive to the material and hence the ideological interests of the interpreters. Any attempt to respond to an interpretation of the Bible must begin with *suspicion*: "Every interpretation of the texts which is offered to us . . . must be investigated in relation to the praxis out of which it comes."[15]

In response, then, to our discussion of the relationship between consciousness and social existence, biblical interpretation and praxis, and most specifically the hermeneutic suspicion which leads to the above demand of Miguez Bonino, we need to inquire into the praxis which gave rise to Barth's hermeneutic. Because, as we have seen, the orientation of this hermeneutic is already clear in Safenwil, we need to focus on Barth's praxis as a pastor in this Swiss Village.

In 1972, Friedrich-Wilhelm Marquardt set the theological world abuzz with his four theses on Karl Barth's theology and radical politics. Marquardt maintained that:

1. Karl Barth was a Socialist.
2. His theology has its life setting in his socialist activity.
3. He turned to theology in order to set the organic connection between the Bible and the newspaper, the new world and the collapsing bourgeois order.
4. The substance of his turn to theology was the construction of a concept of "God."[16]

The fact that these theses were initially rejected by the Kirchlicke Hochschule in Berlin[17] indicates that much of Barth's radical political commitment has been obscured by First-World theologians. George Casalis writes that

> the dominant theologians and the ecclesiastical powers, having an inkling of the danger represented by an outstanding man who refused to be confined in the accepted political, academic and ethical framework, took steps to reclaim him. . . . As a result, conformist theologians and pastors could declare themselves "Barthian" without in any way calling into question the structures and values of social orders and ecclesiastical establishments.[18]

Through the work of Marquardt, Gollwitzer, Casalis, Hunsinger and others, there has been a growing awareness of the radical nature of Karl Barth's political commitments and activities at Safenwil. In a letter in the year of his death Barth reminisces:

> When as a young parson in Safenwil in the Aargau I saw the unjust situation of the workers, who were deprived of their rights, then I believed that as a theologian

> I could meet both them and the other members of the community only by taking their side and therefore becoming in practice a Social Democrat. In so doing, I was less interested in the ideological aspect of the party than in its organizing of unions. And "my" workers understood me on this matter. For them I was their "comrade parson" who was even ready on one occasion to march with them behind a red flag to Zofingen. . . . With that concern, I used the fathers and doctors of socialism to enlighten them as to their rights and possibilities both politically and especially in relations to unions. I successfully taught them to make use of their rights and options, and at times I even represented them at various congresses. Once I was almost elected to the Aargau council of government by the socialists.[19]

Gollwitzer summarizes some of the other activities that Barth was involved in when he notes that in Safenwil Barth "established three unions, organized strikes, travelled up and down the countryside as a party speaker, offended the well-to-do in his community, urged his presbyters to join the party, [and] formed a 'red' presbytery. . . ."[20] These comments and Barth's personal reflection enable us to understand what we would call the praxis of Karl Barth the pastor. They describe the *sitz im leben* out of which Barth could say: "Real socialism is real Christianity in our time."[21]

Barth and Segundo's Hermeneutical Circle

In the attempt to integrate Barth's socialist praxis and his discovery of this new way of reading the Bible, we will rely on Segundo's model of the Hermeneutical Circle, for this articulates most clearly the way in which social activity and biblical interpretation interact. This is Segundo's preliminary definition of the circle:

> It is the continuing change in our interpretation of the Bible which is dictated by the continuing changes in our present day reality, both individual and social.[22]

There are four stages or "decisive factors" in the hermeneutical circle. We shall examine each in turn with reference to Barth.

1. As one experiences reality, one becomes suspicious that all is not as one is led to believe. Ideological suspicion arises, in which one recognizes that the dominant way of explaining things does not fit with reality. Behind talk of peace and order lurks violence and exploitation. This is Segundo's first precondition: one has to become critical of one's society in order to begin to participate in the circle.[23] "A human being who is content with the world will not have the least interest in unmasking the mechanisms that conceal the authentic reality."[24] It should be clear from our discussion that Barth's embracing of socialism involved a critical attitude toward the ruling class of his day. It is clear too from this period that Barth looked upon the "fathers and doctors of socialism" with appreciation,[25] and the recorded correspondence with Herr Hussy indicates that he understood the prevalent socio-economic situation from a Marxist perspective.[26] What is clear from all of this (remarkably so in a letter from *Letters 1961-1968*), is that all of this grew out of his deep commitment to the workers of his parish. It was not just intellectual games!

2. This critical awareness and ideological suspicion grows to include even theology. Here one recognizes that the dominant theology and interpretation of the Bible cannot deal adequately with reality. Prior to the First World War, Barth had made himself "a committed disciple of the 'modern school.'"[27] The suspicion that it could not deal adequately with reality arose most dramatically with the advent of that War. Not only was the whole project of the "modern school" thrown into disrepute, but Barth was deeply shocked at the moral support his theological teachers gave to the German war effort.[28] This was an "ethical failure" that had its roots in theology. He wrote:

> The unconditional truths of the gospel are simply suspended for the time being and in the meantime a German war theology is put to work, its Christian trimmings consisting in a lot of talk about sacrifice and the like.[29]

Ideological suspicion also arose in the area of his day-to-day praxis of *preaching*. The responsibilities Barth faced as a preacher in a working class congregation raised serious questions about the legitimacy and adequacy of the theology he had been taught. He communicated to his friend Eduard Thurneysen his "increasing realization that our preaching is impossible from the start."[30] It must be remembered that in the case of both the War and homiletics, Barth's suspicion received its primary stimulus from his commitment to the workers in his parish and hence to socialism. Hunsinger has written that "the problem of the sermon was for Barth a problem of praxis, and praxis for him included socialist politics."[31] Barth speaks of a radical rejection of prevalent theology when he writes that

> a whole world of exegesis, ethics, dogmatics and preaching which I had hitherto held to be essentially trustworthy, was shaken to the foundations, and with it all the other writings of the German theologians.[32]

3. While the second step involves a rejection of prevalent theology, it can also mean the rejection of the Christian faith. If, however, one does not want to reject the faith itself, then one moves to this third step where one seeks to investigate "the suspicion that the prevailing interpretation of the Bible has not taken important pieces of data into account,"[33] and therefore that it is the expression of the faith and not the faith itself which cannot deal with the unmasked reality. Against Marx, who would have had similar views to him on the first two steps, Barth believed that the failure of liberal Protestantism did not mean the failure of the Christian faith. It meant rather that the Christian faith had to be restated. This involved having an "exegetical suspicion" that what his teachers propagated as "Christian" did not in fact have its roots in the Bible. Thurneysen refers to this shared suspicion:

> It happened as something basically very simple: the Bible struck us in a completely new way. It was already familiar to us, but we read it through certain filters and interpretations. When the theology and the world-view which created those filters were shaken, the interpretation began to fall apart.[34]

4. The fourth point in Segundo's circle is the appropriation of a *new hermeneutic*. We have examined Barth's new hermeneutic in detail above. The evidence we have in terms of responses by representatives of the "old school" bear witness to its novelty. Harnack branded him as being in line with Thomas Munzer, and according to one of the highly regarded New Testament professors, Julicher, he was a new Marcion![35] The inability for Barth and Harnack to correspond over the issue of biblical interpretation also illustrates the profound paradigm shift initiated by Barth's new hermeneuic.[36]

Because we have been speaking of a circle and not a straight line, factors four and one are related in such a way that the affirmation of a new hermeneutic—the grasping of new possibilities in the biblical text—leads on to a deeper commitment in the struggle for a better world. For the reason that the stress is on *action in response to God's Word* rather than mere con-

templation from afar, George Casalis has suggested the term *hermeneutical circulation*. This linguistic change carries with it a change in emphasis which recognizes that the interpeter does not sit still and let his or her mind go round a carousel of thought, but is actively moving in real life.

This constant circulation is also true of Barth. He continued to move around the circle again and again. New issues such as the 1918 Russian Revolution, the Swiss General strike, the rise of Nazi Germany, and the 1948 Hungarian Invasion led him to new suspicions and new insights into reading the Bible.[37] Marquardt quotes Barth himself as recognizing this: If "political relationships change, then Christians will simply take that as an occasion to read the Bible anew. . . . And quite certainly this: a new understanding of Scripture . . . is the community's decisive particpation in the change of the political order."[38] As events led to a new reading of the Bible, this in turn led to a deeper political involvement which included membership in the SDP in Nazi Germany and his refusal to resign from it in 1933; his political activity in the war years, his deportation, and his involvement in the Church struggle; his participation in the communist led *Committee for a Free Germany*; and his continuing rejection of capitalism and the "American Way of Life."[39]

Conclusion

In this essay we have argued (1) that biblical hermeneutics and social praxis are inextricably linked, and that a change in one involves a change in the other. This we have seen is true for Barth. His new hermeneutic which he discovered at Safenwil arose out of his socialist praxis. At the same time we have argued that (2) the orientation of this new hermeneutic remained the same throughout his life and that the themes articulated in the Safenwil period remained dominant in his mature theology.

We conclude with two remarks that flow from the above. (1) If Barth's hermeneutic arose from a socialist praxis, and if his hermeneutic did not change in orientation throughout his life, this lends further credence to the view that Barth remained committed to socialist praxis (at least in principle) throughout his life. Any basic change in praxis would have led to a corresponding basic change in his hermeneutic. (2) If Barth's hermeneutic arose out of socialist praxis, and if it was a *Reformed* hermeneutic, then he has a pivotal role to play in the search for Reformed theology that can be mature enough to be open to the challenge of liberation theology, to be in dialogue with it, and to learn from it while at the same time remaining true to the best of its tradition.

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[1] K. Barth, "The Strange New World Within the Bible" in *The Word of God and the Word of Man*. Trans. D. Horton (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p.43.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 34.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 41.
[4] K. Barth, Preface to the First Edition of *The Epistle to the Romans*. Trans. E.C. Hoskyns (London: OUP, 1933), p.1.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 1.
[6] K. Barth, "Biblical Questions, Insights and Vistas" in *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, pp.60f.
[7] K. Barth, Preface to the Second Edition of *Romans*, p. 8.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 9.
[9] K. Barth, "Biblical Questions, Insights and Vistas," p. 95.
[10] We are speaking here of that trajectory in Calvin which sees a relationship between the Word of God and the words of the Bible, but which avoids verbal infallibility and inerrancy and links together faith, the Spirit and the Word. See for example E.A. Dowey Jr., *The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology* (New York: Columbia UP, 1952) for a discussion of the two trajectories in Calvin.
[11] K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*. Ed. C.J. Arthur (London: Lawrence and Wisehart, 1970), p. 47.
[12] *Ibid.*, p. 58.
[13] J.E. Weir, "The Bible and Marx," in *The Scottish Journal of Theology* Vol. 35, p. 344.
[14] J. Miguez Bonino, *Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation* (London: SPCK, 1975), pp. 90f.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 91.
[16] F-W. Marquardt, "Socialism in the Theology of Karl Barth" in *Karl Barth and Radical Politics*. Ed. and Trans. G. Hunsinger (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976), p. 46.
[17] See *Karl Barth and Radical Politics*, p. 10.
[18] G. Casalis, *Correct Ideas Don't Fall From the Skies*. Trans. J.M. Lyons and M. John (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1984), p. 90.
[19] K. Barth, "To an Engineer in East Germany, June 1968," in *Letters 1961-1968*. Trans. and Ed. G.W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), p. 303.
[20] H. Gollwitzer, "Kingdom of God and Socialism in the Theology of Karl Barth" in *Karl Barth and Radical Politics*, p. 79.
[21] K. Barth, "Jesus Christ and the Movement for Social Justice" in *Karl Barth and Radical Politics*, p. 36.
[22] J.L. Segundo, *The Liberation of Theology*. Trans. J. Drury (Maryknoll, Orbis, 1976), p.8.
[23] For a discussion on what Segundo considers the two pre-conditions for entry into the circle, see *Ibid.*, pp. 8f.
[24] *Ibid.*, p. 10.
[25] K. Barth, "To an Engineer in East Germany, June 1968," p. 303.
[26] See K. Barth, "Answer to the Open Letter of Mr. W. Hussy in Aarburg" in *Karl Barth and Radical Politics*, pp. 40ff.
[27] K. Barth in E. Busch, *Karl Barth*. Trans. J. Bowden (London: SCM, 1976), p. 46.
[28] On the very day that the war broke out, 93 German intellectuals including Harnack and Hermann issued a manifesto in support of the war policy of Kaiser Wilhelm II and Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg.
[29] K. Barth in *Revolutionary Theology in the Making: The Barth-Thurneysen Correspondence 1914-1925*. Trans. J.D. Smart (Richmond: John Knox, 1964), p. 26.
[30] In E. Busch, *Op. Cit.*, p. 81.
[31] G. Hunsinger, "Toward a Radical Barth" in *Karl Barth and Radical Politics*, p. 202.
[32] In E. Busch, *Op. Cit.*, p. 81.
[33] J.L. Segundo, *Op. Cit.*, p. 9.
[34] Quoted in F-W. Marquardt, *Op. Cit.*, p. 60.
[35] See K. Barth, Preface to the 2nd edition of *Romans*, p. 13.
[36] See H.M. Rumscheidt, *Revelation and Theology: An analysis of the Barth-Harnack Correspondence of 1923* (Cambridge UP, 1972).
[37] For a short discussion of this see F-W. Marquardt, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 60f.
[38] In *Ibid.*, p. 61.
[39] See R. Petersen, "An analysis of the Nature and Basis of Karl Barth's Socialism" (Unpublished MA Thesis, UCT, 1985) and the essays by Marquardt, Gollwitzer and Hunsinger in *Karl Barth and Radical Politics* for a fuller discussion of these events and their significance. For Barth's response to capitalism and the "American Way of Life" see specifically K. Barth, *How to Serve God in a Marxist Land*, Ed. R. McAfee Brown (New York: Association Press, 1959). See also G. Hunsinger, "Karl Barth and Liberation Theology" in the *Journal of Religion*, Vol. 63, No. 4, 1983, in which he contends that one of the concerns that unites Barth and liberation theology is a highly critical response to capitalism.

The Evangelical Witness To the Poor and Oppressed

by Thomas D. Hanks

For our consideration of the evangelical witness to the poor and oppressed, I would like to outline ten fundamentals of biblical theology that shape and characterize the proclamation of the Good News to the poor.[1]

1. Oppression and Poverty

Essential to the faithful proclamation of the gospel to the poor and oppressed is the recognition of the fundamental character of oppression in biblical theology and in human history. Explicit vocabulary for oppression occurs more than 500 times and constitutes a fundamental structural category of biblical theology. In more than 150 biblical texts oppression is explicitly linked to poverty and is viewed in Scripture as the basic cause of poverty. True, more than 20 other causes for poverty can be found in Scripture—such as idolatry in Judges or sloth in Proverbs. However, all other causes occur but a few times each and lack the massive emphasis Scripture places on the causal link between oppression and poverty.[2] Since 1968, Latin American theologians have insisted that if we recognize oppression as the fundamental cause of poverty, then neither simple charity nor economic development proj-

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Dr. Thomas Hanks has recently moved from Costa Rica to Argentina to work with René Padilla. This paper was originally delivered at the 1984 ETS meeting at Moody Bible Institute. It has since appeared in Spanish.

ects by themselves are adequate: the ultimate Christian answer must be *liberation* from oppression.

Historically evangelicals often have recognized the decisive character and necessity of liberation, as in William Wilberforce's struggle to abolish slavery in the British Empire.[3] Such Christian initiatives throughout church history stand in fundamental continuity with Jesus' own approach and sense of mission, which involved both the verbal proclamation of the gospel to the poor as well as liberation for prisoners and oppressed and the implementation of Jubilee Year principles in the socio-economic sphere (Luke 4:18-19). The decisive, emphatic role of liberation in Jesus' own programmatic description of his mission corresponds to the fact that he stands in continuity with the Old Testament in recognizing oppression as the fundamental cause of poverty. The character of the gospel as precisely Good News to the poor is disastrously subverted when Christianity is reduced to serving as a religious-ideological prop for an oppressive status quo. If the basic cause of poverty is oppression, then the Good News to the poor *must* carry the banner headline "liberation," as Jesus recognized. His own teaching and liberation praxis, particularly as delineated in Luke's gospel, constitutes a much broader and more profound analysis of oppression and liberation than contemporary Marxist analyses of class struggle.

Essential to the faithful proclamation of the gospel is the recognition of the fundamental character of oppression in biblical theology and in human history.

To appreciate the profundity and breadth of Jesus' analysis and the radical character of his liberating gospel and praxis, let us observe how the structural hierarchy of oppression as delineated by Luke contains some seven layers:[4]

1. *Demonic powers vs. all humanity.* At the uppermost level of what C. S. Lewis might have preferred to describe as the "lowerarchy" of oppression, we have Satan and the demonic powers that dominate and oppress all humanity. Since death is their ultimate aim, with sin and illness as their preferred instruments, Jesus is appropriately described in Peter's sermon to Cornelius as "*healing* all who were *oppressed* of the devil" (Acts 10:38).[5]

2. *Empire vs. provinces and colonies.* The second level of oppression obviously is the Roman Empire that conquered and oppressed weaker nations such as Israel, using such mechanisms as military occupation and taxation. However, while Jesus ministered and Luke wrote ever with an awareness of this level of conflict, the empire was not made a primary focus of immediate struggle as it later became in the book of Revelation.[6]

3. *Local oligarchy vs. the people.* Instead Jesus focused the brunt of his political attack on the oppression exercised by the local political-religious oligarchy: chief priests, Sanhedrin, scribes, Herodians and Pharisees. The dialectical counterpart in this struggle was the common people (*laos*) whom Luke describes as normally siding with Jesus against their self-appointed "leaders."[7] This conflict culminated in Jesus' triumphal entry and forceful but non-violent protest and occupation of the Temple site. These actions brought down upon him, as God's oppressed servant, the institutionalized violence of the crucifixion.

4. *Rich vs. poor.* The fourth level of oppression in Luke comprises all the economic mechanisms of oppression exercised by the rich against the poor. While repeatedly studied in recent years, the fundamental role of oppression is commonly downplayed or overlooked.[8]

5. *Men vs. women.* The fifth level of oppression delineated in Luke's portrayal of Jesus' liberating message and ministry involves the traditional domination of women by men. Widows, as women commonly poor and oppressed, receive special attention. Flenders has pointed out that Luke likes to present women and men in contrasting pairs.[9] The contrasts highlight the common spheres and mechanisms of male domination and oppression. Jesus' teaching and praxis, the power of the Holy Spirit, and Luke's own inspired pen collaborate to oppose male domination, pride and privilege.

6. *Elders and adults vs. youth and children.* Luke gives special attention to the infancy and childhood of Jesus and John the Baptist; both die as young martyrs, and Luke notes repeatedly the role of the elders in bringing Jesus to trial and crucifixion. Obviously Luke was keenly aware of the "generation gap" (1:17) and the conflicts it engendered. Orphans as well as children of one parent receive special attention.[10]

7. *Respectable society vs. prostitutes and publicans.* The seventh level of oppression in Luke is represented by the social outcasts, oppressed by society as a whole. Prime examples are the prostitutes and publicans. Neither group was economically poor, but as "immoral minorities" they were despised, rejected and harassed by the "moral majority." Constantly we find Jesus honoring and stressing the basic dignity of the immoral minorities that society scorned and despised.[11]

Conclusion. Luke's theology is commonly presented as focusing on spiritual salvation. Characteristic elements we have outlined as representing seven levels of oppression are commonly listed as rather unrelated "beads on a string"—almost as if they represented psychological quirks or neuroses of Luke. However, when we approach these concerns from the starting point of Jesus' own explicit programmatic statement of his mission—to proclaim Good News to the poor and bring liberation to the oppressed—the unity and coherence of Luke's theology and the truly radical character of Jesus' teaching and liberating praxis is immediately obvious. Luke's theology is not limited to spiritual salvation—it is a comprehensive theology of integral liberation for the oppressed; and precisely for that reason it is Good News to the poor.[12]

2. "All have sinned"—the Poor included, but especially their Oppressors

Fundamental to the proclamation of the gospel to the poor is the teaching that "all have *sinned* and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23), that "Christ died for our *sins*" (1 Cor. 15:3), that "God commands all men everywhere to repent" of their sins (Acts 17;30-32; Lk. 13:3,5). Obviously if our doctrine of sin is not thoroughly biblical our entire gospel and all our evangelistic efforts become drastically distorted. This has happened in two ways.

Wheaton professor Mark Noll in a tribute to the late Francis Schaeffer concluded that Schaeffer, more than any other modern evangelical leader, "understood existentially the malaise that was eating the heart out of the modern world."[13] In a context where intellectual leaders and communications media unite to bombard everyone with their ideology that "man is dead," that we are but animals, that we are just machines, Schaeffer insisted that "humans possess *vast dignity* because they are made in God's image."[14]

As Kenneth Kantzer points out in his analysis of Robert Schuller's *Self-esteem: the New Reformation*, pastorally we are working in a milieu vastly different from that of Paul and the

Reformers. The Reformers worked in the afterglow of the Renaissance and a humanism that was not secular but still profoundly religious, often Christian. They could proclaim bluntly "all have sinned" and never ask themselves how incoherent, absurd or irrelevant that might sound to beings that view themselves as one more pig at the trough or as somewhat complicated machines soon to be rendered obsolete by the latest computer (if not first pulverized by nuclear holocaust). Kantzer says we should learn from the fact that Schuller, with his "pre-evangelism" stressing self-esteem, self-worth, human dignity and human potential, is "now reaching more non-Christians than any other religious leader in America."[15]

puters to work: tabulate and analyze the specific sins mentioned in traditional evangelism. Why is it almost always the common failings of the poor that we denounce and almost never the characteristic sins of their oppressors?[17]

Paul's universal conclusion that "all have sinned" (Rom. 3:23) comes after six Old Testament quotations that denounce very specifically the institutionalized violence and lies of the oppressors (Rom. 3:10-18). The apostle also was careful to preface his exposé of human sin with clear teaching on creation (Rom. 1:20-23) and link it to a reference to the vast dignity of our human calling to live for the "glory of God." Fundamental to the proclamation of the gospel to the poor is

The character of the gospel as Good News to the poor is disastrously subverted when Christianity is reduced to serving as a religious-ideological prop for an oppressive status quo.

I refer to the evangelistic efforts of Schaeffer and Schuller because—whatever their shortcomings—their discoveries and insights are also of great significance in communicating the gospel to the poor. Today the great philosophers and the mass media have convinced everyone from European intellectuals to American rock singers that human beings are but animals or obsolete machines. By their ideologies, the great empires and oligarchies have sought to instill precisely that low view in the minds of colonies and common workers for millenia. The degree of their success in this task is the secret of their continual domination.

One of the Hebrew words for oppression means literally "to treat like an animal."[16] But an animal cannot sin; neither can your computer. The dehumanizing effects of the oppressive empires and their supporting oligarchies is much worse in modern industrialized technological societies than anything suffered in the Ancient World. Pack animals and computers still have the great value of being useful. In contrast, the unemployed adults and unschooled children who are left to scavenge for a living in the slums and garbage dumps are told in effect: "You are not even as important as a watchdog or pack animal—certainly not as clever as a computer; you are lower than an animal, lower than a machine; you are useless, as disposable as the styrofoam cups you are picking through; you are garbage, the refuse and scum of society." In such a context Christian evangelists *dare* not bypass the biblical teaching on creation. Our creation in God's image and for his *glory* provides the necessary presupposition and complement to the teaching about sin.

Into the slums of the Third World, where human beings have been denied all sense of worth and dignity, Marxist groups come with an electrifying message: you whom the capitalist oppressors treat as animals and view as garbage and scum—you can become the wave of the future, the makers of history, who establish a new kind of classless society with liberation and justice for all. However, as Schaeffer insisted, the biblical teaching on our creation in God's image, for his glory, dignifies human nature infinitely more than any conceivable existentialist or Marxist view.

Since 1968 Latin American theologians have sought boldly to steal the fire back from the Marxists and begin, as Jesus did, with a bold proclamation of liberation to the oppressed, coupled with a strong denunciation of oppression. Undoubtedly some Latin American theologians, priests and pastors can be faulted for dwelling too exclusively on the sins of the oppressors and not always making clear that "all have sinned"—that given the opportunity we all tend to oppress, dominate and treat unfairly anyone who is weaker in any way. But before we denounce Latin American heresies, put your com-

not only the universal truth (all have sinned) but especially the particular prophetic denunciation of the sins of the oppressors against the poor.

3. Christology: the Resurrection of God's poor, oppressed Servant

Fundamental and utterly central to the proclamation of the Good News to the poor is a Christology that is radically biblical. Paul can summarize his entire gospel in stark economic terms:

> You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich yet for your sakes he *became poor*, so that you through his poverty might *become rich* (2 Cor. 8:9).[18]

For Paul the incarnation of the second person of the Trinity implies a theology of revolution, just as it did for Mary (Lk. 1:52-53). The socio-economic status of Jesus and his parents receives far more attention from the gospel writers than the technical medical fact of Mary's virginity. Jesus' poverty and simple life-style have attracted much scholarly attention in recent years.[19] Latin American theologians have stressed not only Jesus' humanity and poverty, but also the conflictive political dimension of his ministry.[20] Already in 1891 in his work *Christianity and the Class Struggle*, Abraham Kuyper recognized that Jesus "like the prophets before him and the apostles after him invariably took sides against the oppressor and for the oppressed."[21]

Precisely what upper and middle class suburban pulpits find an embarrassment to be hurriedly spiritualized or superficially rationalized, the poor in Latin America's Christian base communities find to be an exciting discovery.[22] Traditional Catholics, fundamentalists and conservative evangelicals rush pell-mell from the dogma of the Virgin Birth to the dogma of the penal substitutionary atonement. Thus they manage to dodge any implications of Jesus' incarnate life: costly discipleship and a conflictive political stance on the side of the oppressed and poor.

Elsewhere I have shown that the so-called "Suffering Servant" of Isaiah 53 is in fact the "Oppressed Servant," with four Hebrew words for oppression used six times in that one chapter.[23] Particularly the circumstances surrounding and leading up to Jesus' crucifixion were manifestations of oppression—terrible abuses of ecclesiastical and political power and authority. The crucifixion itself was an act of institutionalized violence. Jesus was a victim of the same kind of violence that condemns millions in the Third World to death each year: carnivorous injustice masked behind purported political "legality" and legitimated by idolatry and religious hypocrisy

(Mt. 23). Thus on the day of Pentecost, Peter points his finger at those who had crucified Jesus and declares: "This Jesus . . . you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men" (Acts 2:23). Here was a powerful, prophetic, political act of denunciation against oppression, injustice and institutionalized violence.

Evangelicals and Catholics have rightly insisted that the atoning work of Christ was penal and propitiatory, as Scripture abundantly attests.[24] However, we might do well to note that one of the earliest biblical expressions of God's anger makes clear that what most provokes God's wrath is the oppression of the poor and the weak (Ex. 22:21-24).[25] God's oppressed servant suffered the institutionalized violence of the crucifixion. However, unlike conformist militarists of modern oppressive empires—capitalist and communist alike—Jesus was truly revolutionary: "God's servant "did no violence" (Is. 53:9). He did not respond in kind, but broke the deadly cycle of violence and made "peace by the blood of the cross" (Col. 1:20).[26]

Jesus' bodily resurrection from the dead represents the decisive divine vindication of his non-violent praxis and all that he taught and suffered. Like the socio-economic circumstances of the incarnation, Jesus' resurrection emphatically manifests God's preferential option for the poor and oppressed—above all when they suffer martyrdom through institutionalized violence. Against the "last enemy," death itself, God unleashes his omnipotence in history on the side of his oppressed servant. Jesus' tomb is empty, his disciples astonished, his tormentors and oppressors dumbfounded and terror struck. The Easter message, then, is not some innocuous card with lavender ribbon and yellow flowers to be sold to the consumer society. Easter is conflictive, partial, earthshaking (Mt. 28:2!) Good News to the poor.

The next decisive step in the revolutionary project of the establishment of God's kingdom is the Ascension. Enthroned at God's right hand, Jesus is the Lord of history who alone is worthy to break open the scrolls as conflictive events on earth move toward their final consummation (Rev. 5). Today, divided and discouraged Marxists struggle to define and implement their "historical project." The Good News to the poor is that the Lamb who was slain is enthroned as the Lord of history. His original "historical project" is still the best: the "Upside-down Kingdom,"[28] the revolution of God. Beside this kingdom both capitalist and communist ideologies are hopelessly conformist. The oppressive empires that embody and propagate them do well to tremble before the "original revolution."[29]

4. Authentic Repentance and the Empty Hand of Faith

Fundamental to the proclamation of Jesus' Good News to the poor is the call for radical repentance that expresses itself in terms of transferral of wealth from the overloaded hands of the rich to the empty hands of the poor, from the hands of the oppressors to the hands of the oppressed.[30] John the Baptist expressed it with classic simplicity: "He who has two coats let him share with him who has none; and let him who has food do likewise" (Lk. 3:11). Whatever the affluent may think of that demand, obviously it is Good News to the poor. "Capital"—accumulation of wealth not so shared—is prime evidence of sin and calls for repentance. When repentance is not soon forthcoming the evangelist announced God's imminent judgment against the glaring injustice of the wealthy oppressors. Traditional exegesis commonly fails to recognize why God's judgment is also an essential part of the Good News to the poor. However, in Scripture the wrath of God, culminating in his judgment against affluent oppressors, is a fundamental dimension of the Good News to the poor.[31]

The call to radical repentance is especially difficult and costly for wealthy oppressors. The declaration that salvation is by grace alone and faith alone is particularly Good News to the poor. Isaiah's classic invitation to the exiles and prospective emigrants in Babylon well exemplifies this truth:

> Come all you who are thirsty, come to the waters. And you who have no money, come buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk, without money and without cost. (55:1)

Those whose hands are truly empty find that the simple invitation to extend the empty hand of faith is most appropriate to their condition. Salvation is by faith alone—the one area, as James points out, where the poor may be said to have the advantage (2:5). And this, too, is part of the Good News to the poor.[32]

Jesus' bodily resurrection from the dead represents the decisive divine vindication of his non-violent praxis and all that he taught and suffered.

5. Liberating Justice and Forensic Justification

In 1513 at the University of Wittenberg, a German professor of Old Testament by the name of Martin Luther was preparing his lectures on the Psalms for a course that was to last three years. F.F. Bruce reminds us how Luther was struck by the prayer of Psalm 31:1, "in thy *justice, liberate* me."[33] Medieval theology had stressed the penal, distributive dimension of justice, but working without reference to the Exodus paradigm, had failed to recognize the dimension of liberating justice. With his linguistic insights from the Psalms about God's liberating justice and faith as personal trust in God, Luther eventually returned to expound Romans and the Reformation exploded in Europe.

What Luther discovered in the Psalms about God's liberating justice, Latin American theologians, going behind the Psalms to the Exodus paradigm, have developed more fully. The Exodus enables us to understand why in the age-old conflict between oppressors and oppressed, God's *distributive* justice is *liberating* justice for the oppressed, who are suffering injustice, but *penal* justice for the oppressors like Pharaoh, who refuse to repent.[34]

Given this fundamental sociological-linguistic insight, we can begin to appreciate the revolutionary character of Paul's letter to the Romans, where the fundamental theme is God's *liberating justice*, forensic justification being the decisive initial expression.

A Latin American *relectura* of Romans 1:16-18 reads like this:

> Not in the least am I ashamed of our Christian message of Good News to the poor—I'm actually proud of it. Far from some religious "opiate of the people" it rather constitutes God's revolutionary dynamite and explodes on the scene of human history underneath all in his creation that oppresses. This gospel brings substantial healing and holistic liberation to all who integrate the message into their lives, be they religious legalists or

secular humanists. In this Good News for the poor God's liberating justice for all the oppressed detonates repeatedly in human history, destroying empires and institutions as well as individuals who harden their hearts against God's historical project of cosmic liberation. Our subversive, revolutionary message, of course, is one thing affluent oppressors do not eagerly grab up. Rather it is especially sought by the oppressed and poor and all who like them stand with empty hands, stretched out in faith—and then enthusiastically pass on this transforming Good News to others of similar condition and like attitude. God's righteous indignation is plainly revealed from heaven against all institutionalized violence and oppression, because in their zeal to oppress, people go to the extreme of making the truth itself "un desaparecido" [vanished victim in Argentinian repression].[35]

The theme and structure of Romans make clear that Christ's propitiatory and redemptive work together with forensic justification (3:21-26) represent the decisive divine acts of liberating justice. From these deep founts flow all other facets of that "freedom of the Christian man" which Paul and Luther celebrated:[36]

Romans 5: Freedom from the eschatological wrath of God, and its historical outworkings.
Romans 6: Freedom from the inherent tendency to oppress.
Romans 7: Freedom from the domination and condemnation of the Law.
Romans 8: Cosmic liberation from futility and death.
Romans 9-11: The universal scope of God's historical project of liberation, embracing both Jews and Gentiles.
Romans 12-13: Revolutionary subordination under imperial domination.
Romans 14-15:13: Liberating praxis for both strong and weak within the Christian base communities.
Romans 15:14-33: Paul's personal project for spreading the revolution throughout the Roman empire.
Romans 16: Greetings to five subversive house churches springing up under Emperor Nero's nose.

Paul thus makes explicit in the structure of Romans that forensic justification is the great foundation stone on which all other dimensions of God's liberating justice and Christian freedom are erected (5:1-2ff.). Ernest Käsemann has pointed out that in Romans 2:1-16 Paul expounds the apocalyptic theme of the final judgment, where God manifests his ultimate distributive justice, *before* turning to the justification of the ungodly (4:5), which is the dialectical and paradoxical anticipation of that final judgment.[37]

Why, then, is forensic justification fundamental in the evangelism of the poor? First, because the poor and oppressed, like all other descendants of Adam, are sinners, guilty before God and in need of forensic justification as classically expounded by Paul in Galatians and Romans, and by Luther and Calvin at the Reformation. Historically, the poor and oppressed in Israel sought to receive justice "in the gate" of their community. However, as in any modern culture, the opposite often occurred. Wealthy oppressors could bribe judges and witnesses, pay for sophisticated lawyers and intimidate the poor with violence. The biblical doctrine of forensic justification is Good News especially for the poor, because it testifies to a Supreme Judge who cannot be bribed, a superlative advocate who need not be hired—and who even pays for us the enormous debt that stands in the books against us.

What evangelicals often forget is that justification by faith alone does not constitute a conservative prop for the status quo: it is radical, revolutionary theology. As F. F. Bruce has pointed out, historically this doctrine has revolutionized and democratized European ecclesiastical and political structures, leading to the collapse of feudal hierarchy, overthrow of monarchy, rejection of the ideology of divine right of kings, etc. Bruce concludes:

> The man who has had such personal dealings with God, and has been raised to his feet by almighty power and grace, can never be enslaved in spirit to any other man. The doctrine of justification by faith underlies and undergirds the forms which democracy has taken in those lands most deeply influenced by the Reformation; it is a bastion of true freedom. Luther was charged with "inciting revolution by putting little people in mind of their prodigious dignity before God." How could he deny the charge? The gospel, as he had learned it from Paul, does precisely that.[38]

What evangelicals often forget is that justification by faith alone does not constitute a conservative prop for the status quo: it is radical, revolutionary theology.

We should add that just as the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries saw ecclesiastical and political structures begin the process of democratization, so in the 19th and 20th centuries the great conflict has centered more on the democratization of economic structures in the various types of New Deal, Fair Deal, Great Society, Socialism, Marxism, Communism, etc.

We also need to appreciate and develop the profound anthropological and psychological implications of our proclamation of justification by faith in contexts of oppression and poverty. Increasing numbers of Marxist leaders and liberal or humanist social workers are coming to the conclusion that the most devastating and *irreparable* effects of poverty are not the external physical deprivations, terrible as these are. The most insuperable problem is the continual shame, humiliation and insults that crush all sense of dignity, self-esteem and self-worth and systematically eliminate all basis of hope for change.

Bruce J. Malina's recent anthropological study of "Honor and Shame" as pivotal values in the ancient biblical world provides fundamental insight for the proclamation of justification by faith to the poor.[39] By relating Malina's insights to Paul's teaching in Romans, we can see that for Paul, forensic justification of the ungodly implies *social vindication* on the human plane. Käsemann has pointed out the significance of Romans 3:4, which he calls a "key passage for the whole of Paul's doctrine of justification."[40] Here the Apostle cites Psalm 51:6 (LXX): "So that you may be justified—proved right—in your words and prevail in your judging." Divine, forensic justification occurs in a conflictive social context and carries with it the implication of social vindication. This dimension of social vindication Paul makes even more explicit in Romans 5:1-11, where three times he repeats "we boast" (5:2,3,11)—the same verb earlier used to describe *improper* boasting in human works (3:27; 4:2). In Romans 5:5 the Apostle adds that Christian hope does not *put to shame*.

To appreciate fully the significance of these texts for the poor and oppressed, we must recall passages like Hannah's

Song (1 Samuel 2:1-10) and Mary's Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55). Here oppressed, humiliated women exalt in their social vindication in the presence of their oppressors and detractors. Hebraic "justice in the gate" undoubtedly provided countless similar experiences of social vindication. The decisive experience of forensic justification thus carries with it not only peace with God, reconciliation and adoption as his sons (Rom. 5:1, 10-11; 8:14-17), but also implies social vindication of the despised, the humiliated and rejected. When we realize what justification and the accompanying sense of social vindication can mean to the poor, we can perhaps begin to understand why Luther's early preaching was soon followed by the Peasants' Revolt. Evangelicals like to recall how Paul's Epistle to the Romans has sparked four great theological revolutions in the church: those of Augustine, Luther, Wesley, and Barth.[41]

A fifth revolution for the poor and oppressed of the Third World awaits the discovery and proclamation of the full implications of Paul's teaching on forensic justification as the first and decisive expression of God's liberating justice.

6. Regeneration—New Birth, baptism of the Holy Spirit: Power to the Powerless

Fundamental to the proclamation of the Good News to the poor is the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. Decades ago biblical theologians began to emphasize that "Spirit" in biblical theology is not to be equated with the negative Greek philosophical concept of non-material.[43] Rather in biblical theology God's Spirit represents something positive: divine power—"You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you" (Acts 1:8).

As we have seen in our analysis of oppression, Scripture shows that human life is conflictive: society consists of a hierarchy of multiple layers prone to oppression, hence the weaker, dominated elements continually struggle for liberation. Joel's prophecy, quoted by Peter in his Pentecost sermon makes clear that God gives his Holy Spirit not to reinforce the privileges and power of the oppressors. Rather God puts the power of his Spirit on the side of the weak and oppressed to effect a democratization of power in human life and society:

> I will pour out my Spirit [divine power] upon *all* flesh [humanity in its weakness]; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy [marking the end of male domination]; and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams [the generation gap bridged; the end of domination by the elders and their traditions]; yea, and on my male slaves and my female slaves in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy [liberation from socio-economic domination as the poor become history-makers].

This biblical teaching on the revolutionary democratizing work of God's Spirit has suffered a thousand distortions in church history. It has been co-opted by political and ecclesiastical hierarchies to justify the cruelest oppression and religious persecution. It has been subverted by Christian militarists of all ideologies to justify the slaughter of millions in war—despite Zechariah's rebuke and promise: "Not by military might and power, but by my Spirit, says the sovereign Liberator" (4:6). Jacques Ellul has pointed out how the three great oppressive empires in today's world (the U.S.S.R., the U.S.A., and China) find themselves characterized by common trends and agreement in their fundamental ideologies:

> a. slavish, uncritical pursuit of technological innovation and domination;
> b. unprecedented growth of state power with common idolization of military power;
> c. unscrupulous use of violence, with integrative propaganda used to mask their atrocities.[44]

To protect and liberate the poor and oppressed from the domination of the great empires throughout history, to foster fullness of life before the onslaughts of the powers of death, God puts his Secret Weapon in the hands of the poor and oppressed—the power of his Holy Spirit, communicated through his Word and Sacraments. Thus fundamental to the proclamation of the gospel to the weak, the powerless, the poor, is God's promise: "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you" (Acts 1:8):

> —power to love the brethren and create authentic human community (Rom. 5:5)
> —power to love even your enemies who oppress and persecute you (Rom. 12:14-21)
> —power to bear witness and suffer martyrdom, to enlist even your persecutors in the ranks of the apostles (Acts 7:9).

Biblical Christianity has never been a matter of the affluent evangelizing the poor; rather . . . it is the poor who evangelize their affluent oppressors.

7. Salvation and Holistic Integration

Fundamental to the Good News to the poor and oppressed is the proclamation of full salvation in all the breadth and depth of biblical teaching. C. I. Scofield in his note on Romans 1:6 wrote: "The Hebrew and Greek words for 'salvation' imply the ideas of *deliverance*, safety, preservation, *healing* and soundness: 'salvation' is the great inclusive word of the Gospel." In the Spanish translation of Scofield, the first definition given for salvation is "liberación." This breadth of the biblical concept is easily confirmed in texts such as Zechariah's prophecy in Luke 1:67-79, and Mary's Magnificat (Luke 46:55). Zechariah speaks of being "*saved* from the hand of our *enemies*, and from the power of all who hate us" (Luke 1:71). Despite the obvious breadth of the New Testament concept of salvation indicated by the Greek word usage and summarized in Scofield's note, popular evangelicalism tends to limit the meaning of New Testament teaching on salvation to justification, forgiveness, and spiritual regeneration. John Stott has given a well-argued defense of this common, restricted interpretation of salvation.[45] However, as I have argued elsewhere, Stott's sharp distinction between secular political liberation and spiritual salvation may well rest more on a platonizing of the New Testament linguistic data rather than historical-grammatical exegesis.[46] A proper *historical* approach must begin with the Old Testament understanding of the *multiple* blessings of the Abrahamic covenant of grace as these blessings continue in the New Testament.

Hermeneutically, we might point out that Calvin, insisting on the fundamental continuity of the Old and New Testaments, found it necessary to stress that the Old Testament always contained a vertical, *non-material* dimension, including justification and forgiveness.[47] Latin American theologians, confronted with centuries of platonizing interpretations of key biblical texts, have stressed that the New Testament offer of

salvation contains a *material* dimension, including salvation from enemies, liberation from oppressors.[48]

Within the Old Testament itself we see a progressive deepening of the teaching on justification and forgiveness, especially after the exile, and in Jeremiah's proclamation of the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34; Ps. 130:8). Similarly in the New Testament, Jesus begins by promising *"liberation"* to the oppressed (Lk. 4:18-19), but uses the same word (*'aphesis*) in the great commission with reference to *forgiveness* of sins (Lk. 24:47). Paul's gospel begins with the broad concept of liberating justice (Rom. 1:16-17) but soon focuses in on our deepest need: forensic justification of the ungodly. Elsewhere I have shown in detail how Isaiah 53 presents salvation in three dimensions: as forensic justification based on penal substitution (the evangelical perspective), as physical healing (the Pentecostal perspective), and as liberation from socio-political oppression (the Latin American perspective).[49] The Johannine interpretation of salvation in terms of abundant life (10:10) confirms the conclusion that "salvation" should not be reduced to the non-material, interpersonal dimension, even in Paul.[50]

However, in proclaiming the Good News of full salvation to the poor and oppressed, biblical theology requires that we proceed with historical awareness and pastoral sensitivity. Popular pentecostal "prosperity" theology lacks biblical balance and destroys the historical dialectic of biblical teaching in this area. Even in Deuteronomy, while obedience brings prosperity, affluence produces apostasy and judgment.[51] In later historical contexts, obedience and fidelity often augments oppression and persecution (Ps. 44; cf. Job). Similarly in the New Testament, while the promises of the Abrahamic covenant continue in all their breadth,[52] fidelity may also result in persecution and loss of goods (Heb. 10:32-39); hence those who are justified but dispossessed of their earthly goods learn to boast and rejoice even in their common experiences of oppression and persecution (Rom. 5:3; 8:31-39). Such texts remind us that we should not restrict "full salvation" to the purely vertical and non-material; but neither dare we allow materialist, secular or Marxist philosophies to dictate to the church an agenda of "bread alone" nor usurp the biblical emphasis that Jesus came to save us from our sins (Mt. 1:21).[53]

8. Christian Base Communities and House Churches vs. Empire and Priestly Hierarchy

One tragic dimension of the suffering of the poor is poignantly expressed in Proverbs: "The poor are shunned by their *neighbors*" (14:20). "A poor person is shunned by all his *relatives*—how much more do his *friends* avoid him"(19:7). Because of this devastating social alienation, fundamental to the Good News for the poor is Jesus' purpose as expressed classically in the promises contained in Matthew's gospel: "Where two or three are assembled in my name, I am right there in their midst" (13:20). "I will multiply and build up my house churches and base communities, and the power of death shall not prevail against them" (Mt. 16:18). The radical New Testament teaching on authentic Christian community as embodied in base communities and charismatic house churches is part of the Good News to the poor. Luke describes the great banquet from which the poor are not excluded or shunned but rather eagerly sought out and urged to come (Lk. 14:12-24).

This strand of the gospel is Good News to all the poor and oppressed in their social alienation. Jesus offers his personal friendship, but also the social solidarity of the new communities that gather in his name. Jesus promises the fullness of his personal solidarity and presence to groups of two or three that do not even come up to minimal standards for Jewish synagogues. Thus he reminds us that authentic Christian community commonly stands in conflict with the traditional authoritative hierarchies that seek to legitimate and promote the privileges and interests of the dominant classes and empires.

Ironically, the radical ecclesiology of Matthew's gospel provides the very texts that have been co-opted to legitimate the traditional church hierarchy in Latin America (Mt. 16:13-20; 18:15-20). Yet when Paul describes the "church" in Rome he speaks of persecuted emigrants and slaves in five house churches—a far cry from our modern image of St. Peter's basilica, Pope, curia, college of cardinals, etc.[54]

The radical New Testament ecclesiology with its house churches and charismatic, democratic leadership enables a Christian assembly to devote its full economic resources to the needs of the poor instead of squandering them in vast building programs and professional salaries. Whenever Christians succumb to the "edifice" complex and professionalize the clergy, inevitably that is bad news for the poor. Then we may offer only erudite discourses in ornate architecture, but must leave it to leftist political groups to take up pressing concerns such as daily bread for widows, clean water and decent housing for the slums, and medical care for impoverished families. A recent issue of *Newsweek* estimates that in Brazil alone there are 60,000 Christian base communities. The article says:

> With the *Bible* as their primer, members studied their responsibilities—and their rights—as citizens. They dug wells and built health centers and schools. And they learned how to protest when the government tried to thwart their projects. . . . Their membership—approximately 10 million—makes them perhaps the most important force for change in the giant, fast-growing country.[55]

Bill Cook has pointed out that individualistic Protestant evangelism of the poor has resulted in individual upward social mobility, while the base communities are more faithful to New Testament teaching on solidarity in Christian community. He concludes: "This fundamental flow in our Calvinistic ethic—our rank individualism—is responsible, I believe, for the superficiality of much of Protestant evangelism."[56]

The tremendous force of the Christian base communities and their leaders in Latin America represents an unprecedented threat to oppressive regimes, along with the traditional hierarchies that have legitimated them. The powers of death have responded with a wave of institutionalized violence, assassination, torture, imprisonment and exile affecting more than 1200 priests, nuns and evangelical pastors since 1968. However, the base communities and house churches continue to multiply and grow, because the resurrected Lord of Life is in their midst. That too is a fundamental part of the Good News to the poor.

9. The Blessed Hope and Realizable Eschatology

Fundamental to the Good News for the poor and oppressed is the full biblical teaching on the Christian hope. As in the case of salvation and liberation we may say that hope in the Scriptures has two *spatial* dimensions: the spiritual, heavenly sphere, and the material, earthly sphere. Hope in the Good News for the poor also contains two *temporal* dimensions: prophetic, "realizable" eschatology, and apocalyptic consummation. The apocalyptic dimension, dominant in the New Testament, includes the triumphant personal return of Jesus as World Liberator, with the resurrection of the dead and final world judgment—the New Jerusalem descending from heaven to earth.

Historically, the apocalyptic and utopian elements in Scrip-

ture sprang from small, weak, oppressed communities in times of cruel persecution; hence they have particular relevance for the oppressed and poor today. Institutionalized violence and martyrdom is commonly their lot, but the apocalyptic hope assures them that the resurrected Liberator, whom they love and follow, will personally return in certain triumph. Fallen young martyrs, tragically cut off in the prime of life, will be raised to share with Jesus in his millennial reign on earth (Rev. 20:1-6). Universal resurrection will be followed by world judgment. The single criterion for world judgment will be solidarity with Jesus as he confronts us in the person of the poor and oppressed: the hungry, thirsty, naked, homeless, sick and imprisoned.[57] The blessed hope of the Liberator's triumphant personal return, millennial reign, universal resurrection with world judgment based on the single criterion of good works done for the poor—all this is glorious good news to the poor, but a drastic threat to all who oppress and persecute them. This hope is also a threat, as Jesus' parable shows, to all whose egotism and greed so dominate their horizon that they remain indifferent to the sufferings of the poor, and who thus passively support the mechanisms and structures of oppression and persecution.

The prophetic dimension of Christian hope, more prominent in the Old Testament, refers to those earthly first fruits and anticipations of the millennial reign and eternal state—what we might call "realizable eschatology." Although New Testament writers, with their anticipation of an imminent parousia, commonly stressed the purely futuristic, apocalyptic dimension, 2000 years of church history reminds us that we dare not neglect the Old Testament, prophetic, "realizable" strand. In Romans Paul speaks of the Old Testament Scriptures, with their strong elements of material, political, realizable eschatology, as providing a firm basis of hope even for gentile believers (15:4, 12-13). Providentially, but perhaps unintentionally, the Apostle also points us to this essential function of the Old Testament in his final letter to Timothy (3:14-17), as we shall see in our final section.

Various materialist, secular and Marxist movements consistently offer the poor the hope of improved earthly conditions. Non-Christian religions of the oriental and neo-platonic types offer escape from the pain and suffering of the material realm. Tragically, most traditional Christian theology and evangelism have not faithfully maintained the powerful biblical dialectic between the heavenly and earthly, and between realizable eschatology and apocalyptic consummation. Especially since Augustine, neo-platonism to a greater or lesser extent has dominated virtually all Christian eschatology. Recently, negative overreactions to naturalist materialism and Marxist faiths often further exaggerate this fundamental perversion of biblical teaching. Affluent Christians commonly are quite happy with this domestication of the Christian hope. With their material needs abundantly satisfied, they eagerly respond to promises of escape from future earthly tribulation to an eternal life in the heavenly sphere.

The results of this situation may be observed throughout the Third World: middle-class missionaries, as well as national evangelists who uncritically accept their ideology, establish churches in the most terrible slum conditions, but offer only a neo-platonic hope of escape to heaven. Marxists in the same environment tell the poor: you can become a history-maker" and change these miserable conditions; work with us to establish the new classless society, free from imperialist domination, with peace, freedom and justice for all.

Latin American Christian base communities have sought to reappropriate the fire that Marxist groups have stolen. While usually not explicitly premillennial, the emphasis on the material, earthly eschatology is much closer to early patristic premillennialism than to the Augustinian neo-platonic spiritualization that has dominated both Catholic and Protestant eschatology, even in its current premillennial and dispensational forms. The dominant, recurring notes in the prophetic hope for the poor as they are expressed in the base communities are: peace, freedom, and justice.

The peace on earth, which angelic messengers announced to poor shepherds at the Liberator's birth, first came to clear expression in the history of human thought in the oracles of Isaiah and Micah. These two prophets spoke of peace to a poor, oppressed nation that was reeling under the impact of cruel Assyrian invasion (Mic. 4:1-5; Is. 2:1-5; cf. 9:1-6). In Micah the hope of the poor for universal, permanent peace on earth appears to result when Israel's great day of atonement and Jubilee law is extended to all the gentile nations, with the result that "*every man* will sit under his own vine and under his own fig tree" (4:3).

Just distribution of land (representing the means of production in an agricultural society) clearly is essential to universal, permanent peace in Micah's vision. In continuity with the Exodus paradigm, the Jubilee law, and Micah's vision, Jesus also focused on radical land reform and Jubilee celebration as intrinsic to his mission and Good News to the poor (Lk. 4:19; Mk. 10:29-31; Mt. 5:5-6). Our Lord is quite explicit that just redistribution of possessions is not merely a future apocalyptic element, but an essential part of eschatology that is realizable "in this present age" (Mk. 10:30).[58]

However, Micah's prophetic hope for world peace and economic justice refers also to universal conversion, freedom, education in Torah, and disarmament. Today when nuclear holocaust threatens the human species—affluent and poor alike—with destruction, when ferocious wars between communist states and between Islamic nations have discredited alternative ideologies, it is time for Christian evangelists to reclaim that fundamental element in our original message of "peace on earth." Militaristic empires ever seek to instrumentalize the poor in their efforts at world conquest. The Christian gospel offers the only firm basis for peace—based on the divine promises and commands—and seeks to enlist the poor not as cannon fodder for empirial conflict, but as courageous peacemakers (Mt. 5:9).

The poor, who commonly suffer the institutionalized violence condemned in Scripture, are exhorted to abstain from vengeance (Mt. 5:38-48; Lk. 6:27-36; Rom. 12:14-21), stop the vicious cycle of violence, and establish communities that refrain from war and that expand by the power of God's Word and Spirit rather than by military conquest (Zech. 4:6; Is. 9:7). Beginning with the angelic message to the shepherds, God in the gospel has committed the great hope and key to peace into the hands of the poor. As they share their Good News, a world weary of wars and rumors of war discovers the only firm basis for hope: faith in the promises of God and obedience to the clear commands of Jesus and his apostles.[59] Biblical Christianity has never been a matter of the affluent evangelizing the poor; rather, in the first century as today, it is the poor who evangelize their affluent oppressors.[60]

10. The Epistemological Privilege and the Epistemological Certainty of the Poor

Fundamental to the Good News to the poor is the confident affirmation that the Scriptures attesting this gospel are true, not religious myth or political propaganda in the service of oppressive imperial ideologies. Latin American theologian Hugo Assmann apparently was the first to speak of the "epistemological privilege of the poor."[61] This epistemological

privilege forms part of Luke's Good News to the poor. Actually, you might say it started when the angels announced Messiah's birth to poor, illiterate shepherds. This constituted an unprecedented "headstart" program, and they managed to locate the Messiah some two years before the wealthy wise men managed to confirm their "star hypothesis." Then when the seventy[two] return from evangelizing the poor in the Galilean villages, Jesus is filled with joy through the Holy Spirit and exclaims: "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children" (10:21-22). In contrast and conflict with elitist-controlled education, Jesus celebrates the democratization of knowledge and education signaled by his incarnation, miracles and teaching ministry. Culminating the educational revolution begun in the Old Testament,[62] this democratization of knowledge and education constitutes a fundamental dimension of the Good News to the poor as recorded in the gospels. It is also accompanied by a corresponding judgment on an oppressive elite (Lk. 10:21) who substitute imperial propaganda for sound education and permit their ideologies to blind them both to the revelatory character of Jesus' Good News to the poor and to the imminent divine judgment on the oppressors (Lk. 10:10-16; cf. Mt. 23). As Howard Marshall explains, the "infants" [nēpiois] in Jesus' saying represent the poor, needy and oppressed who accept the gospel.[63] Jacques Ellul has prophetically analyzed how propaganda functions in contemporary societies, especially in the dominant empires of the U.S.S.R., U.S.A., and China. He points out that it is not the illiterate peasant, but precisely the educated elite—those who gorge themselves on technologically processed information—who are most susceptible to and most completely dominated by imperial propaganda that is not disruptive but "integrative."[64]

Complementary to the biblical teaching on the epistemological privilege of the poor is our evangelical emphasis on epistemological certainty. However, what is commonly forgotten in all our weighty tomes on propositional revelation and inerrancy is that epistemological certainty, grounded in the work of the Holy Spirit and the authority and truth of God's Word (incarnate, preached and inscripturated), is not ideologically neutral nor the special prerogative of the affluent, but rather constitutes a fundamental strand of the Good News to the poor (Lk. 16:17; Mt. 5:17-19; Lk. 21:33; Mk. 13:31; Mt. 24:35; Jn. 17:17). Jesus' stress on the epistemological privilege and certainty of the poor is, of course, also elaborated by Paul as part of his understanding of the Good News to the poor (1 Cor. 1:18-31, esp. 27-29; 2:1-16, esp. 18).[65]

The radical implication of this evangelical certainty strand in the Good News to the poor is perhaps best communicated by a Latin American paraphrase of Paul's *locus clasicus* on the inspiration of the Old Testament (2 Tim. 3:14-17):

> But as for you, Timothy, keep applying to your praxis all you have learned and thus become certain of. Remember the godly women in your family who dared to teach you, and be grateful that you were not (like so many) consigned to illiteracy, but from infancy were taught the Old Testament Scriptures. This subversive literature is able to make you wise for salvation, healing, and integral liberation through commitment to God's Spirit-empowered Liberator and Messiah. Our Hebrew Scriptures do not at all reflect the idolatrous propaganda and ideologies of oppressive empires; rather in their entirety they have been breathed out by God's powerful Spirit of truth. Hence they are helpful in every age for instructing the humble poor and illiterates in true wisdom; for reproving oppressors of all sorts; for correcting our praxis, and for training us in justice that is truly liberating; in order that the ministry of every believer may have a prophetic quality, and that he or she may be equipped and trained to carry out the kind of good works that don't simply create passivity and paternalist dependence, but that really help the poor and oppressed to discover their full dignity and freedom as God's sons.

The inspiration, perspicuity and authority of the Scripture, according to Paul, thus also constitutes an inalienable strand in the gospel, the Good News to the illiterate, the poor and the poorly educated.

Conclusion

We have outlined ten elements that are fundamental in biblical theology for the proclamation of the Good News to the poor and oppressed. In 1970 black evangelist Tom Skinner brought students at the Urbana convention to their feet cheering with his ringing declaration, "The Liberator has come!"[66] Often since then I've had to ask myself: Do affluent white evangelicals preach a different gospel? Are the conflictive, triumphant strains of Jesus' Good News to the poor and woes to the rich still clearly recognizable in our message? Or in our zeal to make "evangelical" synonymous with "conservative" have we utterly failed to conserve those fundamentals so essential to our Lord and to Paul—those characteristics of the gospel that make it *preferentially* Good News to the poor? There is, as Paul insists, "no other gospel" (Gal. 1:6-9).

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[1] By "poor" I mean those lacking elements necessary to human life: land or employment, food, drink, clothing, housing and health—both physical and psychological (honor, dignity, sense of worth, identity, hope, freedom). See Job 24:1-2, Mt. 25:31-46. Jacques Ellul has written extensively seeking to define both the biblical and sociological concepts. See his *Money and Power* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1984 [1954, rev. 1979], pp. 141-151; *The Betrayal of the West* (New York: Seabury, 1978 [1975], pp. 85-125.

[2] Thomas D. Hanks, *God So Loved the Third World* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1983), pp. 38-39, 58-60; see also Elsa Tamez, *The Bible of the Oppressed* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1982); Jacques Pons, *L'Oppression dans L'Ancien Testament* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1981).

[3] John Pollock, *Wilberforce* (London: Lion, 1977), p. 238.

[4] Young Kim, "The Vocabulary of Oppression in the Old Testament," Drew University Ph.D. thesis, 1981 (available from University Microfilms International). Kim's outstanding analysis of the mechanisms of oppression in the Old Testament provides the starting point for my analysis of the levels of oppression in Luke.

[5] Hanks, op. cit., pp. 50-60, esp. 53, 54; Kim, op. cit., p. 264, citing Dt. 28:27-42; Is. 38:10; Ps. 103:3-6; cf., the abundant pentecostal and charismatic literature related to this theme, but often rather myopic in exegesis, hermeneutics and theological perspective.

[6] Juan Stam, "El Epocalipsis y el imperalismo" in Elsa Tamez and Saul Trinidad, eds., *Capitalismo: Violencia y Anti-vida* (San José: EDUCA/DEI, 1978, Vol. I, 351-394. Richard J. Cassidy, *Jesus, Politics and Society: A Study of Luke's Gospel* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1979), pp. 50-97; Richard J. Cassidy and Phillip J. Scharper, eds., *Political Issues in Luke-Acts* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1983), pp. 38-48.

[7] I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1978), pp. 241f., 868f. (note especially Lk. 22:2; 23:5); Richard J. Cassidy, *Jesus, Politics and Society*, pp. 52-54; 63-64, 92-93, 101-107, 114-127; *Political Issues*, pp. 146-167; Colin Brown, ed., *Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), II, p. 799.

[8] Walter E. Pilgrim, *Good News to the Poor: Wealth and Poverty in Luke-Acts* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1981); Luke T. Johnson, Fortress, 1981); Joseph A. Fiztmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX, Anchor Bible* 28 (New York: Doubleday, 1981), I, 247-251; Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974, p. 41); I. Howard Marshall, *Luke: Historian and Theologian* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970), pp. 122, 141-144, 206-209; W. Graham Scroggie, *A Guide to the Gospels* (London: Pickering & Inglis, 1948), pp. 373f.; Kim, op. cit., in his treatment of the Old Testament mentions specifically the rich, merchants, creditors, employees and landholders (people of the land), pp. 273-277.

[9] Helmut Flenders, *St. Luke: Theologian of Redemptive History* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967), pp. 9-10; Letha Scanzoni and Nancy Hardesty, *All We're Meant to Be* (Waco: Word, 1974), pp. 215f.; James G. Sigountos and Myron Shank, "Public Roles for Women in the Pauline Church: A Reappraisal of the Evidence," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, Vol. 26:3 (Sept. 1983), pp. 283-295. Note the neglect of the factor of oppression and Exodus paradigm in Scroggie, op. cit., p. 191; Marshall, *Luke: Historian*, pp. 139f.; Morris, op. cit., p. 40; James B. Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1981), pp. 36f., 79-93; Stephen B. Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ* (Ann Arbor: Servant, 1980), pp. 226-231.

[10] While occasionally noted by Lukan specialists, the age factor does not appear to have received much attention, nor has its place in the overall context of Luke's teaching on oppression and liberation. Kim, op. cit., notes the role of elders as oppressors in the Old Testament (Is. 3:14-15; Num. 22:7,14; Judg. 8:6,16; 10:8,14). On the role of elders in Luke-Acts, see Lk. 9:22; 20:1; 22:24-30,52,66; Acts 4:5,8,23; 6:12; 22:5; 23:14; 24:1; 25:15; cf. 2 Pet. 5:1-5; 2 Tim. 4:12; Jas. 1:27. For the role of children and youths, see Lk. 1:15-17,41,66,76-78; 2:6-7,8-12,16,22-24,50-52; 7:11-17; 9:38,46-48; Acts 7:19; Scroggie, op. cit., pp. 375f.; Morris, op. cit., p. 41; Fitzmyer, op. cit., p. 188; cf. Mt. 2:18-21; 18:2-5; 19:13,14; Mk. 10:141-15.

[11] Scroggie, op. cit., pp. 365-370, 380; Morris, op. cit., p. 80; John G. Gager, "The Social World of Early Christianity" in *The Bible and Liberation* (Berkeley: C.R.R.E., 1976), pp. 120-130.

[12] Marshall moves in this direction, but does not quite arrive; *Luke: Historian*, pp. 94-102.

[13] "Francis Schaeffer, 1912-1984," in *Eternity*, July-August, 1984, p. 12.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Kenneth S. Kantzer with Paul W. Fromer, "A Theologian Looks at Schuller," *Christianity Today*, August 10, 1984, p. 23.

[16] Hanks, op. cit., pp. 9-10 (on *nagas*).

[17] José Pereira de Souza, "Los Efectos de la Cruzada de Costa Rica 1972 sobre las iglesias evangélicas de San José," Masters thesis, Seminario Bíblico Latinoamericano, 1973.

[18] None was richer than He; none became poorer than He." Philip E. Hughes, *Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962), p. 299. C. K. Barrett refers to "the absolute naked poverty of the crucifixion" in *A Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1973), p. 223.

[19] Ronald J. Sider, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1977), pp. 95-98; Sider, ed., *Living More Simply* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1980); *Life Style in the 80's* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982).

[20] Jon Sobrino, *Christology at the Crossroads* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1978): see my critique, Tomás Hanks, *Opresión, Pobreza y Liberación* (Miami: Caribe, 1982), pp. 121-127.

[21] Cited by Harvey Conn, "Sin in the City: the Privatization Myth," *Occasional Essays* XII (June 1984), p. 48.

[22] Ernesto Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1979). See also the literature cited on the Christian base comunities under note 56 below.

[23] Hanks, *God So Loved*, pp. 73-96.

[24] Ibid., also sections of my doctoral thesis on propitiation and wrath, "The Theology of Divine Anger in the Psalms of Lament," Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1972, pp. 1-24, 483-586.

[25] Hanks, *God So Loved*, p. 16.

[26] Ibid., pp. 105-108; Pons, op. cit., pp. 27-52; Kim, op. cit., pp. 22-27, 45-46, 178-184; G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringren, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* IV, 478-487.

[27] José P. Miranda points out the failure of Marx's dialectics in having nothing to offer as counterpoint to our last enemy: "When Marx avoids the problem of death and therefore does not even glimpse the possibility of resurrection, it is not precisely his lack of faith in God but rather insufficient dialectics for which we must approach him." *Marx and the Bible: a Critique of the Philosophy of Oppression* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1974), p. 279; cf. Sobrino, op. cit., pp. 259-272; 374-381.

[28] Donald B. Kraybill, *The Upside-Down Kingdom* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1978); cf. Jacques Ellul, *Changer de Revolution* (Paris: Seuil, 1982).

[29] John H. Yoder, *The Original Revolution: Essays in Christian Pacifism* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1971); Norman K. Gottwald, *Tribes of Yahweh* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1979), p. 593. Also, see note 40 below.

[30] Pilgrim, op. cit., pp. 129-134; Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, pp. 694f. (on Zacchaeus, Lk. 19:1-10).

[31] Luke 3:18 (cf. 10-17!); Rom. 2:16 (cf. 1-15!); Rev. 14:6 (cf. v. 7!); First World commentators often have difficulty seeing what is so "good" about the news in such texts; thus Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), pp. 272f.; but cf. Marshall, pp. 61, 149 and Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), pp. 56-57.

[32] As G. C. Berkouwer points out, "Calvin aptly compares faith to an empty vesssel" [Institutes III':7], *Faith and Justification* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954; See Donald G. Bloesch, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), I, pp. 223-253; Peter Davids, *Commentary on James* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), pp. 110-112); James Adamson, *The Epistle of James* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), pp. 108-110.

[33] F. F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Free Spirit* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1977), pp. 470f.

[34] Thomas Hanks, "The Kingdom and the Poor: Perspectives from Psalm 72," *Occasional Essays* X:1 (June 1983), esp. pp. 67-83.

[35] For the linguistic basis of the *relectura* of Rom. 1:18 (violence . . . oppression), which depends on the LXX translation of Hebrew terms for violence and oppression, see my review of Jacques Pons, *L'oppression dans L'Ancien Testament, Occasional Essays* X:1 (June 1983), esp. pp. 103-105.

[36] Martin Luther, "Treatise on the Liberty of a Christian Man," [1520] in *Three Treatises* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1943). Regarding the structure of Romans, Anders Nygren's commentary is a helpful starting point.

[37] Käsemann, *Romans*, pp. 56-57.

[38] F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (London: Tyndale, 1963), pp. 39-40.

[39] Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: insights from cultural anthropology* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1981), pp. 1-24. See also the anthropological emphasis in Peter Worsley, *The Three Worlds: Culture and World Development* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1984), pp. 41-44, 332-344. The significance of Worsley's work is pointed out by Christopher Hill in his review article, "Keeping One Half of the World Poor," *The* [Manchester] *Guardian* (overseas weekly edition), May 6, 1984, p. 23.

[40] Käsemann, *Romans*, pp. 56-57.

[41] Bruce, *Romans*, pp. 58-60; *Paul*, pp. 469-474. Donald Grey Barnhouse made a similar point in his expository sermons on Romans but omitted mention of Barth. How different church history would have been had Phoebe failed to deliver Paul's letter!

[42] Promising earlier developments, such as Hans Küng's work on justification in Barth's theology, Vatican II, and massive increase in Bible distribution and reading in Latin America, augmented both by the base communities and charismatic movement, have yet to bear their full fruit in the development and application of forensic justification. A growing number of Latin American theologians, both Protestant and Catholic, foresee significant theological development in this area.

[43] Walther Eichrodt, *The Theology of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), I, p. 215. Few terms in the history of philosophy and theology are as widely used in so many senses with so little attention to careful definition.

[44] These points occur repeatedly throughout Ellul's 40 books and more than 600 articles. See, for instance, *The Technological Society* (New York: Vintage, 1964); pp. 284-291; *The Technological System* (New York: Continuum, 1980), pp. 55-57, pp. 134f.; *Propaganda* (New York: Vintage, 1965), pp. 74-75, 250-270; *The Betrayal of the West* (New York: Seabury, 1975), pp. 134, 193-200; for details, Joyce Main Hanks, *Jacques Ellul: A Comprehensive Bibliography* (Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press, 1984), indexed references to technique (pp. 134f., 275f.), propaganda (pp. 131f., 274); state (p. 277); violence (pp. 136, 251); totalitarianism (pp. 135f., 280); U.S.A. (p. 281); U.S.S.R. (p. 277); war (pp. 136, 281f.).

[45] John R. W. Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1975), pp. 82-105. See also Robert Saucy, "Dispensationalism and the Salvation of the Kingdom," *Theological Students Fellowship Bulletin*, May-June, 1984, pp. 6-7.

[46] Hanks, *God So Loved*, p. 132, note 9.

[47] *Institutions of the Christian Religion*, Book III:X-XI.

[48] Mortimer Arias, *Salvación es Liberación* (Buenos Aires: Aurora, 1973); Gabriel Fackre, *The Christian Story* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), pp. 190-194.

[49] Hanks, *God So Loved*, p. 73-96.

[50] Elsa Tamez, op. cit., pp. 75-82.

[51] Dt. 8; 32:13-18.

[52] Rom. 5:1-11; 2 Cor. 8-9; on Mk. 10:29-31 see William L. Lane, *Commentary on the Gospel of Mark* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), pp. 370-373; Fernando Belo, *A Materialist Reading of the Gospel of Mark* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1981), pp. 173f.; "Vagabond Radicalism in Early Christianity," in Willy Schottroff and Wolfgang Stegemann, eds., *God of the Lowly* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1984), pp. 157-160.

[53] Ellul warns against the common notion that the poor must first have their material needs met *before* the gospel can be proclaimed to them; *Violence* (London: SCM, 1970), pp. 37-40.

[54] Bruce, *Romans*, pp. 266f. Correlation of the vocabulary for work with the women mentioned in this chapter shows that women seem to be doing the great bulk of the work in these house churches, probably because the men had to fulfill secular callings.

[55] *Newsweek*, Oct. 22, 1984, p. 13.

[56] Guillermo Cook, "The Protestant Predicament: From Base Ecclesial Community to Established Church—A Brazilian Case Study," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 8:3 (July 1984), p. 100; John Eagleson and Sergio Torres, eds., *The Challenge of Basic Christian Communities (Maryknoll: Orbis, 19)*; on house churches, aside from traditional Plymouth Brethren literature, see Howard A. Snyder, *The Problem of Wine Skins* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1975); *The Community of the King* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1977); Robert Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980); David Prior, *The Church in the Home* (London: Marshall Morgan & Scott, 1983).

[57] Gustavo Gutierrez, *Teología de Liberación* (Salamanca: Sígueme, 1972), pp. 254-265. Gutierrez' interpretation on certain points, of course, may not be correct. If the "last word" on this intriguing but difficult text has been written, I have not seen it. Cf. Jacques Ellul, *The Ethics of Freedom* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), pp. 319-331d; Robert McAfee Brown, *Unexpected News: Reading the Bible with Third World Eyes* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984), pp. 127-141.

[58] See literature cited under note 52.

[59] John H. Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), *passim*.

[60] Gustavo Gutierrez, *The Power of the Poor in History* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1983), pp. 16-22.

[61] "Ponencia de Hugo Assmann," in Sergio Torres and John Eagleson, eds., *Teología en las Américas* (Salamanca: Sígueme, 1980), pp. 339-343, esp. p. 340.

[62] Norman Gottwald, *Tribes*, p. 409.

[63] I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, p. 434.

[64] *Propaganda, passim*: Michael R. Real, "Mass Communications and Propaganda in Technological Society" in Clifford G. Christians and Jay M. Van Hook, eds., *Jacques Ellul: Interpretative Essays* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1981), pp. 108-127.

[65] See, however, the distinction made in the Westminster Confession, Chapter I, between the perspicuity for the ordinary person regarding the way of salvation, and theological controversies that must be resolved by reference to the Hebrew and Greek.

[66] John R. W. Stott, et al., *Christ the Liberator* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1971), pp. 208-209

The Challenge of Religious Pluralism

by Harold Netland

Even a cursory survey of the theological literature of the past three decades indicates that theologians have discovered what missionaries and nonwestern Christians have known for a long time: we live in a religiously pluralistic world in which the great majority of people hold religious convictions quite different from those of orthodox Christianity.

Today there is unprecedented interaction between various cultures, and western theologians are becoming aware as never before of the great diversity among religious traditions, and also of the implications of this for doing Christian theology. For someone who has done his or her theologizing exclusively within the western intellectual context, it can be most unsettling to be invited, for example, to give a series of lectures in, say, Kyoto or Bangalore, and there to be exposed firsthand to sophisticated, articulate, and sincere adherents of other faiths.

With increased awareness of religious pluralism has come a host of disconcerting and perplexing questions: If Christianity is the true religion, why is it that so much of today's world rejects it in favor of diametrically opposing religious traditions? Why are there so many diverse religions? Is it theologically and morally acceptable to maintain that one religion is uniquely true, and that others are at best incomplete or even false? Is Jesus Christ really so unique after all? The challenge to Christian theology posed by pluralism should not be minimized. Canon Max Warren seems to have had prophetic insight when he observed—almost thirty years ago—that the impact of agnostic science upon theology will turn out to have been as mere child's play when compared to the challenge to Christian theology of the faith of other men.[1]

Harold Netland is a missionary in Japan serving with the Evangelical Free Church of America. *Portions of this essay appeared in earlier form in Dr. Netland's "Religious Pluralism and Truth," in* Trinity Journal, *6, (1985) pp. 74-87, and are included here with permission of the editor.*

The growing awareness of religious pluralism is forcing many theologians today to grapple in a fresh way with the issue of the relation of Christianity to other faiths. And this is as it should be, for as Wilfred Cantwell Smith notes, the fact of pluralism should affect the way in which theology is conducted in the West:

> How does one account, theologically, for the fact of man's religious diversity? This is really as big an issue, almost, as the question of how one accounts theologically for evil—but Christian theologians have been much more conscious of the fact of evil than that of religious pluralism. . . . From now on any serious intellectual statement of the Christian faith must include, if it is to serve its purpose among men, some sort of doctrine of other religions. We explain the fact that the Milky Way is there by the doctrine of creation, but how do we explain the fact that the Bhagavad Gita is there?[2]

Consequently, over the past quarter century, questions regarding the relation of Christianity to other faiths have been addressed in the writings of P. Tillich, K. Barth, H. Kraemer, S.C. Neill, K. Rahner, H. Küng, R. Panikker, W. Pannenberg, J.A.T. Robinson, J.B. Cobb, Jr., J. Macquarrie, J. Moltmann, J. Hick, and W. Cantwell Smith, as well as a host of lesser figures.[3]

We live in a religiously pluralistic world in which the great majority of people hold religious convictions quite different from those of orthodox Christianity.

Undoubtedly most persons—at least until recent times—have concluded that since some conflicting truth-claims are made by the major religions, not all the claims made by the various traditions can be true. At least some must be false. For example, it has traditionally been held that the Muslim and the orthodox Christian cannot both be correct on the question of the identity of Jesus of Nazareth. We might, for convenience, refer to this as the exclusivist position. As I use the term, exclusivism maintains that if the central claims of a given religion R are true, then if the claims of another religion S contradict those of R the claims of S are to be rejected as false. We should note that as here defined exclusivism does *not* entail that if the central claims of one religion are true then *all* of the claims of the other religions must be false; nor does it entail that all of the other religions are without inherent value. It simply maintains that if two or more incompatible beliefs are advanced by various religions they cannot all be true.

On this definition, orthodox Christianity has historically been exclusivist. When claims from Buddhism or Islam contradict those of Scripture, the former have been rejected as false. What is often overlooked, however, is that most other traditions (with the possible exception of certain forms of Hinduism) are also exclusivist. For example, Theravada Buddhism rejects as false those claims made by Christians which are incompatible with its central beliefs.

Now the fact that there are a number of exclusivist traditions presents what is often regarded as the scandal of religious pluralism—the problem of conflicting truth-claims, with the apparent implication that millions of devout and sincere people are embracing false beliefs. In part as a result of great personal contact with adherents of other faiths, exclusivism is increasingly being rejected by Christian theologians and even missionaries as naive, arrogant, intolerant, and a vestige of an immoral religious imperialism. Thus, Waldron Scott, former general secretary of the World Evangelical Fellowship, speaks of the ". . . sheer incredibility to the modern person of an exclusivist approach . . ." to the relation among religions.[4] The evangelical Christian, who maintains the unique truth of the claims of Scripture and rejects as false any rival claim, is very much on the defensive in contemporary discussions of pluralism.

Why has exclusivism fallen into such disrepute? Several widely accepted, yet dubious, assumptions seem to be responsible. First, much of contemporary theology is inundated with a pervasive epistemological skepticism which regards any claim to religious truth as problematic, and which views with incredulity those who hold that God has definitively revealed himself in one particular tradition. Closely related is the rejection of the universal (viz., transcultural and timeless) and exclusive (viz., a true statement necessarily excludes its contradictory as false) nature of truth as being "Greek" or "Aristotelian," and thus not necessarily valid in today's pluralistic world. Roger Trigg notes that historically, epistemological and moral relativism have always been attractive options when people who had previously led settled and complacent lives are suddenly confronted with new and different ideas and practices.[5] It is hardly surprising, then, to see that an increasingly influential relativism has accompanied the growing awareness of cultural and religious pluralism.

Second, it is frequently assumed that there is something arrogant and intolerant about holding that one religion is true and that those which are incompatible with it are false. Similarly, it is sometimes claimed that exclusivism must be rejected since it allegedly produces such reprehensible effects upon the interaction between adherents of different faiths. And, since today we are all members of an interdependent global community, it is claimed that we must at all costs strive for peaceful coexistence and harmony, and that accusing adherents of other religions of embracing false beliefs is somehow incompatible with this.

And third, it is increasingly accepted today that if God is indeed a God of love, he is morally obligated to provide all persons with equal opportunity for responding to him; and that maintaining that salvation is necessarily linked to personal response to the person and work of Jesus Christ is incompatible with God's love and goodness, since it allegedly cuts off from the possibility of salvation those who through no fault of their own have never heard of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Accordingly, christologies which see Jesus Christ as being uniquely and exclusively divine, and thus normative for all persons, are increasingly being criticized for being out of touch with the realities of our pluralistic world. As a result of these and other related assumptions, a strong reaction against the perceived evils of exclusivism has resulted in a preoccupation with dialogue and searching out areas of agreement among religions at the expense of considerations of truth.

Consequently, a growing number of theologians and mission leaders are rejecting exclusivism in favor of a more open posture which sees God at work in all the major religions. Many—such as Karl Rahner, Hans Küng, and John B. Cobb, Jr.—are willing to admit that God has revealed Himself in other traditions besides Christianity and that other faiths offer authentic ways of salvation, while also still maintaining in some sense the superiority, uniqueness, and normativity of Jesus Christ. However, such "mediating" positions are vigorously attacked from both the theological right and the left. Con-

servatives accuse them of failing to take seriously the biblical data on the exclusivity of the person and work of Christ, while radical theologians chide them for still holding on (in some sense) to the uniqueness and normativity of Christ. Thus, the central focus of much of the debate over the proper Christian response to other religions is upon christological issues.[6]

The Theocentric Model

Of particular interest in recent years has been the emergence of a growing number of theologians who accept what Paul Knitter calls the "theocentric model" of the relation among religions.[7] Although individual thinkers vary in details, all who put forward this model agree that any christology which allows for the absoluteness, exclusivity, or normativity of Jesus Christ must be rejected. In contrast to exclusivism, the theocentric model holds that it is the one God who is ultimately at the center of reflection and devotion in all the various religions, and thus no single religion can claim superiority or definitive truth. While recognizing significant differences among religions, it is maintained that ultimately all the major traditions are authentic historically and are culturally conditioned responses to the same divine reality. Just as there are many paths leading to the summit of Mt. Fuji, so there are many authentic paths to salvation mediated through the great religions. This, of course, is a familiar theme in certain traditions in eastern thought, such as Advaita Vedanta. But it is also a view which has considerable appeal today in the west, not only on a popular level among the laity but increasingly among Christian clergy and the theological community as well. As such it demands closer scrutiny.

The growing awareness of religious pluralism is forcing many theologians today to grapple in a fresh way with the issue of the relation of Christianity to other faiths.

One of the most articulate and influential spokesmen for the theocentric position is John H. Hick, currently Danforth professor of religion and philosophy at Claremont Graduate School. Professor Hick's 1986 Gifford Lectures at the University of Edinburgh, which deal with the problem of religious pluralism, are to be published in book form under the tentative title, *An Interpretation of Religion*. Hick, who at one time accepted a Christianity "of a strongly evangelical and indeed fundamentalist kind,"[8] began in 1973 to call for a "Copernican revolution" in our thinking about religions.[9] The revolution he advocated would involve "a shift from the dogma that Christianity is at the center to the thought that it is *God* who is at the center and that all the religions of mankind, including our own, serve and revolve around Him."[10] God—or, as Professor Hick prefers, the Eternal One—should be recognized as being the center of religious awareness, with the various conceptions of the divine expressed in the many traditions all being reflective of the one divine reality. That is, "the great religions are all, at their experiential roots, in contact with the same ultimate divine reality."[11]

One of the implications of Hick's proposal is a kind of equality among religions such that no single religion can claim to be exclusively true or correct, or to have a definitive revelation from God.[12] It naturally follows from this that the orthodox understanding of the Incarnation must be abandoned, or at least significantly modified. For Hick correctly points out that if Jesus were literally God incarnate then it is very difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Christian revelation is definitive:

> For if Jesus was literally God incarnate, the second Person of the holy Trinity living a human life, so that the Christian religion was founded by God-on-earth in person, it is then very hard to escape from the traditional view that all mankind must be converted to the Christian faith.[13]

Accordingly, he urges us to reinterpret the doctrine of the Incarnation as a "mythological idea," a "figure of speech, a piece of poetic imagery" which signifies that Jesus is "our sufficient, effective, and saving point of contact with God."[14] By understanding the Incarnation in mythological categories, Hick claims that Christians can maintain God is *truly* to be encountered in Jesus but not that God is uniquely or definitively revealed in Jesus. God can and does reveal Himself in similar ways through other great religious figures.

But if the various religions all reflect the same divine reality, why the bewildering diversity in the respective conceptions of the divine? Why are there conflicting truth-claims about the nature of the divine reality? Hick has a two-fold answer which brings us to the heart of his theory.

First, the various conceptions of the divine found in the major religions represent culturally conditioned human responses to the one divine reality:

> The basic hypothesis which suggests itself is that the different streams of religious experience represent diverse awarenesses of the same transcendent reality, which is perceived in characteristically different ways, by different human mentalities, formed by and forming different cultural histories. . . . One then sees the great world religions as different human responses to the one divine Reality, embodying different perceptions which have been formed in different historical and cultural circumstances.

This is partially simply an extension of Hick's religious epistemology, which is based upon what he takes to be the irreducibly interpretative nature of all experience, including religious experience.[16] In the context of pluralism, then, he is building upon this interpretative element in religious experience and crediting various historical and cultural factors with influencing how followers of different traditions conceptualize the divine reality.

The second part of Hick's answer lies in his distinction between the divine reality as it is in itself and the divine reality as it is experienced by historically and culturally conditioned persons. Immanuel Kant's distinction between noumenon and phenomenon is adapted (and used in a most non-Kantian manner!) to illustrate the point:

> Summarizing this hypothesis in philosophical terms made possible by the work of Immanuel Kant, we may distinguish between, on the one hand, the single divine noumenon, the Eternal One in itself, transcending the scope of human thought and language, and, on the other hand, the plurality of the divine phenomena, the divine *personae* of the theistic religions and the concretizations of the concept of the Absolute in the nontheistic religions. . . . The Eternal One is thus the divine noumenon which is experienced and thought within different religious traditions as the range of divine phenomena witnessed to by the religious history of mankind.[17]

By making this fundamental distinction Hick claims to be able to maintain consistently both that the conceptions of the di-

vine reality in the various religions are actually different, and even conflicting, and that these various images are human responses to and reflective of the same single divine reality. Certainly if both propositions can be maintained consistently, then it would make good sense to reject the position that one religious tradition can be true and other conflicting religions are false, for all religions would be partial reflections of the same divine reality.

But in spite of its considerable intuitive appeal, Hick's thesis is highly vulnerable on several counts.[18] First, scholars have been quick to point out that Hick and his colleagues who call for a mythological reinterpretation of the doctrine of the Incarnation seriously distort the New Testament data on the person and work of Jesus Christ.[19] Their suggestions that the New Testament language of incarnation was originally intended to be simply metaphorical, and not literal, and that Jesus did not conceive of Himself as in any sense uniquely divine, and that similar notions of divine incarnation can be found in other religious traditions are held on extremely tenuous grounds, and have been vigorously challenged in the academic community. Indeed, such mythological reinterpretation of the Incarnation seems to be little more than a dubious and speculative account of the person of Christ read back into the New Testament writings.

Second, it is important to recognize that Hick's thesis is a comprehensive, second-order theory about all religions and religious experiences. That is, he is not proposing an alternative religious perspective but rather a comprehensive theory about *all* religious perspectives. As such, the adequacy of his theory will be a function of at least two factors: (a) the accuracy with which the theory reflects the ease with which it accommodates the various religious traditions, and (b) the internal consistency and plausibility of the theory itself. His proposal is problematic in both areas.

To the extent that certain major religious traditions do not find their views adequately accounted for on Hick's analysis, his theory is called into question. If significant elements of a religion clash with his proposal, this *prima facie* counts against his theory. Two examples, one from Christianity and one from Buddhism, will be given to demonstrate that significant aspects of some major religions cannot be accounted for neatly on Hick's theory.

Orthodox Christianity accepts the traditional understanding of the doctrine of the Incarnation, in which it is held that Jesus was both God and man. Hick, as noted above, rejects this view in favor of a mythological reinterpretation of the Incarnation. Now the christological issues involved in the debate need not concern us here; what is crucial to see, however, is that since Hick's theory—by his own admission—cannot accommodate the orthodox understanding of the Incarnation, it cannot be an adequate *general* theory about religious traditions. Certainly the orthodox doctrine of the Incarnation is a central element of a major religious tradition, and the fact that Hick's theory cannot accommodate it counts significantly against his thesis.

Similarly, Hick's theory has difficulty accounting for the Zen notion of *satori*. *Satori* is said to be an immediate, direct, unmediated apprehension of ultimate reality which transcends all distinctions and dichotomies. Any kind of apprehension which implies dualism is rejected by Zen as being less than ultimately real. This, of course, gives *satori* an absolutely unrivalled status among religious experiences. Hick recognizes the Zen claims for the exclusivity of *satori*, but he then goes on to suggest that not even *satori* can be granted such exclusivist status, since it too is the product of interpretative activity and the influence of the surrounding culture.[20] Now Hick may very well be correct in his analysis of *satori* (it is not at all clear to me that the notion of *satori* is even coherent) but this is beside the point. Zen Buddhists will almost certainly not accept Hick's reinterpretation of *satori* since it eliminates what is central to Zen: the claim to a direct, unmediated apprehension of ultimate reality which transcends all distinctions. Thus, Hick's theory cannot accommodate the basic notion of *satori* as it is understood within the Zen tradition.

In both cases, Hick attempts to deal with troublesome doctrines by reinterpreting them to eliminate problematic elements. But the price of doing so is that the reinterpreted doctrines bear little resemblance to the beliefs originally held in the respective traditions. And this surely counts against his theory as a general theory of the nature of religion.

Nor does Hick's theory fare much better when we inquire into its internal consistency and plausibility. The Eternal One in itself is said to be the divine *noumenon* and the various conceptions of the divine in the many religions are the divine *phenomena*, or manifestations of the Eternal One. Thus, Yahweh, Allah, Krishna, Shiva, Brahman, Amida, Sunyatta, etc., are all divine *phenomena* or *personae* through which the Eternal One is manifested. If the *personae* are indeed accurate reflections of the Eternal One, there must be significant continuity between images of the divine and the divine reality they reflect. This can be expressed in another way by saying that the set of true propositions about a given image of the divine (e.g., Allah or Amida Buddha) must form a subset of the set of all true propositions about the Eternal One as it is in itself.

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Hick correctly notes that images of the divine can be placed into two broad categories: those which conceive of the divine reality as personal (e.g. Yahweh, Allah) and those which conceive of it in nonpersonal categories (e.g. Nirvana, Sunyatta).[21] It is crucial to Hick's thesis that the Eternal One can accurately be described in both personal and nonpersonal categories, as these categories are understood in the respective traditions. Thus, terms such as "Yahweh," "Allah," "Shiva," "Nirguna Brahman," and "Emptiness" should all ultimately have the same referent. But this hardly seems plausible. Careful consideration of the meanings of the personal and nonpersonal images of the divine in the respective traditions reveals that several of them seem to have clearly incompatible entailments. For example, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the ontological implications of the Judeo-Christian image of the divine as Yahweh, who is ontologically distinct from and independent of the created world, are incompatible with the ontological monism of the notion of the Nirguna Brahman from Advaita Vedanta.[23] Or again, the ontological implications of the Muslim image of the divine as Allah seem clearly incompatible with the monistic idealism of the Yogacara school of Mahayana Buddhism, to say nothing of the ontologically ultimate notion of Emptiness in Zen.

Thus, in spite of its considerable intuitive appeal, John Hick's proposal is plagued by some serious epistemological difficulties. And it would seem that similar difficulties would vitiate any formulation of the theocentric model which holds that all religious traditions are ultimately reflecting the same single

divine reality. If we are to take seriously the beliefs of the various religions and to portray them accurately, and if we are to have a view which is epistemologically sound, I do not see how we can avoid something very much like the traditional exclusivist position.

An Evangelical Response to Religious Pluralism

How should evangelicals respond to the challenges posed by religious pluralism? Simply ignoring the issues will hardly do; nor will mere mechanical repetition of traditional "pat answers" be adequate. If evangelical theology is to be credible in today's pluralistic world—particularly in Asia—what is needed is a comprehensive and sensitive response to the set of perplexing questions which are the focus of the current debate. And integral to such a response will be a carefully formulated apologetic for exclusivism.

An evangelical response must begin by refuting certain widely accepted—yet gratuitous—assumptions. For example, the epistemological skepticism and relativism which are pervasive in much contemporary theology must be shown to be unwarranted. Much of the current literature on religious pluralism is marked by sloppy and indefensible work in epistemology masquerading as profundity. Evangelical philosophers can make a vital contribution by clarifying basic issues and exposing faulty reasoning. Similarly, evangelicals must refocus attention upon the central issue of truth and the problem of conflicting truth-claims.[23] While we can readily admit that religion serves a variety of social and psychological functions, we must recognize that one of the central concerns of religion is to provide truth about God, humanity, and our universe. As such, the truth question must not be glossed over but must be vigorously pursued.

Further, it must be emphasized that the widely accepted equation of exclusivism with intolerance is misleading. To be sure, history provides ample evidence that exclusivists of all faiths have acted in intolerant and barbarous ways to adherents of other faiths. But there is no necessary connection between holding a given group's religious beliefs to be false and the radical mistreatment of members of that group.[24] Surely one can consider the beliefs of another to be false and yet treat that individual with dignity and respect. To deny this is to suggest that we can only respect and live harmoniously with those with whom we happen to agree. But this is nonsense. On the contrary, is it not a mark of maturity to be able to live peaceably with those with whom we may profoundly disagree?

It is crucial that an evangelical response to religious pluralism develop a genuinely biblical theology of religions which gives special attention to three areas. First, since much of the current debate is over christology, the biblical understanding of the person and work of Jesus Christ must be clarified. This should be done not simply by collating the biblical data, but also by making explicit reference, through comparison and contrast, to other great religious figures.[25] In this manner the supremacy and normativity of Christ will be clearly evident. Second, an evangelical theology of religions must take seriously the biblical teaching on general revelation and its implications for non-Christian religions.[26] To what extent do religions such as Islam and Buddhism retain truths (however distorted or incomplete) about the nature of God, morality, and the human predicament? What is needed is not simply careful exegesis of all the relevant biblical texts—though that of course is essential—but also a thorough familiarity with other faiths. Third, given that universalism is practically axiomatic in much of the discussion of pluralism, the biblical teaching on the nature of and conditions for salvation must be clarified. Are those who have never heard of the gospel of Jesus Christ necessarily lost without hope of salvation? Obviously this is a highly sensitive issue, but it must be confronted and settled solely on the basis of careful exegesis of all the relevant biblical texts.[27]

Finally, I suggest that the following should serve as guidelines for developing an evangelical response to the cluster of issues raised by religious pluralism:

1. The Bible alone—and not religious experience in general or the sacred scriptures of other traditions—is to be the final authority for conclusions about the relation of Christianity to other faiths.

2. An evangelical response must be based upon careful and rigorous exegesis of all the relevant biblical passages. Too often contemporary discussions of pluralism are marred by what seem to be arbitrary and superficial treatment of the biblical text. Scripture must be allowed to speak for itself.

3. An adequate response must also be epistemologically sound. That is, it cannot be based upon notions of truth, faith, knowledge, or the extent of cultural influence upon beliefs, etc., which are epistemologically untenable.

4. The beliefs and practices of other religious traditions must be portrayed accurately. Too often evangelicals have been guilty of distorting other faiths through gross caricature. Every effort must be made to understand adequately other traditions. And yet in so doing, basic differences between religions must not be ignored. We do the other traditions an injustice if we distort or reinterpret beliefs and practices to minimize the differences.

5. Similarly, a genuinely biblical response will be marked by a sensitive awareness of the fact that those who follow other faiths are also created in God's image and are objects of God's limitless love. Our interaction with those of other faiths must be characterized by genuine humility and respect; there is no room here for arrogance or triumphalism.

6. While in no way compromising the claims of Scripture and the absolute uniqueness of Jesus Christ, nor minimizing the significant differences between various religions, an adequate response must actively seek to discern points of agreement between Christianity and other faiths, and to build upon these to establish bridges of communication to those of other faiths.

7. Out of a profound recognition of the love and grace of God, who earnestly desires that all people come to repentance and an experience of salvation (John 3:16, 2 Peter 3:9) to the end that all the peoples of the earth will glorify and praise Him (Psalm 67), a genuinely biblical response to religious pluralism must also include the priority of the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ to all people—including devout adherents of other faiths.

The troubling questions prompted by our increasing awareness of religious pluralism cannot be conveniently ignored; they will not quietly go away. The theological agenda for evangelicals in the coming decades must include careful and Spirit directed consideration of these issues, and the formulation of a response which is thoroughly consistent with Scripture and also sensitive to the realities of other religious traditions.

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[1] As quoted in W. Cantwell Smith, "The Christian in a Religiously Plural World," in *Religious Diversity: Essays by Wilfred Cantwell Smith*, ed. Willard G. Oxtoby (New York: Harper & Row, 1976) p. 7.

[2] W. Cantwell Smith, *The Faith of Other Men* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962) pp. 132-133.

[3] See, for example, Paul Tillich, *Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963); Karl Barth, "The Revelation of God as the Abolition of Religion"in *Church Dogmatics*, vol. I, part 2, section 17 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, Ltd., 1956); Hendrick Kraemer, *Religion and the Christian Faith* (London: Luttterworth, 1956); Stephen C. Neill, *Christian Faith and Other Faiths* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), revised and reprinted as *Crises of Belief* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1984); Karl Rahner, *Theological Investigations* (New York: Seabury, 1974-1978) vol. 5 pp. 115-134, vol. 12 pp. 161-178, vol. 14 pp. 280-294; Hans Küng, *On Being a Christian* (New York: Doubleday, 1976) pp. 89-118,

and "The World Religions in God's Plan of Salvation" in *Christian Revelation and World Religions*, ed. Joseph Neuner (London: Burns and Oates, 1967) pp. 25-66; Raimundo Panikkar, *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism*, rev. ed. (New York: Orbis, 1981); Wolfhart Pannenberg, "Towards a Theology of the History of Religions" in *Basic Questions in Theology*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971) pp. 65-118; John A.T. Robinson, *Truth is Two-Eyed* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1980); John Macquarrie, "Christianity and Other Faiths" in *Union Seminary Quarterly*, 20, (1964) pp. 39-48; John B. Cobb, Jr., *Beyond Dialogue: Toward A Mutual Transformation of Christianity and Buddhism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982); Jurgen Moltmann, "Christianity and the World Religions" in *Christianity and Other Religions*, ed. John H. Hick and Brian Hebblethwaite (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981) pp. 191-211; John H. Hick, *God Has Many Names* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982); Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978) and *Toward A World Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1981).

[4] Waldron Scott, "'No Other Name'—An Evangelical Conviction" in *Christ's Lordship and Religious Pluralism*, ed. Gerald H. Anderson and Thomas F. Stransky (New York: Orbis, 1981) p. 69.

[5] Roger Trigg, "Religion and the Threat of Relativism" in *Religious Studies*, 19, (1983) p. 297.

[6] For a good introduction to the current debate see the collection of essays in *Christ's Lordship and Religious Pluralism*. Paul Knitter, *No Other Name? A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes Toward the World Religions* (New York: Orbis, 1985) and Alan Race, *Christians and Religious Pluralism* (New York: Orbis, 1983), both recognize the centrality of christological issues and argue that any view which maintains the exclusivity, finality, or normativity of Jesus Christ must be rejected.

[7] Paul Knitter, *No Other Name?*, chapter 8. Other advocates of the theocentric model include John Hick, Raimundo Panikkar, John A.T. Robinson, Stanley Samartha, Alan Race, Monika Hellwig, Don Cupitt, and Rosemary Reuther.

[8] John Hick, *God Has Many Names*, p. 14.

[9] Idem, *God and the Universe of Faiths* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973).

[10] Idem, *God Has Many Names*, p. 36.

[11] Idem, "The Outcome: Dialogue Into Truth" in *Truth and Dialogue in World Religions: Conflicting Truth-Claims*, ed. John Hick (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974) p. 151.

[12] Idem, *God Has Many Names*, p. 48.

[13] Ibid., p. 19.

[14] Ibid., p. 75. See also Hick's "Jesus and the World Religions" in *The Myth of God Incarnate*, ed. John Hick (London: SCM Press, 1977) pp. 167-185.

[15] Idem, *God Has Many Names*, pp. 83, 18-19.

[16] For more on Hick's epistemology see his *Faith and Knowledge*, 2nd ed. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966); "Religious Faith as Experiencing-As" in *Talk of God*, ed. G.N.A. Vesey (New York: Macmillan, 1969); and Michael Goulder and John Hick, *Why Believe in God?* (London: SCM Press, 1983).

[17] John Hick, *God Has Many Names*, pp. 53, 83).

[18] For a more comprehensive critique of Hick's proposal see Harold Netland's "Professor Hick on Religious Pluralism," forthcoming in *Religious Studies*.

[19] See, for example, the collection of essays in *Incarnation and Myth: The Debate Continued*, ed. Michael Goulder (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979) and *The Truth of God Incarnate*, ed. Michael Green (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977).

[20] John Hick, *God Has Many Names*, p. 85.

[21] Ibid., pp. 24-25, 52, 78.

[22] For a concise and helpful introduction to the epistemological and ontological views of the major eastern religious traditions see Stuart C. Hackett, *Oriental Philosophy: A Westerner's Guide to Eastern Thought* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979).

[23] Donald Wiebe, in his important recent work, *Religion and Truth* (The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1981), strongly criticizes the strictly descriptivist approach to the study of religion for evading the question of truth. Genuine understanding of religious pluralism must confront the question of truth.

[24] On this see Paul Griffiths and Delmas Lewis, "On Grading Religions, Seeking Truth, and Being Nice to People—A Reply to Professor Hick" in *Religious Studies*, 19, (1983) p. 77. Jay Newman's *Foundations of Religious Tolerance* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982) is also very helpful.

[25] A good first step in this direction is the late Bishop Stephen Neill's *The Supremacy of Jesus* (Downer's Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1984).

[26] Bruce Demarest's *General Revelation: Historical Views and Contemporary Issues* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982) is helpful in this connection.

[27] Although evangelicals clearly reject universalism, not all evangelicals are agreed on how to answer this question. See Malcolm J. McVeigh, "The Fate of Those Who've Never Heard? It Depends" in *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, 21, (1985) pp. 370-379. A sampling of evangelical responses can be found in Harold Lindsell, "Fundamentals for a Philosophy of the Christian Mission" in *The Theology of the Christian Mission*, ed. Gerald Anderson (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961); J. Herbert Kane, *Christian Missions in Biblical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1976) p. 160f; Millard Erickson, "Hope for Those Who Haven't Heard? Yes, but . . ." in *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, 2, (1975) pp. 122-126; Norman Anderson, *Christianity and World Religions* (Downer's Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1984), pp. 145–161.

BOOK REVIEWS

Naming the Powers: The Language of Power in the New Testament

by Walter Wink (Fortress, 1984, 181 pp., $14.95). Reviewed by John H. Yoder, Department of Theology, University of Notre Dame.

Since the initial popular synthesis *Christ and the Powers* by Hendrik Berkhof (E.T. 1962) and more occasional uses by Jacques Ellul and Albert van den Heuvel, the Pauline "principalities and power" language has been used increasingly to express the ambivalence of value structures in human experience: structures which both make life possible and make it difficult. Those who do use this language seldom check out whether it has been demonstrated to be an adequate frame for theologically informed social analysis. The critics of this usage do not take the trouble—with the exception of one passage by John Stott—to make their case.

The "principalities, powers, thrones, etc . . ." are, in the minds of the apostolic writers, *either* real spiritual beings (in which case we cannot and need not deal with them, since we moderns know there can be no such things), *or* they are mythical images for real historical entities, and then we can with profit demythologize them and spare ourselves the spooky projections. This either/or is taken for granted as the name of the problem; no one doubts that that is the problem. Even the conservatives who want to affirm that such spiritual entities do exist do not do much theologically or practically about their meaningfulness for faith and life.

The achievement of the Wink survey is to destroy completely the either/or, on the basis of a meticulous reading of all the texts, not only in the New Testament but in the surrounding literatures.

The powers are both human and superhuman, both personifiable and structural, both visible and invisible, both in institutions and in the heart, both good and evil. Sometimes shades of difference of meaning can be discerned, as with *stoicheia* or *exousia* in the singular. More often their meanings overlap or they occur in near-synonymous strings. Sometimes the change is that they be sacralized, sometimes that they be secularized.

The demonstration is abundantly clear that there is in the New Testament—not only in the Pauline texts where Berkhof had found it emerging most clearly—a coherent and usable cosmology to describe the mysteries of creaturely fallenness and the Cross's Victory. The transition from the New Testament data to contemporary relevance is reserved for the other two volumes of Wink's promised trilogy. The hints already generously offered in this volume need therefore not be reviewed here. The value for guiding discernment in social analysis and ethics should be substantial.

The demonstration is least convincing at the point of the assumptions adopted uncritically from realms not under study. One notable weakness is the variety of meanings with which the word *demonic* is used. The other is the discussion of the sense in which the Powers' reality is "inward and outward" and how the "inward" component has no existence of its own. At both of these points Wink seems to slide back from the semantic and philosophical care that had been so productive in reading first century texts, to make a twentieth century "reality statement" which after all boils off some of the dimensions of the material due to the inadequacy of the "inner aspect" notion. The later volumes will have to fill this gap.

For now, the demonstration is convincing on purely scholarly grounds. The New Testament writers did think this way about the cultural/institutional dimension of creation, fall, and redemption. They took for granted (more than they taught it or declared it) that this cosmology, fluid yet clearly patterned, could describe the facts of both history and salvation. They did so with greater refinement (here the reviewer speaks) than the later theologians' systems of nature and grace, law and gospel, or the "orders of creation," to say nothing of post-enlightenment reductions. Whether we have to think that way because the apostles did is a question "evangelicals" will go on debating. Whether post-enlightenment minds *can* think that way, our apologetes and culture critics will still debate. Wink has provided them all the material they cannot avoid facing.

The Seeds of Secularization: Calvinism, Culture, and Pluralism in America, 1870-1915

by Gary Scott Smith (Christian University Press, 1985, 239 pp., $14.95). Reviewed by David Kling, Assistant Professor of History, Palm Beach Atlantic College.

Ever since Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr.'s groundbreaking article on "The Critical Period in American Religion" (1932-33), historians have recognized that between the Civil War and World War I Americans succumbed to and eventually embraced secularization—the loss of religion as a molding force in society. In this revised dissertation, Gary Scott Smith focuses on the origins and evolution of secular thought in America during this critical period and traces the response of Calvinistic thinkers to this profound change. After mapping out a useful typology of Calvinists ("consistently," "considerably," and "somewhat"), Smith elucidates Reformed answers to such secular "isms" as scientific and social Darwinism, ethical subjectivism, socialism, and a generic secular humanism. Calvinists not only defended their worldview against these competing ideologies, but also developed institutional responses to such threats. For example, they crusaded for Christian government by supporting the National Reform Association; they strongly advocated biblically centered public education; and they established social agencies for dealing with urban poverty and the

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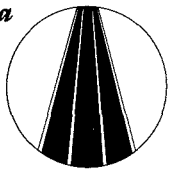
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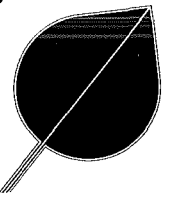
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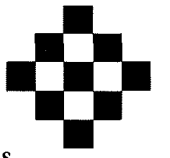
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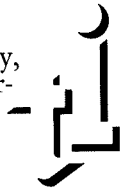

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Edited by John R. W. Stott and Basil Meeking

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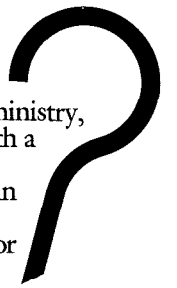
Jacob Firet



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related problems of industrialization.

Yet, according to Smith, the Calvinist response was fundamentally flawed. The Reformed community mistakenly believed that a Christian worldview should continue to dominate America's pluralistic culture. Victims of previous success (in America and elsewhere) and blinded to the pervasiveness of secular influences in America, Calvinists endorsed the coercion of non-Christians to their views. The results of their efforts proved disastrous, for in the name of religious neutrality, secularism (another faith) won the battle of competing ideologies.

Smith goes beyond historical analysis to offer an alternative approach. Throughout his work, he supports the theory of cultural pluralism whereby competing religious ideologies have equal rights in the public realm. That is, in a pluralistic society all faith communities should be given equal opportunity to promote their agendas in the public sphere. Smith considers unbiblical the efforts of Calvinists to build a political kingdom of God and usher in a distinctly Christian age.

This is a timely book. In his concluding chapter, Smith traces the advancement of secularism to the present, and argues that current Protestant groups (the Moral Majority, Religious Roundtable, and the Christian Voice) are repeating the same errors of nineteenth-century Calvinists. Such a strategy, he reasons, is divisive, intolerant, and lacks a biblical basis.

Smith's efforts at relevance, however, are a drawback to the book's structure and, at times, his style. He employs a "scissors and paste" organization where at the beginning and end of nearly every chapter he stresses the applicability of nineteenth-century issues for today. No doubt this is the liability of any dissertation revised for public consumption, yet his didactic approach does not mix well with straight historical analysis.

To Smith's credit, he ties together the disparate strands from previous chapters in his conclusion. Also, in his attempt to heighten the drama of the conflict, he borrows cliches and overworked metaphors. To mention a few: the "Calvinist fortress" was "continually bombarded" by the "artilleries of Arminians, liberals, and skeptics" (p. 34); or Calvinists built "dikes against the flood of secular sensibility" (p. 41)—a more appropriate metaphor for Abraham Kuyper's response in the Netherlands! Still, for those given to asking, "What's happened to a Christian America, and what can be done about it?" Smith's thoroughly researched book is a recommended primer.

The Identity of Christianity
by Steven Sykes (Fortress, 1984, 349 pp., $21.95). Reviewed by Geoffrey M. Bromiley, Senior Professor of Church History and Historical Theology, Fuller Theological Seminary.

This book is by one of the brightest of new Anglican scholars and one distinguished for his knowledge of the European field. Having previously tackled the integrity of Anglicanism, he now boldly takes up the identity of Christianity, his new term for the older "essence." Singling out the three perspectives of conflict, inwardness, and power from which to survey the terrain, he devotes the body of the work to six modern theologians (Schleiermacher, Newman, Harnack, Loisy, Troeltsch, and Barth), and finally attempts some conclusions by way of an analysis, a discussion of unity, and an assessment of the role of worship.

Sykes brings to his work an impressive erudition, originality of insight, clarity of expression, and no little skill in exposition. His three perspectives have obvious relevance, his accounts of the chosen figures are informative, and he has some interesting if not very precise or compelling suggestions.

Yet, although students can learn from the book, one can hardly say that it is more successful than his earlier effort to present Anglican integrity. The initial perspectives have a restrictive effect on the historical exposition. The discussion of power neither bears much relation to its biblical use nor is such as to evoke anything but scorn from an expert in institutions like Jacques Ellul. The individual analyses are not wholly convincing. (What would Barth think of being called "so radical a representative of the inwardness tradition" on p. 207?) The features of continuity, e.g., on pp 245 ff., are so generalized as not to serve any very useful purposes; they do not even mention Christ, and even when filled out a little they hardly bear the weight that Sykes wants to place on them (pp. 251ff.). At the end the book seems to beg a lot of questions when it commends the disputes of theologians so long as they "continue recognizably to be disputing about one and the same thing" and participate in public worship (p. 286)!

More seriously the work proves to be disappointing on four counts. First, it does not give proper attention to the ecumenically accepted role of faith in Scripture, cavalierly dismissing it because of hermeneutical division. Second, it does not reckon sufficiently with the fact of history that almost always and everywhere the churches have focused their instruction on the same basic documents. Third, it fails to relate Christian identity to the evangelistic and missionary task of the church with its kerygmatic requirements. Whatever the case may be with academics, believers who fulfill their New Testament commission may differ in detail but usually get to the heart of the matter, whether in simple or more sophisticated forms.

Fourth and finally, the work does not even raise what is perhaps the most pressing of all the issues of Christian identity, namely, the problem of differentiating the central and the peripheral or adiaphoristic when Christianity makes its way into other regions and comes to expression in new and different cultures, as it has always had to do throughout its history. Here, if anywhere, Christians need theological guidance as they seek to protect the message from assimilation while not perpetuating forms of thought, life, or expression that are merely incidental to it. In this book, however, they will find at best only the most indirect and indefinite of assistance.

Letters to the Editor

TSF Bulletin welcomes letters to the editor. We especially enjoy those that carry on creative dialogue with material we've published. Send your letters to the Editor, TSF Bulletin, P.O. Box 7895, Madison, WI 53707-7895.

Anglicanism and the Bible
edited by Frederick Houk Borsch (Morehouse Barlow, 1984, 261 pp., $7.95). Reviewed by the Rev. Dr. Kenneth J. Wissler, Church Development Consultant, and Priest-in-Residence at St. Alban's Episcopal Church, Wilmington, Delaware.

Anglicanism and the Bible is a collection of six essays edited by Frederick H. Borsch, Dean of the Chapel and Professor of Religion at Princeton University, as part of the Anglican study series. The contributors discuss the importance, place, and function of the Bible within the Anglican tradition.

Within this framework, each contributor addresses a particular concern: William P. Haugaard, Professor of Church History at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, provides an historical sketch of the use and translation of the Bible in the English Church from the Middle Ages to the publication of the King James Bible in 1611. Marion J. Hatchett, Professor of Liturgics and Music at the School of Theology, University of the South, demonstrates through an analysis of various Prayer Books and lectionaries how Anglican worship and spiritual practice are informed by and steeped in Scripture. John E. Booty, Dean of the School of Theology, University of the South, describes how the Bible influenced and was used by the various missionaries and reformers of the 18th and 19th centuries. Reginald H. Fuller, Professor of New Testament at Virginia Theological Seminary, relates the stormy road to acceptance and respectability travelled by the various schools of criticism of the 19th and 20th centuries. W. Taylor Stevenson, Professor of Philosophical Theology at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, outlines what he believes to be the proper relationship between Scripture and science. Through a closely and carefully reasoned analysis of the proper scope and task of each discipline, Prof. Stevenson finds not only no conflict but a shared task to discover truth. He also sounds a prophetic note of warning against the modern idolatry of scientism, which cloaks the spiritual/religious quest in scientific language to provide (pseudo-) scientific answers to religious ques-

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tions. Frederick H. Bouk concludes the collection by describing the relationship between the Bible and the Church as one of dialectic dialogue: while the Bible informs the faith of the Church, it is the Community of Faith which in turn informs the reading and interpretation of Scripture. While such an approach may be open-ended and at times ambiguous, the very nature of the Bible demands it.

As the title of this book suggests, it is written by Anglicans primarily for an Anglican audience. Other than students, historians, and liturgists, few non-Anglicans would probably find this book of great interest. This should not be surprising since the book was written as part of the Anglican Study Series. With this in mind, the six contributors accomplish their purpose admirably. However, the last two articles make valuable contributions beyond this limited scope: at a time when Christians of all traditions are wrestling with the relationship between religion and science and the place of Scripture in the modern world, the article by Prof. Stevenson calls for a clear understanding of the separate but equally necessary place of both Scripture and science without the one co-opting the concerns and quests of the other, while the last article calls for a return to the Bible as providing a method and guide for the religious/spiritual quest in a modern world.

Anglicans who read this book would come away with a greater appreciation for the part the Bible has played in the formation of Anglican practice; they would also have a deeper understanding of the Anglican Church as a church which is as biblical as any church of the Reformation. In this sense, this book takes the Anglican Church one more step toward the rediscovery of her roots and purpose.

As a collection of articles, the book hangs together very well. Each article logically proceeds to the next, and the reader receives the impression that each contributor was very much aware of the contributions of the others. This serves to assist the reader in following the common thread of the theme of the book.

Dictionary of Christian Theology
by Peter Angeles (Harper & Row, 1985, 210 pp., $17.95). Reviewed by Ray S. Anderson, Professor of Theology and Ministry, Fuller Theological Seminary.

This small (as far as theological dictionaries go) and concisely written volume covers more than one thousand core terms and topics. Written to aid the non-specialist reader, this dictionary seeks to bridge the gap between large, more scholarly works and more "popularly" written dictionaries.

The content ranges over a broad field, giving definitions to core theological terms, biblical and historical figures and events, important texts, symbols, rites, religious movements, and theological and philosophical concepts. No bibliographic references or resources are listed.

The author, professor of philosophy at Santa Barbara City College in California, intends that the dictionary be used as an "enjoyable, quick at-hand reference and a beginning to advanced work in the field of Christian religion and theology." In the main, it accomplishes its purpose.

As with any dictionary produced by a single author, however, the listings tends to be selective and some of the definitions so nontechnical as to be misleading. For example, while there are listings for Calvinism and Lutheranism, there are none for Arminianism or Wesleyanism. While there is a listing for infallibility there is none for inerrancy, which ignores a matter of great concern to many contemporary Christians.

Under the heading of theology, there is a definition of liberal theology, but not of orthodox theology, nor neo-orthodox theology, nor evangelical theology. There is a listing of conservative theology, for which the reader is advised to see the definition for Fundamentalism.

Some definitions simply fail through reduction to the lowest common denominator. Incarnation, for example, is explained as, "God becomes human for the purpose of humanizing mankind with the Christ-Spirit." Under the heading of Evangelism, we are given one sentence: "Actively preaching or promulgating the GOSPELS—the word of Jesus Christ—usually in the hope of conversion of others or revitalization of the HOLY SPIRIT."

On occasion, a definition misses the mark completely. Under Predestination, for example, we are correctly told that this is the belief that God has foreordained every event

that has happened, is happening and will happen. Double predestination is then explained by stating: "If God does cause a change in the predetermined plans for things, then this too was predetermined by God, which is in effect 'double predestination' or 'double predetermination.'" The failure to inform us that double predestination for most Calvinists means that God has two decrees—one for salvation and one for reprobation—may be accounted for by the fact that there is no listing for Decree!

For those who have very little knowledge of the vocabulary of Christian doctrine and the historical tradition, this dictionary cannot help but inform. For those who are more serious about the study of Christian faith and doctrine, there are a variety of other dictionaries more substantial and resourceful.

Creeds, Society, and Human Rights: A Study in Three Cultures
by Max Stackhouse (Eerdmans, 1984, 315 pp., $19.95). Reviewed by Esther Byle Bruland, doctoral student in Religion and Society at Drew University and co-author of *A Passion for Jesus, A Passion for Justice.*

General misconceptions and disagreements regarding the roots and fabric of human rights indicate necessary work to be done by Christian ethicists. In *Creeds, Society, and Human Rights* Max Stackhouse has devoted himself to that vital task. He writes, "The phrase 'human rights' implies a universal ethic which claims that they *ought* to be believed and observed everywhere by everyone." However, "at present, human rights are not universal in either the sense that everyone believes in them or the sense that they are everywhere observed in social practice" (p. x). Nor, according to Stackhouse, is there a universal consensus as to what is human or what is right.

The motivating questions of the book, then, are the following: "What are the conceptual and social conditions which make such a universalistic ethic viable? What kinds of 'creeds' and what kinds of social patterns support belief in and action upon universalistic values? What kinds of metaphysical-moral visions allow people to respond to human problems in economic, political, educational, familial, and other relations by cultivating a social order conducive to human rights?" (p. x).

With these evaluative questions in mind, Stackhouse examines three cultures, the United States, East Germany, and India. By means of longitudinal and cross-sectional analyses he assesses their conceptions of human rights and the amount of social space allowed for defining, claiming, and preserving these rights.

Creeds, Society, and Human Rights makes a major contribution in three areas. In the area of methodology, Stackhouse has developed a device for cross-sectional study of societies which he calls a "map of institutional sectors of society based on universal human needs" (p. 18). The map facilitates charting the significance, functions, and interrelations of the various sectors. Its range includes interpersonal, collective, and civilizational structures; individual as well as intersocietal dimensions; and material, associational, and ideational levels of society. Stackhouse uses the map to portray the variations among the three cultures studied in the amount and significance of institutional space devoted to upholding human rights.

Stackhouse puts the descriptive powers of the social sciences in the employ of ethical analysis. He carefully diagnoses the cultural "is" before moving to the ethical "ought." In addition to cross-sectional examination, Stackhouse presents longitudinal descriptions of the three cultures. The descriptive studies which result form a second major contribution of the book.

Care of Souls in the Classic Tradition
by Thomas C. Oden (Fortress, 1984, 128 pp., $5.95). Reviewed by Matthew Floding, M.Div. student, McCormick Theological Seminary.

In this brief but important study Thomas Oden calls pastors and teachers and students of pastoral care to reconsider the rich pastoral legacy of Gregory the Great (A.D. 540-604).

In chapter one, Oden argues the need for such reconsideration by documenting the current amnesia in regard to the classical tradition. His research indicates that since the

1920s, pastoral care has moved increasingly toward accommodation to modern psychological theory. "Pastoral theology has become in many cases little more than a thoughtless mimic of the most current psychological trends." Oden believes there is an emerging hunger for classical wisdom. He does not disparage modern psychology altogether. Rather, he argues convincingly for a "neoclassical approach to Christian pastoral care that takes seriously the resources of modernity while also penetrating its illusions."

In chapter two, Oden introduces Gregory. This valuable section highlights those critical formative experiences which shaped Gregory's outlook as pastor and pope. For Protestants who may only associate Gregory's name with a form of church music it will be helpful to be reminded of a few of his many significant accomplishments. Included among these are the instigation of the mission to England as well as writing his remarkable *Pastoral Care* which provided the model for pastoral care over the next millenia.

In the final two chapters, Oden presents an analysis of Gregory's intriguing series of paradoxical case studies of the diversities of pastoral counsel. The case studies examine personality traits that appear as polarities, e.g. timidity/assertiveness and patience/impatience. These studies reveal Gregory's appreciation of the paradoxical and ironic within the human personality as well as his concern for a variable practice of ministry that is responsive to the needs of the individual parishioner. This ministry, Gregory insisted, must mirror Christ's care for us. Most important, however, is Oden's examination of Gregory's use of the Bible applied to the pastoral counseling situation. Gregory appealed to biblical examples in every case as paradigms for personal growth and building positive relationships.

The value of this book is really threefold. First, it calls the Christian counseling community to be self-critical in its appropriation of modern psychotherapies. The reader will sense something of the personal pilgrimage that Oden himself has made. Secondly, it recovers the valuable contributions of Gregory the Great for consideration by the Church today. Some readers may suspect, however, that Oden makes Gregory out to be a twentieth century Protestant at points. Thirdly, *Care of Souls in the Classic Tradition* encourages pastoral, theological and historical integration in pastoral care. This book should be required reading for students of pastoral care. It will also be greatly appreciated by those caregivers who wish to be introduced to a rich resource of time-tested wisdom.

Old Testament Criticism in the Nineteenth Century: England and Germany
by John Rogerson (Fortress, 1985, 320 pp., $29.95). Reviewed by Mark A. Noll, Professor of History, Wheaton College.

John Rogerson, head of the department of biblical studies at Sheffield University in England, is well-known for his historical and exegetical studies in the Old Testament. With this book he goes beyond an examination of the Old Testament itself to study those in the nineteenth century who were so important in the introduction of modern critical scholarship to the Anglo-Saxon world. Rogerson tells the story of advancing critical scholarship in Germany during the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century, when scholars like de Wette, Vatke, Ewald, and eventually Wellhausen began radically to reinterpret the nature of Old Testament history, religion, and ethics. He then shifts to England and traces the acceptance of generally critical positions, an acceptance that was slower and more cautious than in Germany. Especially interesting to readers of *TSF Bulletin* will be the sections on German confessionalists who first responded with much skepticism to the new critical conclusions (e.g., Hengstenberg), but who then tempered traditional attitudes to the Bible with a relative openness to newer philosophical and historical views (e.g., Delitzsch).

Biblical scholars will have to judge whether Rogerson has succeeded in capturing the inner nature of his story. For historians, the book offers a valuable summary of ways in which German scholarship sustained a looser relationship to established academic traditions, and a closer relationship to the latest speculations in philosophy, than was the case in England. Off-hand comments on the academic settings in which the biblical scholarship took place also illuminate the importance of intellectual environments for the conclusions of academics. The book may be faulted for stressing academic, philosophical, and attitudinal environments at the expense of the theological. Many of the innovations that the Germans treated simply as the discoveries of research or the causal application of philosophical speculation were in fact complex propositions affecting deeply

embedded, and very well attested theological convictions. The result is that the nineteenth-century innovators in biblical scholarship, who presented themselves as the vanguard of sophisticated academic work, displayed a naiveté about the revolutionary character of their conclusions which, to a limited extent, Rogerson also shares. In spite of this limitation, he has written a good book worthy of serious consideration. There is also a useful bibliography.

Wisdom and Spirit
by James A. Davis (University Press of America, 1984, 258 pp., $13.50). Reviewed by Edwin Yamauchi, Professor of History, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio.

The subtitle of this volume, "An Investigation of 1 Corinthians 1:18-3:20 Against the Background of Jewish Sapiential Traditions in the Greco-Roman Period," accurately depicts the subject of Professor Davis' 1982 doctoral dissertation, written at Nottingham under James D. G. Dunn.

Davis (pp. 4, 117) joins a growing number of scholars (e.g. S. Arai, H. Conzelmann, R. McL. Wilson, F. Wisse) who have opposed the "Gnostic" interpretation of Paul's opponents, maintained by W. Schmithals, K. Rudolph, and G. MacRae. His work is especially indebted to the Philonic researches of B. Pearson and R. A. Horsley.

His monograph is divided in two main sections: I. Wisdom and Spirit in Pre-Christian Judaism, and II. Wisdom and Spirit in 1 Corinthians. In the first part he analyzes the characteristics of "wisdom" in Sirach, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and Philo. In the light of the admittedly infrequent occurrence of the words *hokmah* "wisdom" and *hakam* "wise" in the scrolls, one wonders how central the concept of wisdom could have been at Qumran. He does not deal in depth with the "Wisdom of Solomon."

He concludes that common features of Jewish wisdom include: 1) there is a link between wisdom and Torah, 2) there are different levels of attainment of wisdom, 3) the highest level is attained by those inspired by the help of the Spirit, and 4) in Sirach and Philo the sage is marked out by eloquence.

After a thorough exegesis of 1 Corinthians 1:18-3:20, Davis concludes: "Thus, in his critique of the manifestation of wisdom at Corinth, Paul may be seen to concentrate on precisely those features which were earlier found to be characteristic of Jewish wisdom traditions in the Greco-Roman era: a nomistic emphasis, a tendency to distinguish between individuals in regard to their possession of wisdom, and a stress upon eloquence as a quality of the person gifted by God to understand, interpret, and impart wise guidance and teaching" (p. 143). In opposition, Paul represents the wisdom of God centered in the cross as the only true wisdom.

Instead of the retrojection of later Gnostic concepts, Davis has presented a most helpful and persuasive discussion of pre-Christian Jewish texts which illuminates the controversy over wisdom at Corinth.

Within the compass of the author's aims many subsidiary questions were not discussed which might be raised: for example, the impact of Greek philosophy on Philo, or the role of Greco-Roman rhetoric on someone like Apollos. Nor is there any reference to the concept of wisdom, e.g. in James 3:13-16, or any discussion of rabbinic materials.

There are some surprising omissions in an otherwise extensive bibliography (pp. 229-57). The lack of indices is to be regretted. There is an excessive number of misspellings and a lamentable use of diacritical marks, which are either omitted or sometimes wrongly inserted over French and German words (e.g. pp. 58, 73, 90, 119, 155, 159, 166, 179, 189, 198, 216, 221, 222, 231, 233, 236, 237, 238, 239, 243, 247, 248, 249, 252, 253, 257).

The Faith of Christians: An Introduction to Basic Beliefs
by Denis Baly and Royal W. Rhodes (Fortress, 1983, 245 pp., $14.95). Reviewed by Randy L. Maddox, Assistant Professor of Religion, Sioux Falls College, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

While this work employs the traditional structure of treating theological loci, it is the product of a rather innovative approach. Each chapter was originally presented as a working draft to a group of twenty interested students. The reactions and criticisms of these students were taken into account in the final draft. In those cases where there were significant differences between the various contributors, the majority opinion was adopted in the text and the minority views stated in the notes.

This approach has the strength of producing a text understandable to contemporary students. The chapter on Christians and Society is an excellent example. Likewise, this approach allows the reader to sense areas of disagreement in Christian circles. Here, the best example is the chapter on the Authority of Scripture.

At the same time, this approach has a deeply troubling aspect. Is it methodologically sound for the majority opinion of those who are admittedly novices in theological studies to determine the content of basic Christian beliefs? Are the authors serious that it was not their aim to tell the students "what they ought to believe" (p. viii)? If so, that may explain some of the characteristics, tensions, and limitations apparent in the text.

One of the most defining characteristics of the text is the majority option for the "liberal view" of biblical authority which treats the biblical material as culturally influenced and, therefore, less inspired in some parts than in others. The ramifications of this view are evident in several doctrinal discussions. Perhaps the clearest example is the discussion of heaven and hell where the majority view opts for a type of ultimate universalism *despite* the solid biblical foundation for the alternative (p. 163)!

However, there is a tension in this commitment to the liberal view. It is seen most

clearly in the intriguing and unsubstantiated argument that, while the New Testament authors used masculine language for God, they did not *intend* to attribute gender to God (p. 33). The implication drawn is that we can continue to use masculine language about God today as long as we are clear on our non-sexist intent. Usually, such distinctions are found only among those concerned to defend the biblical view as timeless and plenarily inspired! All this suggests the text would have been strengthened by a more nuanced discussion and utilization of biblical authority.

A clear limitation of the text is its lack of discussion of the sacraments and the diverging approaches to sacraments in the Christian tradition. Likewise, one could question the apparent identification of original sin with being human *per se* (p. 134), and the abstract approach to defining God's attributes (p. 36).

A final limitation would be the overidentification of the Spirit with the Church (see Chapter Eight). This identification has been challenged by much recent doctrinal reflection. At the heart of this reflection is a sensitivity to the presence of the Spirit in other religions, which seemms to be a preferable alternative to talk of God being incarnate (*sic*) in other religions (p. 188).

In general, the work is well-written, provocative, and helpful. However, it will be less appealing to the conservative and evangelical communities.

The Story of Christianity, Volume I: The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation
by Justo L. Gonzalez (Harper & Row, 1984, 429 pp., $12.95). Reviewed by Tim Daniel, Associate Pastor, Trinity Baptist Church, Wheatridge, Colorado.

This thorough and readable account of the Church's development from its infancy to the Reformation reveals the heart of a true historian. Justo Gonzalez takes history personally. He sees history as his own, as the antecedent of who he now is. For Gonzalez our heritage colors the way each Christian from whatever tradition interprets Scripture, relates to the local church and lives out his or her Christianity. To be aware of our historical biases, says the author, is the only way to be in some measure free to look beyond them. Such historical awareness is found at the base of any period of renewal, as Christians display the courage to confront their traditions anew with the Scripure.

The author asserts that Christianity is essentially a historical faith. It was born and grew as a real human movement impacted by all the forces that define other histories. His thrust is that the story of Christianity is just that—a great story. It has a plot, rich characters, and background forces that press themselves onto the stage. Gonzalez' approach is refreshing as it presents the story of the Church not as a sacred, lofty legend set in a mythical land, but as a dynamic, complex human drama like any other. Here the history of Christianity reads as real and believable as a history of World War II.

This is not to say that Gonzalez sees the story as only a human one. Rather he sees church history as the continuation of the book of Acts. It is the record of the deeds of the Holy Spirit through men and women of faith through the ages. It is a divine purpose worked out through a thoroughly earthly medium, the Church.

To accomplish his purpose of telling this story in real terms, Gonzalez presents the events of the New Testament and subsequent eras through rubrics familiar to readers of *Time* magazine. By so doing he provides relevant handles on what was happening in each period. For example, the birth of the Church in Palestine is seen in the wider context of a Jewish-Hellenistic cultural struggle, in which Alexander governments were attempting to impose Greek culture on the Jewish community. In this light, the Pharisees suddenly spring from the pages of Scripture as more than just arch-typical enemies of good. They are devout Jews concerned with preserving revealed truth from compromise by applying the law in everyday situations. From this perspective many of the conflicts in the New Testament make more sense. These were logical and inevitable reactions of two poles of

opinion, not unlike those in our religious community today. Their world was as complex as our own.

This text is thorough enough to provide a good reader for most survey courses. Gonzalez covers the background of Christianity's birth in Palestinian Judaism, the Diaspora and the Greco-Roman empire. He includes a unique chapter on what happened to the Church in Jerusalem after Acts. There is a chapter on the mission of the Church to the Gentiles with an interesting look at facts and legends about the apostles. He deals with the Church's conflict with Judaism and the Empire, giving unique insights into the government's policy toward Christians following Trajan's edict. He covers the apologists, the forming of the creeds and the lives of leading Christian teachers. He details the final centuries of persecution and the daily life of the Church, including a glimpse of early Christian art.

In Part II the author chronicles the development of the Imperial Church and the impact of Constantine. He describes the origin of monasticism in reaction to official Christianity and the development of the Donatist schism. Gonzalez tells the story fleshed out in the lives of people. The Arian controversy is painted in full color around the lives of men like Athanasius. This method is used to cover the eras of the Cappadocians, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Jerome and Augustine.

Gonzalez turns from a narrative centered around men to a sweeping survey of the new order these men had founded. Part III describes Medieval Christianity from the Barbarian Kingdoms and the Papacy to the Eastern Church. The author deals with Charlemagne, reform movements, the Crusades, Scholasticism, the Renaissance and the rumblings of Reformation. Part IV is a unique and fascinating look at Colonial Christianity promoted by the Spanish and Portuguese crowns in the New World.

Dr. Gonzalez tells the story in short, quick-moving chapters with smooth transitions. The reader wants to read on. It *is* an exciting story! The author provides a workable framework for each major development so that it makes sense. The reader feels the drama and the intertwined forces impacting Christians in each period. This work assumes some familiarity with theological and ecclesiastical terms. It may not be the best reader for a layperson but would suit the bored student or busy pastor well.

Christian Dogmatics, Vol. 1 & 2
edited by Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson (Fortress, 1984, 569 pp./621 pp., $49.90). Reviewed by Richard A. Muller, Associate Professor of Historical Theology, Fuller Theological Seminary.

Theology must be written anew for each generation. Moreover, it must be written with close attention both to the voice of the church speaking to us through the traditional reading of biblical doctrines and to the voice of the present, performing its faithful task of communicating the biblical revelation in the light of contemporary scholarship. *Christian Dogmatics*, written by a team of Lutheran theologians under the editorship of Carl Braaten and Robert Jenson, is a significant attempt at contemporary theological statement, resting on a clear grasp of problems and issues confronting theology today.

The fact that the volumes are written by a team of authors rather than a single theologian results in a wide range of approaches to theology and, at times, in somewhat disconcerting shifts in perspective and presuppositions. Jenson's discussion of the Trinity manifests a strong use of the fathers, particularly the Cappadocians, while Braaten's Christology, not as favorable toward patristic materials, manifests a willingness to wrestle with contemporary problems confronting Christology. Together, Braaten and Jenson represent a Hegelian interest that is not nearly so evident in the *loci* by Sponheim, Forde and Hefner; while Braaten in particular reveals an admiration for the theological perspectives of Pannenberg.

Although it is not possible to survey all twelve of the *loci* of this *Dogmatics* in one review, some detailed review of select topics seems appropriate. Forde's essay on justification stands out as a fine discussion of this crucial doctrine. Both the Pauline foundations and Luther's unique contribution to Protestant exegesis are carefully described and then expertly drawn into dialogue with contemporary issues. Forde well shows the dangers of post-Kantian and post-Freudian tendencies to "psychologize" this doctrine—as if justification were not an objective, forensic, and totally gracious act of God. Forde also rather nicely brings Luther's language of *simul justus et peccator*—at once justified and a sinner—to bear upon the problem of the relationship of justification to sanctification. We are sanctified, but nonetheless *peccatores*. Underlying this generally sound discussion, however, there is an element of distaste for traditional or scholastic Lutheran dogmatics and its schematized *ordo salutis* that evidences an unwillingness to recognize the problem of moving from the rather existential character of Luther's thought to a systematic statement of the meaning of justification in the context of other elements of Christian life—where, as the Lutheran scholastics recognized, there is good reason to ask questions concerning the logical, causal or temporal succession of such things as grace, calling, faith, justification and sanctification.

Braaten's christological locus very clearly views the theological world as taking form in the aftermath of neo-orthodoxy and, frequently, in the terms announced by Pannenberg. This approach has both negative and positive results. Negatively, Braaten's discussion of the "historicity of God" attempts to juxtapose ontological categories associated with "Greek" thought with the historical perspective of the "Hebrew" mind. Not only has recent scholarship made this kind of juxtaposition less than acceptable, there is also no genuine biblical or Hebraic basis for moving from a sense of the historical character of God's revelation to a notion of God himself

as historical. This latter idea rests primarily on the vaguely Hegelian assumptions of Pannenberg's theology. On the positive side, Braaten does encapsulate nicely the problem of the starting point or "root" of Christology—whether the historical Jesus, the resurrection as event, or the kerygma of the early church—and points toward a synthesis of the various views in a historical Christology resting on the issue of the "personal identity" of Jesus. In this portion of the discussion, we find an important presentation of biblical and churchly materials as they point toward contemporary issues and formulation.

One last example: Schwartz's discussion of the Word in relation to sacraments and under the more general rubric "The Means of Grace" provides sound contemporary insight into the typically Lutheran conjunction of the living Word preached with the efficacious grace of the sacraments. The perception offered here of the divine presence in the life of the church is one that Protestants outside of the Lutheran tradition will do well to heed: the doctrine of the Word of God needs to be more than an examination of objective "properties" of the biblical text! Schwartz includes in his discussion a salutory statement concerning the way in which the form of biblical revelation, culminating in Christ, does not negate but rather transforms philosophical and metaphysical conceptions of the essence and attributes of God. Nevertheless, we also find here the influence of Pannenberg's rather one-sided and aprioristic view of revelation as indirectly given in history, to the exclusion both of theophany and direct propositional statement. We certainly agree that much of the language of the Bible is not logically propositional or descriptively direct, but we would also recognize that direct, even propositional, statement does also occur in Scripture.

By way of conclusion, I would suggest that these volumes, particularly in the light of their traditionally Lutheran title and their adoption of the traditional *locus*-method of exposition, would have done well to maintain a closer dialogue with the Lutheran dogmatic tradition, not only of the seventeenth, but also of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The authors do appreciate and occasionally critique the systematizing efforts of seventeenth century giants like Johann Gerhard, but they make no reference at all to the American bearers of the orthodox Lutheran tradition, C. F. W. Walther, Franz Pieper, Conrad Lindberg. I would not claim that Christians today can easily adopt all of the arguments and conventions of these older thinkers, but their writings do continue to be a source of sound definition and well-conceived traditional statement of doctrine that ought not to be ignored by anyone attempting to write dogmatics in the classic sense of the term. The great problem facing contemporary efforts like the Braaten-Jenson *Dogmatics* is that its orientation toward issues, in the absence of clearer rootage in the tradition of Lutheran dogmatics, becomes the controlling factor in theology. In this case, the appeal of Pannenberg and Hegelian metaphysics may not only limit the present usefulness of the volumes but may also result in the ultimate failure of this dogmatics to maintain its audience when the current interest in Pannenberg fades and Hegelianism once again joins the ranks of defunct metaphysical systems.

BOOK COMMENTS

Crumbling Foundations: Death and Rebirth in an Age of Upheaval
by Donald G. Bloesch (Zondervan, 1984, 168 pp., $6.95).

Prolific evangelical theologian Donald Bloesch gives us an exercise in what he calls "social prophecy," by attempting to bring modern culture and the church under biblical scrutiny. The work is more a manifesto than a treatise; more a tract than a monograph.

Bloesch is inspired to preach the integrity of the gospel in an age of compromise. His tone is consistently sermonic, *warning* us of "technocratic humanism" (with repeated reference to Ellul), ideological captivity (either to the left or the right), secularism, nihilism, totalitarian government, neo-occultism, etc., and *exhorting* us to remain biblically faithful.

Bloesch is a synthesizer; he quotes and refers to countless sources from a broad variety of social and theological perspectives. For instance, we find several footnoted references to the conservative writer R.J. Rushdoony (who is usually ignored by established theologians). Yet Bloesch also cites several books published by Orbis, a leading publisher of liberation theology (Bloesch is, though, critical of liberation theology).

Sometimes this synthetic approach is profitable and legitimately catholic, culling insights from a wide variety of sources and avoiding the narrowness of constrictive ideology. Other times catholicity gives way to vagueness and a blurring of focus because too many ideas have been thrown together without sufficient development, clarification, and analysis.

Crumbling Foundations is a call to biblical fidelity and integrity. But the call seems a bit muffled and too general to direct our steps very specifically.

—Doug Groothuis

Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook
by John H. Hayes and Carl R. Holladay (John Knox Press, 1982, 132 pp., $6.95).

Hayes and Holladay, Old Testament and New Testament professors respectively at Emory University, divide their 132-page handbook into ten chapters (each of which contains a helpful reference bibliography): 1) Introducing Exegesis; 2) Textual Criticism; 3) Historical Criticism; 4) Grammatical Criticism; 5) Literary Criticism; 6) Form Criticism; 7) Tradition Criticism; 8) Redaction Criticism; 9) Integrating Exegetical Procedures; 10) Employing the Fruits of Biblical Exegesis.

The book is not a guide or manual per se, but does provide clear discussions of the various criticisms, including discussions of how individual passages might, in general, be exegeted according to one critical method or another. The authors are critics in every sense and their assumptions about the composition, transmission and editing of biblical materials are those normally associated with the left wing of biblical scholarship. This naturally affects their methodology, as illustrated in the chapter on Redaction Criticism: ". . . or if a text appears not to be taking up a previous biblical tradition and reinterpreting it, in these instances, *try as one may*, one cannot demonstrate that an author or editor has redacted anything [italics mine]" (p. 95). How much one tries to find redaction, of course, is bound to make a rather big difference in how much one finds.

As an explication of current critical presuppositions, procedural theories, and analytical styles, the book is very valuable. Its audience is mainly the theological student, who in any case would still require a further guidebook of some sort actually to produce a full-blown exegetical paper.

—Douglas Stuart

Nuclear Pacifism: "Just War" Thinking Today
by Edward J. Laarman (Peter Lang, 1984, 210 pp., $20.95).

Originally a Ph.D. dissertation for the University of Notre Dame, Edward Laarman's book is a closely reasoned analysis of Christian just war theory as it applies to modern war. While Laarman is from a Reformed

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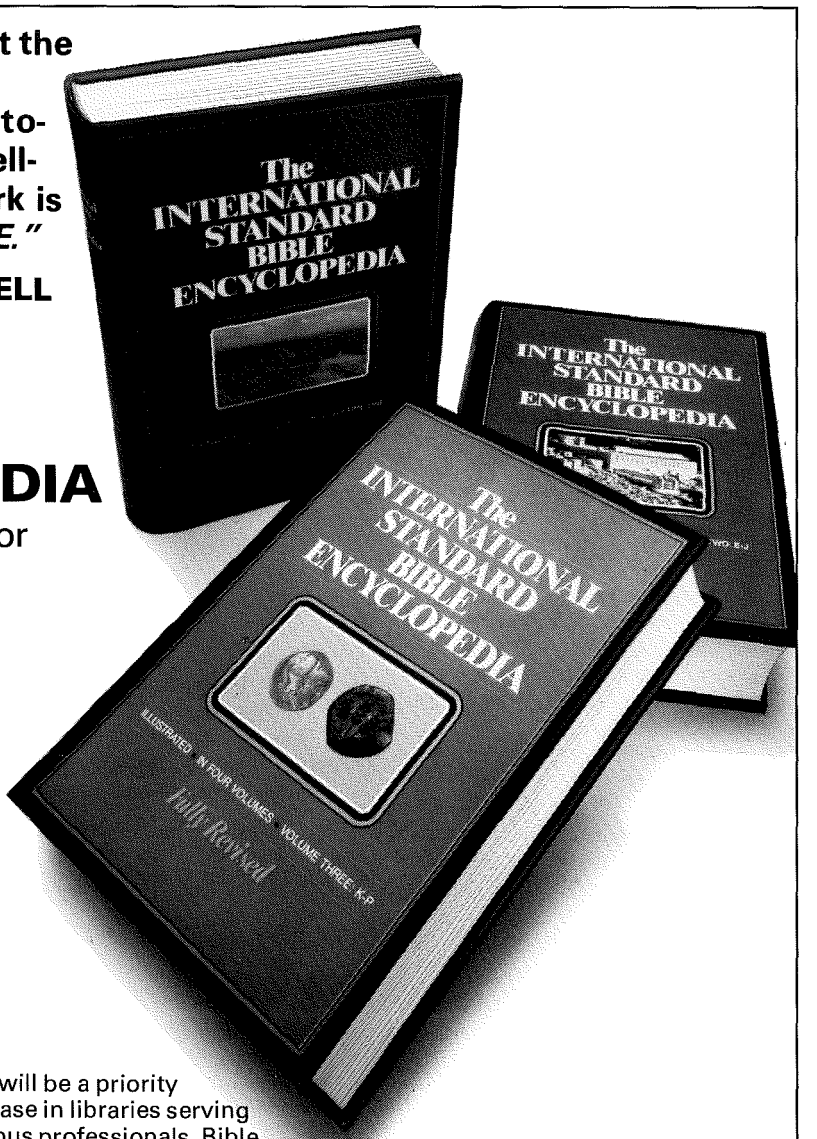

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tradition (B.A., B.D., Calvin), his theological roots lie with his teachers John H. Yoder and Stanley Hauerwas. Nevertheless, this is not a pacifist critique of just war theory, but a careful examination of the debate between different kinds of just war theory.

It is not Laarman's purpose to question the basic assumptions of just war theory, but to examine the success or failure of their application to nuclear deterrence and war. Laarman focuses on the two major just war criteria of discrimination (between combatants and non-combatants) and proportionality. He then examines how these criteria are used by three modern streams of theologians who locate themselves in the just war tradition.

These include "nuclear pacifists," such as Walter Stein, who call for unilateral disarmament; counterforce advocates, such as Paul Ramsey, who justify both deterrence and the use of nuclear weapons as long as only military installations are targeted; and those such as J. Bryan Hehir who believe nuclear weapons may never be morally used, but that nuclear possession and "bluff" may be justified for the sake of deterrence. Laarman concludes that nuclear pacifists are most faithful to the just war tradition.

This book is not for casual reading. Laarman shows an admirable grasp of a wide range of materials and depicts opposing viewpoints very fairly. His casuistry is impressive. Laarman's primary readers will be scholars (who may disagree at points) and students who are seriously interested in modern just war theory.

—Bernard T. Adeney

Christianity: A Way of Salvation
by Sandra S. Frankiel (Harper & Row, 1985, 135 pp., $6.95).

This book is overly brief for what it tries to do. Unlike the two earlier volumes in this series (Religious Traditions of the World: *Religions of Japan* and *Religions of Africa*), this volume attempts to do too much. Chapter 1 is the Introduction and sets forth the purpose of the book. The next two chapters are the book's weak points. Chapter 2—Historical Development of Christianity—only deals with the Western Church, which is a serious weakness. There is a rich vein in Christianity from our non-Western brothers and sisters and this is completely lacking. The book gives the impression that we are only a Western religion, which is far from the case. Chapter 3—Structures of Christian Life—is factually correct as far as it goes, but it is fatally incomplete. It introduces data and leaves it hanging. For example, she writes out the Roman, Apostles' and Nicene Creeds and then her analysis is finished in only four paragraphs. This book is designed for the beginner and I'm afraid that this will leave that reader worse off than before.

Her fourth chapter is worth the price of the book. It is entitled, "Dynamics of Christian Life." Here, she chooses two examples, not trying to cover the entire waterfront, and she does it well. Her coverage of the pilgrimage experience using the pilgrimage to St. James (Santiago) of Compostela in Spain (12th century) and the life and impact of the Beecher family in America through Lyman Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe is excellent. I believe that the entire volume should have used this format.

The author's orientation can be summed up by the subtitle to the book—a way of salvation. It is definitely not an evangelical author or book. If you are in seminary and take courses in church history and systematic or historical theology, this book can be avoided. I would not use it in a world religion class because of its incompleteness. If you can, read Chapter 4. What we need is an evangelical scholar who can write for a popular market, to do a similar book. As the remaining titles come out in this series, they will be reviewed: *Religions of China, Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, and Native Religions of North America.*

—Charles O. Ellenbaum

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Whole Hearted Integration: Harmonizing Psychology and Christianity Through Word and Deed
by Kirk E. Farnsworth (Baker, 1985, 160 pp., $6.95).

I have now read this book for the third time; twice while it was in preparation and once in its bound form. My enthusiasm for it has grown each time. I am jubilant about this book. I believe it says something unique that has not been stated before. I found it readable and stimulating. I intend to make it required reading in my courses on this subject.

What is it that I find so unique in this volume intended for Christian mental health professionals who are eager to know how to relate their discipline with their faith? Two things: first, I find Farnsworth's distinction between "critical" and "embodied" integration extremely convincing; and second, I find Farnsworth's procedure of clarifying method prior to discussing content very helpful.

In earlier articles, Farnsworth has called for "embodied" integration. This is integration that is "lived" rather than "thought"—his term for critical integration. In the present volume, Farnsworth elaborates on this distinction; and, while he still affirms the high importance of the incorporation of integration into the daily lives of Christian mental health professionals, he yet reasserts the value of critical, conceptual thinking about these matters.

The emphasis on clarifying method before defining terms is a crucial contribution of this volume. The early chapters detailing the methods of psychology, of theology, and of integration are valuable. They will provide a useful introduction to the problems in the

The Journal of Esther Edwards Burr 1754-1757
edited with introduction by Carol F. Karlsen and Laurie Crumpacker (Yale University Press, 1984, 318 pp., $25.00).

Esther Edwards Burr (1732-1758) was the third child of Jonathan and Sarah Pierrepont Edwards. In 1750 she married the Rev. Aaron Burr, an evangelical Presbyterian from Newark, New Jersey. Soon Esther moved with her husband to Princeton where the Rev. Burr gave his full attention to superintending the College of New Jersey. During the brief time allotted to this family, Esther bore two children, the second of whom became famous as a vice-president of the United States and the killer of Alexander Hamilton. The family's world came crashing in when death carried off four members in rapid succession: Aaron Burr (September 1757), Jonathan Edwards, who had come as Burr's replacement to head Princeton College (March 1758), Esther (April 1758), and Sarah Edwards (October 1758).

The remarkable document reproduced here is a journal kept by Esther Burr from October 1, 1754, to September 2, 1757. It formed part of a two-way correspondence with Sarah Prince, daughter of a well-known Congregational minister in Boston. It is one of the most complete records of a woman's experience in colonial America. Karlsen and Crumpacker have done their jobs as editors superbly, sketching clearly biographical, theological, social, and economic backgrounds, and providing the necessary notations for making full use of the journal.

The life which shines forth is one of piety, hard work, family joy and tragedy, nearly overwhelming domestic responsibility, and faithful friendship. In their introduction the editors highlight Esther Burr's many duties as household manager and the "sisterhood" which bound her with Sarah Prince, her mother, and other women. To these appropriate emphases, they could have added that Esther Burr's journal is also a compelling record of consistent, even moving, Christian faithfulness.

–Mark A. Noll

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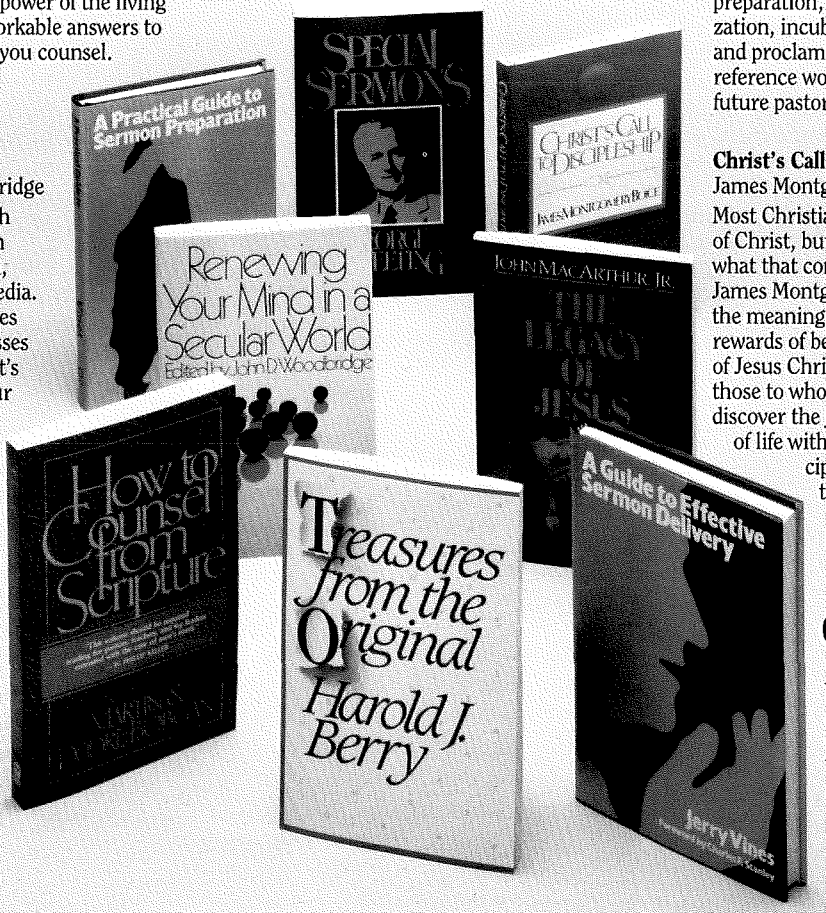

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integration endeavor that goes far beyond the simplistic statement that "only a particular kind of psychology can be integrated with a particular kind of theology."

As I stated before, Farnsworth's thoughts are like vintage wine—they get better with age. I would recommend this volume to any serious seeker of insight into the integration enterprise. Those who read, and read again, will not be disappointed. They will be called to intentional and devout embodied integration, plus be enlightened in their efforts to do critical integration.

—H. Newton Maloney

The Hermeneutical Reader
edited and translated by Kurt Mueller-Volmer (Continuum Press, 1985, 346 pp., $27.50).

Currently the word *hermeneutics* is used in three different ways but with some overlap: 1) in the more traditional American usage to indicate rule of biblical interpretation; 2) in the continental way to indicate the root-methodology and root-assumptions of a theologian's theology; 3) in a third or more secular meaning which deals with the whole nest of assumptions or presuppositions in any given major discipline.

The author's purpose is to provide us with a historical review of this third meaning or usage by translating from the German classic essays on the subject matter and thereby enabling scholars to get a headstart into the very

complex shape the study has taken in recent years. His list is Chladenius, Schleiermacher, von Humboldt, Droysen, Boeck, Dilthey, Husserl, Ingarden, Heidegger, Bultmann, Gadamer, Habermas and Appel.

It is a scholar's scholar book. Only those with some grasp of the subject matter (*Vorverständnis!!*) can read it with some basic understanding of what is being said. For evangelicals who have a specialized interest in tracking this movement for its potential theological usage, this is a basic resource book.

—Bernard Ramm

Dissentient Voice: Enlightenment and Christian Dissent
by Donald Davie (University of Notre Dame Press, 1982, 154 pp., $16.95).

The book's chief historical thesis is that the English Enlightenment, as opposed particularly to the French, was not entirely or essentially anti-Christian. Apart from Samuel Johnson, demonstration is sought in the poetry of Watts, Doddridge, and Wesley, who unite intellect and culture with the profound and paradoxical subject matter of the faith and testify to a reasonable and "experimental" religion. Their hymns display a controlled simplicity that rendered them accessible "to men and women who were less sophisticated and less learned than they were."

The author regrets the decline of nineteenth-century Dissent into fervor and philistinism. Even worse is the ill-defined liberalism of the twentieth century, presaged in the Unitarianism of the late eighteenth. One of Mr. Davie's main concerns is, in fact, definition. Thus he objects to the extension of "the words 'Christian' and 'Dissenter' to comprehend people who deny both Original Sin and the Holy Trinity," a linguistic sign of the present "muddle about the boundary between Belief and Unbelief."

Apart from the 1980 Ward-Phillips Lectures on English Language and Literature given at Notre Dame, the book contains occasional essays sparked by episodes in present-day letters. With many a deft blow at secularists and *marxisants* as well as spiky and skeptical Anglicans, they illustrate the wit and wisdom of a leading poet and critic, a constitutional monarchist who, like myself, was reared not far from the heart of English Dissent.

—Geoffrey Wainwright

Doing Theology in a Divided World
edited by Virginia Fabella and Sergio Torres (Orbis, 1985, 217 pp., $11.95).

"Doing Theology in a Divided World" was the topic of the Sixth International Conference of the Ecumenical Association of the Third World Theologians (EATWOT), which, for the first time, also included first world representatives of liberation theology. The participants' *basis* for discussing theology is story-telling, that is, narrating personal experiences of doing theology in a divided world (e.g., case histories of Dutch feminism, Nicaraguan revolution, the Sri Lankan Devasarana Movement, the Swedish Christian Labor Movement, and the Canadian Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in Latin America). Next, the concrete *context* of theology, say the participants, requires social analysis, especially the interrelatedness of oppression and efforts for liberation (e.g., racial—black South African; economic—Latin American; feminist—female North American; and cultural—non-western, third world perspectives). Finally, theological reformulation is the *implication* of liberating praxis, which involves a re-reading of the methods and themes of theology from the standpoint of liberational commitment (e.g., Protestant and Catholic critiques of Eurocentric theology, and methodological reflections from black, West European, and Asian participants). In short, they advocate concrete commitment to liberation for the oppressed, social analysis of exploitation, and a new hermeneutic of biblical and historical interpretation as the way of doing theology in a divided world.

These short essays (authored by twenty-six contributors) are contextual yet dialogical in nature. Sex, race, class, culture, and religion are the contexts in which one does theology—a point not new to liberationists. The *interdependence* of contexts, however, is the key insight of the book, as well as its chief problem: specifically, how to reconcile the distinctiveness of Christianity with the plurality of social contexts and religious themes in this new *multi*-contextual theology.

—Todd Saliba Speidell

BOOK COMMENT CONTRIBUTORS

Bernard T. Adeney is Professor of Social Ethics, New College, Berkeley; Charles O. Ellenbaum is Professor of Anthropology & Religious Studies at the College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn, IL; Doug Groothuis is a Research Associate with Probe Ministries; H. Newton Maloney is Professor and Director of Programs in the Integration of Psychology and Theology at Fuller; Mark A. Noll is Professor of History at Wheaton College; Bernard Ramm is Professor of Theology at American Baptist Seminary of the West; Todd Saliba Speidell is a Ph.D. student in Systematic Theology at Fuller Seminary; Douglas Stuart is Professor of Old Testament at Gordon-Conwell; Geoffrey Wainwright is Professor of Systematic Theology at Duke Graduate School.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Bloesch Replies to Finger

While appreciating Thomas Finger's thoughtful comments on my book *The Battle for the Trinity* (TSF Bulletin, March/April, 1986), I wish to answer some of his criticisms for the purpose of clarifying my position. I shall give quotations from Finger and then state my reaction.

1. "I wish that Bloesch had consistently used some precise term to indicate the viewpoint he is opposing." The term I consistently use for the adversary of Christian faith in this area is "ideological feminism." Even if the word "ideological" is sometimes omitted for the sake of readability, the context always leaves my meaning abundantly clear. I have indicated in this book as well as in my earlier *Is the Bible Sexist?* (Crossway, 1982) that the women's liberation movement itself has much to commend it. The essential equality of woman and man and the dignity of woman are something all Christians should support. What I oppose is feminism as a life-and world-view, an attempt to achieve a holistic humanity through a resymbolizing of God and nature.

2. "It is unfair to link 'feminism' with the programs and death camps spawned by Nazi ideology." Nowhere did I associate feminism with the demonic side of Nazism. What I did point to were some striking parallels between the two ideologies, including the resymbolizing of language about God. My position is that Christian faith must resist alliances with so-called good theologies as well as bad.

3. Feminism is "the most racially and nationally inclusive of all the modern 'isms.'" I do not think that feminism is more inclusive than socialism or welfare liberalism. No ideology is really all-inclusive. Feminism excludes male chauvinism and patriarchalism. In its radical forms, it also excludes women who give priority to motherhood over a career. Socialism excludes the moneyed class, and fascism excludes racial and ethnic minorities. Only Christian faith overcomes all racial, class and gender barriers; but Christian faith is not entirely inclusive, for it excludes from the family of God those who consciously persist in known sin.

In all but its mildest forms, feminism really does not appeal to the vast majority of women. It is guilty of misrepresentation when it claims to speak for women in general. Elizabeth Achtemeier, distinguished biblical scholar and author of the foreword of my book, is an example of a growing number of women in academic circles who are taking exception to the audacious claims of ideological feminism.

4. "Bloesch sometimes employs words with ambiguity." I have repeatedly said that words do not necessarily contain their meanings, and therefore there is a certain fluidity in all words, particularly those employed as symbols. I have consistently described both metaphor and analogy as symbolic expressions but have insisted with Thomas Aquinas that only the latter yields real knowledge. I have followed the eminent philosopher of language, Paul Ricoeur, in sometimes speaking of "conceptual metaphors," where metaphors are used as concepts to explain or define something.

Finger faults me for obscuring the relation between symbol and concept. But I think I have made it clear that although symbol has chronological priority over concept, it needs conceptual elucidation if its meaning is to be made more broadly intelligible. Yet nuances of meaning that reside in the symbol are invariably lost in conceptualization, and this is why abstract thought must always return to the symbol if it is to keep in contact with the reality of which it speaks. Symbol is the foundation of intelligible discourse, but concept is its culmination.

5. "The uniqueness of doctrine that Donald Bloesch so emphasizes consists in affirming this equality among the Trinitarian persons." I believe we have a deficit understanding of the Trinity unless we give equal weight to the voluntary subordination within the Trinity. The Son freely subordinates his own will to that of the Father, and the Spirit freely carries out the decisions of the Father and the Son. To be sure, within this basic subordination there is a mutual subordination, and Finger reminds us of this important truth.

6. "The Bible uses different words or images to speak of God: God is called 'Lord' and 'Father,' but also 'Fortress' and 'Rock.'" But the difference is that the latter are metaphors, which point to the way God exists or acts, while the former are names, which reveal the inner character of God. The God of the Bible is not a nameless being beyond concepts and words (as in Neoplatonic mysticism) but the Living One who reveals his proper name—Father, Son and Spirit. Feminist theology and ideology relegate the Trinitarian names to a metaphor that is on a par with "Fortress," "Rock," "Wind," etc.

7. Finger looks forward to the time when "masculine and feminine imagery for God may come to be employed with similar frequency in the Church." But this means that the doctrine of the Trinity is bound to be sacrificed for more "inclusive" and ipso facto impersonal language concerning God. My critic refers to God as "the transcendent Origin of all things" and "the stable, transcendent Source of all things." It seems that for him symbolic abstractions of this type actually function as the norm in governing the use of language applied to God. I contend that to call God "heavenly Father" is much closer to biblical understanding than to describe him as "the transcendent Origin of all things." Can we pray to a transcendent Source of all being?

The doctrine of the Trinity makes explicit the mysterious but at the same time integral relationship of Father, Son and Spirit attested in Holy Scripture. Calling God "she" introduces an entirely new dimension that actually distorts the biblical intention. Finger fails to realize that the very act of changing back and forth from Father to Mother draws attention to sexuality, which is patently not the intent in the Bible.

8. Viewed eschatologically, God, for Finger, becomes primarily the immanent, indwelling Spiritual Presence. What is depicted in biblical apocalyptic literature, however, is a divine intervention into human history and the creation of a new heaven and a new earth.

In conclusion, I affirm the divine motherhood as well as the divine fatherhood, but I insist that God has chosen to relate himself to us primarily as masculine, which Finger acknowledges but dismisses as of minimal importance, apparantly indifferent to the marked biblical stress on names.

My protest is directed not against the women's movement with its demands for equal pay for equal work but against the rebirth of Baalism and Gnosticism that actually undercut women, since they basically portray woman in terms of sexuality rather than in terms of partnership with man in the battle for social righteousness.

Donald G. Bloesch
Professor of Theology
University of Dubuque
Theological Seminary

In Praise of TSF

I am writing to express my great appreciation to you and all those involved in bringing out the March/April 1986 issue of *TSF Bulletin*. Smith's article on Whitefield and Wesley I found very informative on an historical matter concerning which I have great interest but little information. I would also like to compliment you for the interchange among Anderson, Mickelsen, and Sheppard, which though frustratingly brief for contributors and for readers such as myself, was an exciting example of creative theological investigation.

Not being involved directly in the training of ministers in my present position in a Faculty of Arts, issues of *TSF Bulletin* that concentrate on articles intended for the professional ministry are of more passing relevance to me. The March/April issue, however, speaks across the confines of the ministerial profession to the intellectual and pastoral needs of the larger Christian community, and I commend you for it. These articles exhibit what a journal like *TSF Bulletin* should be, a forum for serious dialogue on important questions.

Larry W. Hurtado
Associate Professor
Department of Religion
University of Manitoba Canada

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BOOK REVIEWS

BOOK COMMENTS

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Introducing This Issue

Twice now it has been my privilege to attend a very enriching conference held each June on the campus of Eastern College in St. Davids, Pennsylvania.

The brainchild of Dr. Robert Seiple, president of both the College and Eastern Baptist Seminary, the Evangelical Round Table brings together Christians of differing viewpoints to discuss issues which are creating tension within the same faith-community. In 1984 the first Round Table focused on Central America and the question of what policy our country ought to pursue regarding Nicaragua. I was not present but I have been reliably informed that the exchange of opinions generated heat as well as light. In 1985 the second Round Table examined the vexatious and explosive problem of the Israeli/Palestinian controversy. Again, considerable heat was generated in the enlightened interchange of antagonistic convictions.

This year evangelicalism itself was analyzed. While the central theme, "Will Evangelicalism Survive Its Success?," did not elicit the strong emotions which had marked the two preceding conferences, it did afford opportunity for the expression of a wide-ranging spectrum of opinions. Thomas Johnson's report (p. 8) will fill in the details for us.

With the kind permission of Dr. Seiple we are publishing some of the addresses which were given at the 1986 Round Table. Hoping that these annual discussions will serve not only as a catalyst for evangelical self-criticism but also as an antidote to the fissiparous tendencies within the evangelical family which strongly embraced and sharply divergent positions exacerbate, Dr. Seiple desires that the Round Table papers be circulated as widely as possible.

Since the contributions we are including come from well-known evangelicals, I will not mention each of their articles separately. I do feel, however, that I ought to offer at least a quasi-apology for including the ethos-setting exposition of Romans 14 which I presented on two successive mornings at the conference last June.

Besides these stimulating articles, we are including reports of two other conferences that readers will—or certainly should—find of interest. We are also including Stephen Mott's review-essay on *Brave New People*, the much-controverted study by D. Gareth Jones of the moral complexities created by biotechnology. Regardless of one's belief about abortion (and in my opinion a consistent pro-life ethic requires an intelligently implemented anti-abortion stance), we must not succumb to an irrational book-burning hysteria which insists that responsible Christian scholars refrain from putting into print their examination of the agonizing complexities which scientific achievements are raising. The cause of truth is best served when individuals of competence and integrity are free to state and debate in the public arena whatever opinions they have conscientiously reached.

As for in-house affairs, let me bid a regretful but most appreciative *adieu* to Becky Groothuis whose efficiency, diligence, and insight in her dual capacity of Publishing Coordinator and Office Manager were invaluable assets to the *Bulletin*. We pray that God will bless Becky and her husband Douglas in the new ministry they are jointly undertaking. Let me also express our sincere gratitude to Karl Hoaglund for his devoted labor as our Circulation Manager.

In a world where faith, love, justice and truth are always under attack, this is the time of year to recall John Henry Newman's great lines concerning the Incarnation:

O, loving wisdom of our God!
When all was sin and shame,
A second Adam to the fight
And to the rescue came.

In the assurance of His victory I wish you a joyful holiday season and a productive 1987!

Finis To Fratricide

by Vernon C. Grounds

In I Corinthians 11:22, Paul raises an intriguing question: "Do you despise the church of God?" Our response, of course, is unhesitating and emphatic: by no means! Instead of despising the church, we prize it and are inexpressibly grateful to God for its ministry. Yet we must listen attentively to the criticisms of church-despisers in order to more effectively carry out our Savior's mandate to evangelize the world.

One criticism which the church-despisers direct against us is that of *mythology*. They charge that we subscribe to beliefs which are simply incredible. We believe not only in the reality of the supernatural, the possibility of miracle, and the divine authority of an accidental collection of Semitic documents. We also, the church-despisers scoff, believe in the infallibility of Moses, the edibility of Jonah and probably the superiority of American society.

For a second thing, the church-despisers charge us with *apathy*. We talk grandiosely about transforming the world and getting the will of God done in space and time. But by and large our churches are narcissistic groups of uninvolved individuals, members who are concerned about their own souls, marriages and families, and who consequently devote energy and money to self-centered edification and amusement.

The church-despisers also level against us the charge of *hypocrisy*. They point out the discrepancy between our profession and our practice, our belief and our behavior, our creed and our conduct. Love, unity, and compassion may be our watchwords, but we fail to incarnate our high ideals. Christians, the church-despisers claim, are not conspicuous for their sacrificial loyalty to biblical principles.

Fourth, the church-despisers charge us with *bigotry*. We split hairs over even nonessentials and assert that our views are in precise alignment with the mind of God Almighty. Who among us will deny that a spirit of intolerance characterizes large segments of evangelicalism—not simply and understandably with respect to the historic centralities of the gospel, but likewise with respect to the very debatable distinctives of our separate denominations?

Still further, they charge us with *disunity*. How often we sing the well-known words:

We are not divided, all one body we,
One in hope and doctrine, one in charity.

Yet the very same hymn includes this stanza:

Yet with a sorry wonder, men see her sore-oppressed,
By schism rent asunder, by heresy distressed.

The scandal of Christianity from early on has been its disunity, its failure to fulfill its Lord's entreaty, "May they all be one as we, Father, are one" (John 17:21).

A satirical poet whose identity I have thus far been unable to ascertain observed the divisiveness among Christians and expressed what he interpreted as the attitude of at least some of the churches:

We are the Lord's elected few. Let all the rest be damned!
There'll be no room up there for you. We don't want heaven crammed.

I often recall that contentious handful of saints, a splintered group which erected a sign with movable letters outside its meeting-place. It announced to passers-by, "Jesus Only." But after a night of violent wind that sign read, "Us Only." When the church universal is reduced to a splinter of schism, who can blame our critics for their scorn?

Leaving aside all the other criticisms, let us zero in on the charge that evangelicalism has been and still is marked by disunity. What can we do to blunt the painfully sharp edge of justifiable criticism? More than that, however, what can we do in order to achieve in fuller measure the openness of his body for which our Savior pleaded? I am persuaded that what we need to do is become full-fledged biblicists, allowing the Scripture to dynamically control our practice as well as to theoretically shape our beliefs. I am convinced that the antidote to fratricidal disunity is found in the fourteenth chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans. Here are principles which, if they become operative in our churches, will bring a finis to ecclesiastical conflict. On the contrary, if we fail to put these principles into practice, I anticipate many a tragic rerun of our past divisiveness.

Though the background of this pivotal passage is probably familiar to all of us, suppose I review it very hastily. In the capitol of the Caesers is a church composed of both Jews and Gentiles. Some members of this mixed congregation have been reared on an Old Testament diet. As a result they find it impossible to shake off life-long taboos, especially taboos grounded in their sincere loyalty to the Word of God. They look upon the indiscriminate eating of meat as an act of disobedience to the Mosaic law and therefore an act of disobedience to Jehovah. They view the keeping of the Sabbath and other sacred days as a matter of conscientious piety. Thus they are vegetarians and Sabbatarians. They form the party of weak believers, genuine Christians who have not yet grasped the pure graciousness and liberating spirituality of the gospel. By no means inferior in character or commitment, they are nevertheless immature, bound by custom and ignorance and prejudice.

In the church at Rome, however, there are other believers who do not practice the taboos of these weaker Christians. The strong Christians, as Paul designates them, have come to see the full meaning of the gospel. They have come to see that the Old Testament regulations concerning unholy foods and holy days were wiped out by the sacrifice of Calvary. They have come to see that they are living under grace, and the keynote of grace is freedom from all legalism. They have come to see, accordingly, that a surrender to legalism is a betrayal of the gospel.

Now each party is dogmatic, convinced that it alone possesses the truth and that the rival party is wrong, dead wrong. So with these two factions in the same church, there is danger that civil war will suddenly erupt like a volcano. How, then, does Paul handle this explosive situation? Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he lays down principles which, if put into practice, are guaranteed to prevent ecclesiastical civil war. What are these peace-producing principles?

I

We must extend the hand of fellowship to Christians who differ with ourselves concerning those matters of belief and behavior that Scripture leaves unsettled. Notice Romans 14:1-4:

Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing

Vernon C. Grounds is Editor of TSF Bulletin.

judgment on disputable matters. One man's faith allows him to eat everything, but another man, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God accepted him. Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

In either case, however, Paul turns on a red light. Break the nasty habit of name-calling, he orders his readers. Stop pinning labels, which are probably libels, on your brothers and sisters. Remember that, when you indulge in either despising or criticizing your fellow Christian, you are guilty of pride, self-righteousness and contempt. Remember too that, when you despise or criticize, you stir up bitterness and hatred and strife. You become the Devil's stooge. Thus from here on out, instead of despising or criticizing, exercise respect and

When the church universal is reduced to a splinter of schism, who can blame our critics for their scorn?

Notice also chapter 15:7 (for we cannot isolate chapter 14 from its context in the Roman letter): "Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God."

What is Paul's explicit directive? Welcome your brothers and sisters in the faith even though, as you understand your faith, they are weak and immature, holding to opinions and practices which are wrong—at least in your opinion. Yes, welcome the weak brothers and sisters precisely because they are brothers and sisters. They too have sincere faith in Jesus Christ as the incarnate Son of God who died for our sins and rose again in Easter victory. God has therefore accepted them into the membership of the true church, and hence you must not reject them, wrong as they may be concerning some matters. Welcome them, Paul commands us, provided they have a sincere faith in the centralities of the gospel. Welcome them despite their ignorance or stubbornness or prejudice or misunderstanding or maybe downright stupidity. Welcome them, and then refrain from unedifying controversy about those things which Scripture leaves unsettled.

Now what does this mean for us? What does it mean unless it means that fellowship in the gospel of Jesus Christ does not demand an absolute uniformity of viewpoint and interpretation? What does it mean unless it means that fellowship in the gospel of Jesus Christ is compatible with sincere differences of opinion? What does it mean unless it means, as Protestants have historically contended, that when God leaves an issue open we have no authority to close it by ecclesiastical mandate? So the first principle Paul lays down is this: fraternize, don't ostracize! Make the centralities of our faith your platform for fellowship, and guard against making toothpicks for planks!

II

Second, we must exercise respect, courtesy and tolerance. Paul lays down this directive in the third verse: "The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him." The apostle realizes that a strong believer who is emancipated from old scruples and prejudices may indulge in sarcastic criticism of weaker brothers and sisters. He or she may label them narrow-minded prudes or hair-splitting legalists or straight-laced Pharisees or creaking traditionalists or unenlightened mossbacks. Such persons may poke fun at their old-fashioned fundamentalism. But, on the other hand, the vegetarian or the Sabbatarian, the conscientious abstainer, may denounce the stronger brothers and sisters as unspiritual rebels or low-living libertines or high-minded intellectuals or inflated egotists or perhaps camouflaged liberals.

courtesy and tolerance.

III

We must resolutely refuse to push God aside and pass judgment on another Christian's motives. I call your attention again to verses three and four:

> The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him. Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

I call your attention also to verse ten: "You, then, why do you judge your brother or why do you look down on your brother? For we will stand before God's judgment seat." Again, look at verse thirteen: "Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way."

Oh, how subtle, how chronic is the temptation to usurp the prerogatives of God Almighty! As if we were omniscient! As is in our finitude we could possibly know whether or not our fellow believers are being true to their own deepest insights, loyal to that interpretation of Scripture which they have been able to attain! As if we could possibly know all the forces and factors which are motivating the behavior of our brothers and sisters? No! No! No! What Paul assumes, therefore, is the integrity of his fellow believers. He takes it for granted that his fellow believers are motivated spiritually, not carnally. Yes, Paul operates on the premise that his fellow believers are motivated by a desire to please God. That surely is the point of verse six:

> He who regards one day as special, does so to the Lord. He who eats meat, eats it to the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who abstains, does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God.

So unless fellow believers are guilty of heresy or immorality in plain contradiction of Scripture, I must refuse to judge their motivation. I must steadfastly decline to play the role which belongs exclusively to our omniscient God.

IV

We must insist on the right, indeed the inescapable obligation of personal responsibility. How emphatically Paul says this in verse five: "One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind." How emphatically he likewise says this in verse twelve: "So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God." And here, as we

all perceive, is the biblical foundation of our great Protestant distinctive, the sovereignty of the individual soul, the right and duty of every human being to establish a first-hand relationship with the Creator who will ultimately be his or her Judge. I cannot breathe for my brother; he must do his own breathing. Neither can I think for my sister, decide for my brother, trust for my sister or die for my brother. They must do their own thinking and deciding and trusting and dying. Consequently, I cannot answer for my brothers and sisters, nor can they answer for me.

To be sure, they may help me, and I may help them. We may share our opinions—or merely pool our ignorance and prejudice. Each of us may prayerfully seek to instruct, persuade and correct the other. But in the end I must make up my own mind before God. I must stand on my own feet before God. I must answer for my own life to God. And my brothers and sisters must do the same.

In view of this awesome and inescapable fact, Paul urges us to insist on the right of personal responsibility.

No Christian must be pressured to agree with an opinion or a practice which her own conscience cannot sincerely accept. No Christian must be coerced by a crowd, even if the crowd is a church congregation.

V

We must hold fast to the inviolability of conscience; and this is, obviously, a corollary of the tremendous fact which I have just been discussing: our personal responsibility before God.

What is the thrust of verse fourteen? "As one who is in the Lord Jesus, I am fully convinced that no food is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for him it is unclean." The thrust of this text is plain. The conscience must be obeyed even if it is weak and warped and wrong. This theme is repeated in verse twenty: "Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble." This theme reemerges in verses twenty-two and twenty-three:

> So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the man who does not condemn himself by what he approves. But the man who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin.

If people violate their own conscience, Paul asserts, sin is being committed. Such people are wrong even though what is being done is right. Suppose a man does something which is right and yet, as he does the right thing, he senses that he is doing wrong; then he is wrong even though the thing he does is right. Hence no Christian must be pressured to agree with an opinion or a practice which her own conscience cannot sincerely accept. No Christian must be coerced by a crowd, even if the crowd is a church congregation. No Christian must be forced to compromise conviction for the sake of tradition. Granted that she may be shortsighted or stubborn or sinful. She must nevertheless hold fast to the truth as she sees it; and there is no power that can enable her to see the truth differently except the power of the illuminating Holy Spirit.

Let me sharpen the issue. A brother may sincerely believe in the ordination of women; and we don't agree. A sister may fervently believe in all five points of Calvinism, passionately defending double predestination; and we don't agree. A brother may believe in *laissez faire* capitalism as a good and necessary deduction from certain biblical texts and principles; and we don't agree. A sister may believe that abortion under specific circumstances is the lesser of two evils; and we don't agree. A brother may believe that the advent of the nuclear age necessitates pacifism and our country's unilateral disarmament; and we don't agree. A sister may believe that neighbor concern gives support to the enforced busing of school children; and we don't agree. A brother may believe in racial segregation as practiced in South Africa; and we don't agree. A sister may believe that captial punishment is inconsistent with the pro-life stance; and we don't agree. A brother may believe that the Genesis account is compatible with theistic evolution; and we don't agree. If our brothers and sisters honestly deduce from Scripture beliefs and practices which we are convinced are wrong, we must grant them the right to hold those convictions. Indeed, we must protect their right to be wrong. We will no doubt struggle to straighten out (as we view it) their corkscrew logic. We will challenge their exegesis and indicate the baleful consequences of the teaching they are espousing. We may be conscientiously unable to become members of their churches. But we will not leave them out of the church which is Christ's body. We will not repudiate their claim to be children of God. No, instead of that, we will joyfully acknowledge that all of us belong to the same spiritual family. We will champion their loyalty to that inner monitor which whispers to every human being, "Whatever you believe wrong ought not be done; whatever you believe right ought to be done though the world oppose you." In short, as Christians obedient to Scripture we must affirm the inviolability of conscience.

VI

We must acknowledge the lordship of Christ in all our interactions. Is there in all the New Testament any other passage which trumpets the sovereignty of our Savior more eloquently than verses seven through eleven of this chapter?

> For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgement seat. It is written, "'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God.'"

By the sacrifice of the cross, by his Easter victory, Jesus Christ, once despised, disgraced, and seemingly defeated, is now enthroned as cosmic King. The totality of existence is under his rulership, all of life and all of death, this world and the next world, present and future, time and eternity, everything is under His rulership. Therefore whether we eat and drink, whether we fast and pray, no matter what we do, we must do it for the sake of Jesus Christ. In everything, we must strive to please our Lord. I must not do what I please. I must not do what my church or denomination pleases. I must do what pleases my Lord. I must seek his will, his glory, his

approval in everything even if, in pleasing him, I displease you.

And I must unreservedly confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord of my brother's life, the Lord of my sister's heart, the Lord of my brother's service. I did not die for my brothers and sisters; Jesus Christ did. My brothers and sisters do not belong to me; they belong to Jesus Christ. So my brothers and sisters must not please me, they must please Jesus Christ, just as in everything I, too, the bondslave of the Savior, must seek to please my Lord and Master.

If Scripture is silent concerning the issue, we must never, never, never allow a human opinion to be imposed on us if it were a divine norm.

VII

We must defend the liberty of the Gospel. Consider what Paul writes in verse fourteen: "As one who is in the Lord Jesus, I am fully convinced that no food is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for him it is unclean." Next add verse seventeen: "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." Now observe the very heart of verse twenty: "All food is clean, but it is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble." In other words, we must keep on affirming that the gospel spells the death of legalism. Our relationship to God is not a matter of externalities. Salvation is neither obtained nor retained by what we do or fail to do. Salvation is purely a matter of faith in redeeming grace. Consequently, we must resist steadfastly any attempt to introduce human merit, gained by lawkeeping, as a condition of justification or sanctification. To be sure, we must make concessions to immaturity and prejudice, but we must never, never, never allow the gospel to be undercut by legalism. So understand me when I repeat what I was emphasizing before: if Scripture is silent concerning the issue, we must never, never, never allow a human opinion to be imposed on us if it were a divine norm. Here I think we can learn a salutary lesson from Donald Gray Barnhouse, that gifted and forthright expositor of God's Word. Allow me to share with you a simple and, I think, amusing anecdote from his multi-volume commentary on the Roman Letter:

> Many years ago, I led a Bible Conference at Montrose, Pennsylvania. About 200 young people were present, and a few older people. One day two old ladies complained to me in horror because some of the girls were not wearing stockings; these ladies wanted me to rebuke them. This was about the year 1928. Looking them straight in the eye, I said, "The Virgin Mary never wore stockings." They gasped and said, "She didn't?" I answered, "In Mary's time, stockings were unknown. So far as we know, they were first worn by prostitutes in Italy in the 15th century, when the Renaissance began. Later, a lady of the nobility wore stockings at a court ball, greatly to the scandal of many people. Before long, however, everyone in the upper classes was wearing stockings, and by the time of Queen Victoria stockings had become the badge of the prude." These ladies, who were holdovers from the Victorian epoch, had nothing more to say. I did not rebuke the girls for not wearing stockings. A year or two afterward, most girls in the United States were going without stockings in the summer, and nobody thought anything about it. Nor do I believe that this led towards disintegration of moral standards in the United States. Times were changing, and the step away from Victorian legalism was all for the better.
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> In my opinion, that is the stand we must take against all legalism, Victorian or otherwise. We must defend the blood-purchased liberty of the gospel.

VIII

Finally, we must live by the law of love. Paul asserts this in verse fifteen which might better be translated: "Now you are living by the law of love." He asserts this likewise in chapter thirteen, verses eight through ten:

> Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellow man has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

If I live by the law of love, I will not scandalize my brothers and sisters. This is the burden of the 14th chapter and verse thirteen: "Therefore let us stop passing judgement on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way." If I live by the law of love, I will not grieve my brothers and sisters. This is the burden of the fifteenth verse in this same chapter. "If your brother is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy your brother for whom Christ died." If I live by the law of love, I will not offend or weaken or destroy my brothers and sisters. This is the burden of verses 20 and 21: "Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble. It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother to fall."

Thus, motivated by love, I will avoid doing anything that is going to hurt my brothers and sisters or bring them under the chastening judgment of Jesus Christ. Rather than scandalizing them, I will make these sacrifices which promote harmony and produce edification. This is the burden of verse nineteen: "Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification." Motivated by love, I will make any sacrifice—except the sacrifice of God's truth—to help my brothers and sisters become more like Jesus Christ, experiencing righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Motivated by love, I will carry out verse 22: "Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God." Thus I will not pugnaciously insist on the acceptance of my opinions. I will soft-pedal my prejudices. I will forego some of my liberties, if by doing so I can prevent my brother from losing out spiritually.

These are the eight principles which the Holy Spirit lays down through Paul, principles which, if put into operation, will prevent any future outbreak of ecclesiastical civil war.

Pastor Martin Niemoller was imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp. As Christmas 1944 dawned, the Dachau authorities, who had denied Protestants the right to worship,

relented and ordered Niemoller to conduct a service. He writes of that event:

> There were seven of us: a British colonel, a Dutch minister of war, two Norwegian ship-owners, a Yugoslav diplomatist and a Macedonian journalist, and me, the Lutheran pastor from Germany. When I realized what a task I should have to fulfill, I felt embarrassed and even desperate; for how should I—the German—find the right way to the hearts of this congregation, to men who hated Germany and Germans and who could not do otherwise?

But a sort of minor miracle happened. As Niemoller has recorded:

> At noontime before Christmas Eve somebody knocked at my door. The cell was opened, and in came the Dutch minister of war with the Gestapo guard. "Good morning, pastor," he said. "I am just dropping in to ask you something. My comrades and I myself want to celebrate Holy Supper with you tonight after your sermon. You may be astonished, but we could not help asking you." In this way it happened that in the evening I preached my sermon: "Glory be to God in heaven and peace on earth to men of good will!" And peace there was when we knelt down, seven people of different nations, divided ny hatred and war, but now united and bound together by the love of God and by the grace of Jesus Christ. The small cell widened, walls and wires disappeared. We felt liberated and, in a flash, we saw God's promise fulfilled: "Peace on Earth."

My brothers and sisters, let us pray and work to the end that our churches may be healingly "united and bound together by the love of God and the grace of Jesus Christ."

Evangelical Diversity and Self-Criticism: Signs of Hope

by Thomas F. Johnson

Nearly two hundred evangelical leaders gathered June 4-6, 1986, at Eastern College, St. Davids, Pennsylvania, for the third annual Evangelical Roundtable. The topic was "Evangelicalism: Surviving Its Success." In his opening remarks, Robert Seiple, president of the college and of Eastern Baptist Seminary, which sponsored the conference, welcomed those present, encouraged discernment, open dialogue, and understanding among the conferees, and warned them against dogmatism. A similar theme was sounded by *TSF Bulletin* editor Vernon Grounds in the morning Bible studies on Romans 14 and 15.

Roots Of Social Concern

Johns Hopkins historian Timothy L. Smith led off a lineup of heavy-hitting addresses by providing a historical overview of evangelical involvement in "social idealism" (see article, p. 10). Evangelicals were in the forefront of liberation movements in the 19th century (women's rights, defense of the poor, anti-slavery, free public schools, etc.) He demonstrated that contemporary evangelical social concern has deep roots in their nineteenth century ancestors' passion for the kingdom of God.

Southern Baptists

Roy Honeycutt, president of embattled Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, asked whether success would destroy the SBC. Documenting both its successes and its divisions, he warned that the Lord of history will judge the church with a divine perspective on success. Southern Baptists, he said, are a people searching for a new identity, with the loss of both the cultural and programmatic syntheses that have held the denomination together in the past. Will the new theological synthesis currently being "forced" by more conservative leaders work? "Not in my lifetime and certainly not in my tenure as president of Southern Seminary," Honeycutt vowed.

Feminist Concerns

One of the highlights of the conference was the clash of feminist perspectives represented by Elouise Fraser, Eastern Baptist Seminary theologian, and Elizabeth Achtemeier, Old Testament professor from Union Seminary, Virginia. Fraser struck hard against the sin of paternalism among evangelicals, the "fathers"-know-best attitude that stifles theology and leads to fruitless battles over inerrancy and creationism. "Do not marginalize the concerns of evangelical feminists," she warned.

Achtemeier, while asserting the bias against women in the church is a scandal, saved her strongest words for feminist theology itself, which, she said, by insisting on the use of female terms for God, is leading the church to a religion other than Christianity, a Canaanite goddess religion, that unifies creation with Creator and ultimately makes human history meaningless.

Black Perspective

A black evangelical perspective was brought by Tuskegee Institute professor James Earl Massey (see article, p. 16). He noted that black churches are almost universally evangelical and that they have contributed to the movement in five ways: (1) by proving that Christianity is not a white man's religion (2) by a rich, musical heritage (3) through an active witness against racism (4) through celebrative and radical preaching and (5) by taking leadership in urban ministry. When asked why there is such a low visibility of blacks in evangelical theology, Massey replied, "Blacks and whites have had different agendas: whites have been preoccupied with theologizing, blacks with doing things."

Evangelism

Evangelism was the primary concern of the first evening. Jay Kesler, former Youth for Christ national director and now president of Taylor University, spoke on "Jesus, Rambo and the Gates of Hell." He maintained that there are millions of pagan young people in America today with no personal or family ties to the church. YFC learned that they cannot be reached by youth who have grown up in the church and in Christian homes; rather, it takes an ex-pagan to reach a pagan. He warned that instead of taking on the new challenges of evangelism, the evangelical movement is succumbing to the siren song of civil religion. Both Jesus and Rambo are being

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Thomas F. Johnson is Professor of New Testament at North American Baptist Seminary.

solicited to bless America. But Rambo is Barabbas! So the question is: will evangelicals maintain an authentic Christ, even at the risk of crucifixion?

Samuel Escobar, missiologist from Eastern Baptist Seminary, added a Third World perspective. He noted that the church can be a hindrance rather than a help to evangelism. When that happens, he maintained, God raises up parachurch movements to spread the gospel. Evangelical survival depends upon letting mission set the agenda for theology, re-thinking authentic piety, and ceasing sterile doctrinal disputes.

Joel Nederhood, director of the Back to God Hour, concluded the focus on evangelism by advocating greater use of broadcast and video media. Yet he warned against selling out the integrity of the gospel for "effectiveness." There is a tendency to try to "zap" people in thirty to sixty minutes with a flamboyant, sensational, simplistic message. "Be effective," he urged, "but be authentic."

Biblical Authority

The issue for the next morning was biblical authority. Bruce Waltke, an Old Testament scholar from Westminster Seminary, stressed the normativity and contemporaneity of the Bible. "It is the direct Word of God." One cannot separate "Word of God" from "Scripture."

Manfred Brauch, New Testament professor from Eastern Baptist Seminary, maintained that the highest view of the Bible is the one that is most faithful to the Bible's own intention. This intention focuses on God's saving, incarnational actions in history and especially in Jesus Christ. The inspiration and authority of the Bible must, then, be understood not deductively, but incarnationally, by an inductive study of the text itself, its statements and phenomena. When we make that examination, we find that the term "inerrancy" is not very helpful in conveying the essential authority of Scripture. Brauch argued that just as Jesus was divine yet came in human weakness, so the Bible speaks with divine authority, even though it participates in the normal, human limitations of its authors.

Paul J. Achtemeier, who teaches New Testament at Union Seminary, Virginia, emphasized the relation between biblical authority and preaching (see article, p. 19). Scripture is the vehicle for the Word of God to be addressed to the church. This happens when the Holy Spirit witnesses to the lordship of Jesus Christ in the context of the Christian community. It is in the community that we hear the Bible as God's Word spoken to us. Achtemeier also advocated a new approach to the historical-critical method. "Historical" helps us appreciate that the Bible comes from another time and culture; it puts a necessary distance between ourselves and the text. "Critical," though, must be understood as self-critical—critical of our own assumptions, values, and pre-understandings that often keep us from hearing the Word of God. Without the historical-critical method, we will preach ourselves, and not Jesus Christ, as Lord.

Thinking Styles

In a less-focused afternoon session, mission strategist Waldron Scott defined three styles of thinking or categorizing: "bounded set," "centered set," and "fuzzy set." The first characterizes most Western thought, the latter two most non-Western peoples. He then offered the challenging insight that "most of our problems in evangelical theology have been caused by the more rigid, either/or, 'bounded set' thinking." We need to explore a theological style that emphasizes relation to a fixed center and an appreciation of paradox and ambiguity.

Brave New Publishers

James Sire, senior editor at InterVarsity Press, asked whether we should be censoring "brave new publishers," a reference to the book by Gareth Jones, *Brave New People*, which IVP was forced to withdraw under pressure from militant Christian anti-abortionists. Sire said publishers must have the freedom to publish responsible, unpopular views. Christian readers also have a responsibility to read, think and change before reacting publicly. The Christian Right's response to Jones' excellent book, now published by Eerdmans, was not appropriate, he claimed.

Too Much Politics?

Ex-Falwell staffer Cal Thomas, now a Washington-based columnist, warned that there is a limit to how involved evangelicals can become in politics without either being co-opted by the state or losing the church's distinctive message of salvation. Christians of the left and of the right have made the same mistake of identifying of the kingdom of God with the kingdoms of this world. Human government, however, will not solve our fundamental problems.

Justice

Evening messages by Calvin College philosopher Nicholas Wolterstorff and Eastern Baptist Seminary ethicist Ron Sider proclaimed the biblical mandate of justice. Wolterstorff outlined the case for caring about justice: people are being treated unjustly, true Christian piety demands justice, and the God of the Bible loves and does justice. The presence of the kingdom in Jesus' ministry and the continuation of his ministry in his body, the church, also demand that we work, and not just wait, for justice.

Sider raised the question whether evangelicals will ever agree about what the Bible says about justice, in view of the name-calling and malicious stereotyping that have marked their internal debates over social issues. He urged a Covenant of Evangelical Integrity that calls for careful listening to and appreciation of the critiques of the other side and for on-going dialogue between differing views, e.g., between the more liberal Evangelicals for Social Action and the more conservative Institute for Religion and Democracy. Many of those present signed the covenant at breakfast the next morning and hoped for its wider distribution.

Trueblood

The final addresses came from D. Elton Trueblood, octogenarian and evangelical statesman, Roberta Hestenes, Fuller Seminary's professor of discipleship and Christian formation, and from Os Guinness, author and Brookings Institute fellow. Trueblood, in a moving address titled "The Basis of Recovery," called for more "great evangelical leaders," such as John Baillie, J.B. Phillips, and C.S. Lewis, for persons whose lives are characterized by the inner life of devotion, the outer life of service, and the intellectual life of thought. These distinctives have also characterized Trueblood's own career.

The Need for Evangelical Maturity

Hestenes' message was the most exegetical of the conference. She interpreted present-day evangelicalism in the light of Paul's Corinthian correspondence. Her analysis noted that: (1) we have been seduced by success, confusing means and ends (2) we have Corinthian standards of leadership, valuing more the superstar than the servant (3) we have acquiesced to superficiality, seeking quick-fixes for problems that took generations in the making (4) and we have an affinity for Ayatollahesque "great Satan" theories to explain why things go wrong ("If you can link your opponents to some 'great

Satan,' then you don't have to address the specifics of their arguments"). It is time for evangelicals to mature, she concluded, especially by "putting behind us old formulas and old dichotomies."

A European Perspective

Finally, in the most intellectually stimulating message of the conference, British evangelical Os Guinness offered a European perspective on American evangelicalism (see article, p. 22). He compared this moment in American history to the evangelical hour in 19th century Britain, which saw an opportunity for authentic revival and social reform. The American concern for religion is not superficial but deeply rooted. Evangelicals can play a strategic role if they maintain the Christian faith's two major strengths, the lordship of Jesus Christ over every sphere of life and the challenge of being Christian in the world while living in tension with it. Are today's evangelicals doing this? No, Guinness maintained. They are compromising the gospel to gain "success" and conforming to American culture. "Even if we win all the 'right' Christian issues, we may lose America's soul." Will God be God to evangelicals, or will they turn away to idols? "Ascribe glory to the Lord before the darkness falls," he concluded in a somber challenge.

The complete texts of all the presenters' remarks will be printed and published by Eastern College and Seminary before next year's Roundtable, which will focus on "The Sanctity of Life."

A Shared Evangelical Heritage

by Timothy L. Smith

It is a splendid kindness to be asked to comment on an aspect of American and British evangelicalism which has rarely been noticed by commentators or historians: its amazing nonsectarianism. Sectarian competition that once existed within and between various evangelical communities and traditions has steadily declined. Scores of conferences involving many evangelical movements and their supporting denominations take place with almost no expression of sectarian rivalry. Onlookers will find this amazing, since the legend, both in historical accounts and among recent secular observers, is that ecumenicity is a trait of liberal Christianity and sectarian strife a principal feature of old-time Protestantism.

Why is this degree of good fellowship and mutual cooperation possible? It arises from the broad agreements among evangelicals that date from their beginning as a self-conscious Christian movement two hundred and fifty years ago in Scotland, England, Germany, and America. An evangelical, historians can now perceive, is one who, since the time of John and Charles Wesley, George Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards, and August Francke, has believed that his or her religious life should rest fully upon the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures; that the center of those Scriptures is the promise of moral and spiritual rebirth through faith in Jesus Christ and the gift of God's Holy Spirit; and that, on both these accounts, believers should be devoted to evangelism, that is, to persuading lost persons to trust in Christ, and in that faith be born again.

These central affirmations informed American Protestantism throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In 1740, for example, the greatest Puritan pastors of Boston invited George Whitefield to his first evangelistic engagement there. He preached in nearly all of their pulpits and a great religious awakening followed. What prompted them was the reprinting in Boston of several of Whitefield's sermons, including his discourse preached in England three years before on *The Nature and Necessity of the New Birth.*[1] Another example: the first Lutheran pastors in Pennsylvania and New York and southward to Virginia and the Carolinas were Pietists. They came chiefly from the missionary institution at Halle, Saxony, in response to the pleas of Lutheran lay people already in America. They forwarded their petitions through a graduate, Henry M. Muhlenberg, who became the great organizer of colonial Lutheranism.[2]

American Methodism's vitality stemmed from the same three commitments. Methodism came to America on the eve of the War of Independence, while still a spiritual community within the Church of England. It decisively influenced what became the Virginia and Ohio dioceses of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Though the Methodists separated from their parent communion in 1784, Wesley's followers grew rapidly and by 1850 had become the largest Protestant sect in the United States and Canada.[3]

Meanwhile, a similarly evangelical Baptist movement emerged out of the most revivalistic wing of Connecticut Puritanism and, through American and English immigrants, in the maritime provinces of Canada.[4] Transferred to the South by two of its young men who had studied theology at Yale, it began spreading among the plain people of that section, both slaves and free, like a benevolent plague. Though both Methodist and Baptist communions were divided during the long controversy over slavery, the Southern Baptist Convention eventually replaced the Methodist Episcopal Church, North, as America's largest Protestant group.[5]

The followers of Alexander Campbell, a Presbyterian evangelist from Scotland who was briefly a Baptist, now form three denominations: the Churches of Christ, Disciples of Christ, and Churches of Christ and Christian Churches. Congregational independence and adult baptism by immersion have always been as important to them as to Baptists. The nineteenth century forebearers of all three groups rest their faith on the same evangelical principles, though they emphasized reason more in explaining the process of one's embracing the faith by which he or she was born again.[6]

So with the multitude of nineteenth-century Protestant denominations organized among immigrants from Northern Ireland, Scandinavia, Germany, and central and eastern Europe. Without reference to the much-vaunted American frontier environment and often in conscious rejection of some notions that were popular among older American denominations, they formed themselves into religious communities that drew deeply upon British and continental understandings of these same three evangelical ideas.[7]

Likewise, when American Blacks won the freedom to establish their own congregations—a right that white southerners granted them only after the Civil War—they became mostly Methodists or Baptists. Black Christians were not only one hundred per cent American Protestants, as has often been pointed out, but they were and have remained overwhelmingly evangelical, preaching a Bible-centered gospel of the

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Timothy L. Smith is Professor of History at Johns Hopkins University. This material was originally presented at the Evangelical Roundtable June 4-6, 1986, and is used by permission.

new birth and steadily evangelizing their fellow Blacks.[8]

The growing awareness of twentieth-century American and Canadian evangelicals that they are united on these larger issues—a unity only recently rediscovered by the mass media of communication and by some conservative Christians as well—has caused them to think of their movements as compromising the religious majority instead of a disparate body of minority sects. True, they all know that the literary, scientific, and business culture of our times is still moving in a secular direction, and that the clergy in old line denominations are still deeply affected by various kinds of theological liberalism. But evangelicals in all traditions draw together around the three historic principles. Their contest with religious modernism for the soul of America has helped to harden that unity.[9]

Probably at no time since the Reformation has there been less sectarian feeling among a broad and diverse community of Christians than now exists among Bible-believing Protestants.

Except for extremists in each tradition, probably at no time since the Reformation has there been less sectarian feeling among a broad and diverse community of Christians than now exists among Bible-believing Protestants. With our Pentecostal brothers and sisters leading the way, we have managed to reach out in fellowship and thought about the Holy Spirit to those Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Christians who share the current religious awakening.[10] We have rejoiced in the steady multiplication of pastors and congregations in the old line Protestant denominations who accept and promote the evangelical movement, often seeding those denominations with young clergymen trained in evangelical theological seminaries like Fuller, Bethel, Gordon-Conwell, and Southwestern Baptist.[11] Evangelical ministers of every denomination and none, and professionals who support them in colleges and welfare institutions, nearly all read *Christianity Today*, the world's largest non-denominational journal. Most of them are members or adherents of the vast umbrella organization called the National Association of Evangelicals.[12]

Looking back, we can see that one of the self-deceptions of the modern ecumenical movement is that because of its emphasis on biblical doctrines, traditional and evangelical Protestantism helped to divide Christianity into a multitude of warring sects. Self-proclaimed ecumenists have freely offered their description for that strife: jettison orthodox Christian doctrines and adopt a program of social action that is adapted to modern ethical demands and rooted in the perceptions of modern culture.[13] In response, ironically, modern evangelicals, particularly the fundamentalist party, have sometimes believed this libel, and acted as though one's orthodoxy is certified by abrasive dogmatism in theology, silence on social issues, and advocating nationalistic and economic doctrines shared by the most conservative secular politicians.[14]

The shared heritage of evangelical social concern, however, especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, exposes the modernist self-deception for what it often is: an excuse to lay aside the old-time religion, to reject biblical Christianity. For in historical fact, the concern for social justice has been a major contribution of evangelical faith to modern culture. And it has sprung in various ways from every one of the religious traditions that today contribute to the evangelical movement. To this aspect of the historic consensus I now direct your attention.

Most literate Christians know that Wesleyans and Quakers were important pioneers in promoting social reforms in England and America. Few realize, however, that multitudes of social reformers were rooted in Puritan, Continental, or Scotch-Irish Calvinist ideas; that Baptist, Lutheran, Episcopal or Anglican, and churches of Christ or "Christian" ministers were in the past deeply concerned about social justice; and that small denominations such as the Seventh-day Adventists, German Baptists, and the many kinds of Mennonite and Scandinavian free churches emphasized particular social ministries. Moreover, to ponder the tremendous communities of Black Christians, now organized mostly into various Baptist, Methodist, and Pentecostal denominations, is to be reminded that these peoples, like Puerto Rican Pentecostals and Mexican-American Roman Catholics, have not needed a "social gospel" because they always understood the gospel to be both social and spiritual.

True enough, the several Wesleyan denominations that flourished in the nineteenth century, along with small but earnest communities of Quakers, deserve much credit for their promotion of peace, the liberation of women, the abolition of slavery, justice to native Americans, and the crusade against the manufacture and sale of liquor (which they considered a social blight spread by the greed of brewers and salonkeepers). Moreover, they usually championed the cause of poor people in British and American political contests.[15]

However, I wish to stress here, the role of non-Wesleyans and non-Quakers in promoting social justice. The Lutheran Pietists in America, the New England Puritans, the Scotch-Irish and other Presbyterians, the German Peace-church people, the Baptists, and the Scandinavian Christians, of both Lutheran, Covenant, and Free Church backgrounds helped shape the Christian heritage of social concern in America. And though I do not have the space to underline it, the same can be said of the social convictions of many Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christians as well, especially whenever the evangelicals among them turned their attention to biblical ethics. In short, no one spiritual tradition in Christianity, but all of them, whenever they became preoccupied with trying to follow Moses and the prophets, Jesus and the apostles, developed not only an individual ethic of righteousness and love, but a social one as well.

The story begins with the Protestant Reformation and the proliferation of evangelical movements that followed in its train. John Calvin's hopes for a Christian social order in sixteenth-century Geneva, Switzerland, helped to shape a Scottish Presbyterian culture and to provoke the Puritan revolution in England. That revolution made English Puritanism a model for all kinds of religious movements of social transformation, including the establishment of the Puritan Commonwealth in New England. Later, that Puritan tradition encouraged nineteenth century Congregationalist and Presbyterian pastors to embrace the goal of building the kingdom of God on earth.[16]

Less perhaps can be said about Martin Luther, but Lutheran scholars now stress the Reformer's teaching, especially in his later years, that Christians must live a life of holy deeds, and that these are not human works but the fruit of divine grace.[17] The step from that understanding to a commitment to charity, mercy, and justice toward all persons is a small one, and Lutheran pietists of all descriptions often took it, both in Europe

and America. Hence the multitude of orphanages, homes for the aged, and schools that they founded under the leadership of August H. Francke and Henry M. Muhlenberg.[18] Pastors who came from Germany in the nineteenth century to serve relatively recent immigrants brought a similar consciousness of social obligation to many German-American evangelicals. Typical, for example, was the role that Gustav Niebuhr played in the mixed Lutheran and Reformed Synod that nurtured his two sons, H. Richard and Reinhold Niebuhr, famous ethicists in the generation that preceded our own.[19]

after, the Southern Baptist Convention furthered the idea of the sovereignty and independence of each congregation, even while it was making Southern culture overwhelmingly Baptist.[24]

Out of these early commitments to social idealism emerged the nineteenth century evangelical passion to build God's kingdom on earth. The spark of the social flame was no doubt the emergence of hopes for the near onset of the millennium, the biblical thousand years of peace on earth. Scholars often attribute the millennial idea to Jonathan Edwards, even though

The concern for social justice has been a major contribution of evangelical faith to modern culture.

Continental backgrounds of the tradition of social reform are also evident from the work of Mennonites, Brethren, Moravians, and other German "Peace Christians," as they were called. True, many Mennonites championed the idea of "two kingdoms," one divine and the other human, to both of which Christians belonged; and they tended across the years toward increasing preoccupation with the relationship of their own "separated" congregations to the kingdom of God.[20] All these groups, however, were committed to an ethic of non-violence. They refused to serve in armies, bear arms, swear oaths in courts of law, or otherwise to give the heart's allegiance to a worldly kingdom—an attitude still evident in the well-known encounters of the Amish Mennonites with the state. They have kept alive the idea that Christianity is a counter-cultural religion, and point out that a merely civil or public faith allows all kinds of corruptions of Christian ethics in the name of national patriotism.[21]

Anglican traditions of social justice contributed much to the American scene as well, from the colonial period forward. True, the Church of England's record on slavery in the colonies was a sad one. After some uncertainty in the seventeenth century, they surrendered to the insistence of colonial planters that the new spiritual status of converted slaves did not free them from their bonds. During that century also they abandoned much of their dream of evangelizing and educating the native Americans or American Indians, as many still call them. The story of the Anglican effort to educate the poor English-speaking children, however, both in the Old World and the New, is part of the background of George Whitefield's orphanage in Georgia and, indeed, of much else in the humanitarian bent of Whitefield and the Wesleys.[22]

John Wesley's Methodists, of course, took a much sturdier stand against slavery, both on England's Caribbean sugar islands and in the new American nation. In the United States, forty years of Southern resistance to that stand eventually frustrated Bishop Francis Asbury's effort to build an antislavery communion. During the early years of Methodism in America, however, Southern whites set their slaves free on becoming church members. Later on, when freeing one's slaves became illegal, Bishop Caspers of South Carolina, one third of whose members were Black, carried on an impressive ministry of evangelism and oral education for slaves.[23]

Meanwhile, in Britain and America, that wing of the Baptist movement which took its stand for the sovereignty of the congregation, for adult baptism by immersion, and for the separation of church and state led the way in resisting the power of the political authorities to impose their will on the churches. They gave sturdy support to the independency of New England Baptists before and after the Revolution. There-

the Northampton pastor got only a few lines into print about it during his lifetime. The idea's first great American advocate was Samuel Hopkins, Puritan pastor at Newport, Rhode Island, during the decades following the American War for Independence. His widely circulated lectures on the millennium, like a half-dozen of John Wesley's later sermons, gave a rational and biblical basis for expanding Christian hopes.[25] However, these hopes sprang as much from the popular optimism generated by the settlement of a new and now republican nation composed of peoples from many European and African lands. Christians on both sides of the Atlantic believed God was moving forward the timetable of human destiny, in response to worldwide evangelism. Clergymen in all nations urged believers to seek an outpouring of the Spirit of God that would prepare the kingdom for the King.[26]

Thus in the late 1770s, millennialism sparked the organization of the New York and Connecticut Missionary Societies. Both were modeled on recent British examples and aimed at supporting ministers on the frontiers of western New York and Pennsylvania.[27] The philosophy and aims of the missionary movement were, then, international from the start. Witness the close association of millennialism with overseas missions, first in Scotland and England and shortly afterward in America, where both were joined in the famous "Haystack prayer meeting" conducted in 1812 by students at Williams College in western Massachusetts. From that point forward the missionary idea drew deeply upon the internationalism that pervades the New Testament Scriptures. These declare that the teaching and ministry of Christ and the apostles were not the announcement of a new faith but an extension to all peoples of the promises God had first made to Abraham and his decendents.[28]

As with John Wesley's millennial views, faithfully understood and reproduced in the preaching of generations of his British and American followers, so with those of Lutheran and Reformed evangelicals of the nineteenth century: in our modern sense they were neither premillennial nor postmillennial. Rather, they declared that the Christian churches must seek the evangelization of the whole world amidst an outpouring of the Spirit, and so hasten Christ's return. His coming would make the hoped-for thousand years of peace a social reality. In that day, they were convinced, and increasingly as it drew near, justice would roll down from the mountains, the burdens of poverty would be lifted, and all forms of oppression, including slavery, war, ignorance, and exploitation, would pass away.[29]

Millennial hope, then, underlay all aspects of nineteenth century social idealism. I did not understand this fact when I wrote my first book, *Revivalism and Social Reform*, and made

the chapter on the anticipation of Christ's kingdom the last and climactic one, rather than, as I should have, making it the first and foundational one.[30] One of my early graduate students, Garth Rosell, now academic vice-president at Gordon-Conwell Seminary, later taught me what reading broadly in the evangelical literature of the first two decades of that century has fully confirmed: millennialism is a parent to the nineteenth century revivalism, not its offspring.[31]

Moreover, millennialism pervaded the nineteenth century peace movement. About this I also knew little, and felt less, during the period when I was writing that book. The association of the two ideas, I now see, was close and widespread. Edward Hick's famous painting, "The Peaceable Kingdom," showed all kinds of lions lying down with the lambs. Not only Quakers, Mennonites, and German Brethren, but New England Congregationalists and Southern Presbyterians were regional leaders.[32] A small but significant minority of American Methodists, in Canada and all parts of the United States, kept alive the revolutionary commitment to non-violence, though here as elsewhere in the nineteenth century radical Christian pacifism was rare.[33] Moreover, the several wars fought by the United States, from the Mexican to the Spanish-American, each muffled for a time the rhetoric of peacableness.[34]

But concern for peace was so strong that on the eve of the Civil War deeply anti-slavery Christians like the Methodist lay evangelist, Phoebe Palmer, suppressed their abolitionist feelings out of fear that they might help drive the nation into civil war. William Lloyd Garrison championed both abolitionism and peace. He argued throughout his life for peaceable secession by the North.[35] When the nation drifted into the bloodiest war of the century, freeing the slaves was not its first aim, but the preservation of the union. Only in retrospect can we view Lincoln's wartime emancipation of the slaves still under Confederate rule as a "good" outcome. "Good," that is, if one disregards the alternative of peaceable and compensated emancipation. Such a politically realistic policy might have overcome the stubbornness of the most radical pro-slavery Southerners.[36]

The temperance movement was equally important to nineteenth century evangelicals. It eventually succeeded after one hundred years of political agitation. The movement sprang up during the first decade of the nineteenth century, when the protest against New England manufacturers and sellers of rum became an important expression of the evangelical desire to save the poor from exploitation by the wealthy. By the late 1820s, New England Congregationalist pastors were turning against all use of alcohol, and Charles G. Finney was making total abstinence, like peace and anti-slavery, the obligation of all Christians. It was a centerpiece of the social reforms he advocated during the 1830s in his New York City congregation as well as at his college at Oberlin, in Ohio.[37]

The principal thing to understand here is that right down until the passage during World War I of the Eighteenth Amendment, which enabled Congress to ban the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors, the movement seemed to its sponsors a crusade for social justice, rather than simply an effort to regulate private morality.[38] Only after the adoption of that amendment, when enforcement of the Volstead Act fell upon individuals, did publicists and politicians who opposed Prohibition convince a majority of American voters that the hope to regulate morality had in fact motivated temperance reformers. After fifteen years of capricious enforcement, the nation turned against Prohibition.[39] Historians have ever since neglected the true story of the "noble experiment."

Advocates of the Marxist notion that evangelical Christianity is an opiate against privation, that it so focuses converts' minds on heaven that they are of no earthly good, should consider the Blacks. Thousands of them became Christians while yet under slavery, and their hopes for heaven sustained both their submission and resistance to terrible injustice.

The "common school" movement, later called the campaign for free public schools, was even more important to nineteenth century Christians. Poor children rarely had access to the private schools conducted by either entrepreneurial teachers or religious congregations. In the new settlements of the West, struggling congregations were usually unable to maintain schools at all. Though on the northern sector of successive frontiers, from New York to Oregon, settlers from Puritan New England led the way, there and in most of the Ohio and lower Mississippi valleys the great diversity of denominations, all wishing to educate children, was a formidable obstacle.[40]

Clergymen and laypersons gradually realized that the moral values essential to both democracy and Christian faith could be taught to all children in common, without favoring the doctrines of any one sect. Often Eastern churches sent out educational missionaries to the West, directing them to organize non-denominational "common schools" in frontier towns which had none, then to do gospel work on Sundays in church buildings belonging to one or another denomination.[41] From the experience of many persons, then, the conviction emerged that free and tax-supported education for poor children was the social obligation of all Christians.

Little wonder that the public schools were so infused with the spirit of Protestant evangelical faith. At times, they became suspect to both Jews and Roman Catholics, the one wishing them to be less Christian and the other, more Catholic. After some slight modifications in larger cities, however, the campaign for free, and later for compulsory, public schooling moved ahead. One of its major themes was social justice for poor children.[42]

Likewise, the anti-slavery movement won favor among a broad company of evangelicals. The story of widespread religious support of it has been told in a number of volumes, including my own, but I wish to stress here three neglected aspects of that story. First, the opposition of Black Christians to slavery, even when expressed by nothing more than flight, gained strength from their identification with the enslaved Hebrews, whom God liberated under Moses. Advocates of the Marxist notion that evangelical Christianity is an opiate against privation, that it so focuses converts' minds on heaven that they are of no earthly good, should consider the Blacks. Thousands of them became Christians while yet under slavery, and their hopes for heaven sustained both their submission and resistance to terrible injustice. Neither before nor after Civil War do we find any pro-slavery Black Christians; almost none made compromises with the institution that were not forced upon them. Escaped slaves who became pastors of free Black

churches in the North, such as the notable Prebyterian W.J.C. Fennington, author of *The Fugitive Blacksmith*, expressed an understanding of Christianity that scholars have only recently begun to appreciate.[43] Once the Civil War liberated them, an amazing number of Black church organizations moved aboveground in every part of the South. They became the centers of Afro-American education and communal life precisely because Christianity had won such deep loyalty among the enslaved.[44]

Second, the support many white evangelicals gave to colonizing slaves in Africa—a grand piece of wishful thinking or, as some steadfastly believe, a substitute for dealing honestly with the problem of the free Negro in America—drew in some cases, at least, upon three reasonable notions. It seemed to its evangelical proponents a way of helping to Christianize African societies, an act of restitution of having torn Black persons from their homelands, and a means of hastening through both these means the dawn of the millennium.[45]

Third, Black education both before and after the Civil War was a major evangelical concern. After state law made it illegal to teach slaves to read and write, Methodists in South Carolina carried on for thirty years an extensive program of oral education, aimed at helping Black people to learn all they possibly could without knowing how to read. Secretly, of course, and in very large numbers, Blacks taught one another to read; and, in defiance of the law, a few whites taught their slaves to do so. After the Civil War, when missionaries from the North began to pour into the South, their first preoccupation was the education of Black people. They founded scores of academies and a few struggling colleges like Hampton Institute. A multitude of small and primitive church buildings served as schoolhouses on weekdays, well into the twentieth century. Long before this educational crusade became a campaign to reconstitute the culture of the South in ways that both secular and religious persons supported, a vast program of education, both rural and urban, had been set in motion. It combined white missionary zeal with the social aspirations of Black Christians.[46]

Since Black education, like the abolitionist agitation that preceded it, focused attention upon the poverty and social need, the freed slaves developed an understanding of Christianity that made compassion and social justice central. Toward the end of the century, when whites developed various forms of social Christianity, Black religion showed little change. They had always considered the gospel to be as much concerned with social as with individual ethics.[47]

But for whites, the emergence of a socially concerned Christianity was a great leap forward. Robert H. Bremner believes the discovery of poverty in the United States took place only with the arrival of vast numbers of penniless European immigrants in the 1880s. Evangelical Christians discovered it, however, in the three decades preceding the Civil War. By the 1840s, groups of pastors and lay people were organizing volunteers to visit weekly the destitute families in each block of every sizeable city in America, looking for cases of illness, hunger, or cold that required immediate help.[48] After several years, interdenominational city missionary societies came into existence in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, then in smaller cities. Their organization fell chiefly to Congregationalists and Presbyterians, although many others assisted. They have survived down to the present day, as did many of the mission institutions organized just after the War, in emulation of Jerry Macaulay's famous one in New York City.[49]

During the same period, Christian movements to aid the impoverished masses in Britain and Canada caused many Anglican and most Methodist leaders to support various programs of social and political reform. These gave rise at last to a full-blown Christian socialism.[50] In less dramatic ways, Bernard Semmel has pointed out, Methodists there also helped reshape the personality and morals of people who must for the foreseeable future live in industrial cities and learn the self-reliance that free enterprise capitalism demands.[51]

At the end of the nineteenth century, when German Baptist Walter Rauschenbusch accepted a pastorate in New York City's "Hell Kitchen," his ministry to the poor, initially a thoroughly evangelical one, was simply the most socially radical of a multitude of missionary and institutional church ventures which aimed to show gospel compassion to the masses.[52] The 1890s witnessed an immense expansion of the English-born Salvation Army and its offspring, the Volunteers of America, in this country. Evangelicals organized myriads of social service agencies—orphanages, rescue homes for unwed mothers, and employment bureas, for example—to help poor people whose migration to the city had produced not success but abject failure.[53]

That providing medical care for the needy should have followed in the train of all of these endeavors is no surprise. The deaconess movement, as I pointed out earlier, gave early leadership to it. Lutheran and Methodist organizations gave the deaconess name to some of the finest hospitals in the nation. Many of these began as nursing homes. So with the Baptist hospitals that dot both northern and southern cities.[54] Even small sects, thought to be concerned only with spiritual matters, got into the act. Seventh-day Adventists established "sanitariums" in many states.[55] The first piece of printing by Phineas F. Bresee's infant Church of the Nazarene in California was a small card announcing the opening of services in Redmen's Hall, Los Angeles. On the back, the card announced that the daughter of Bresee's co-founder, Joseph P. Widney (a prominent physician and president of the infant University of Southern California) had drawn together a group of practical nurses, who offered to provide free medical care for the poor in the neighborhood.[56]

Meanwhile, of course, every immigrant people was developing a sense of solidarity and mutual aid that reflected both its religious traditions and its understanding of the call of Christ in the modern world. The World Parliament of Religions, at the Chicago Exposition of 1893, gave a great boost to such social idealism; so did the Men and Missions Movement twenty years later.[57] Dutch immigrants, for example, pondered deeply the meaning of the socially concerned Calvinism of Abraham Kuyper, a religious and political leader in Holland who became prime minister of that country in 1901. Kuyper rejected all views of evangelical Christianity that would deny the believer's responsibility to help Christianize the culture. Both at Hope and Calvin Colleges, in central Michigan, his ideas inspired three generations of Dutch-American Christians. At Calvin, they helped to spark the evangelical denomination called the Christian Reformed Church. At one crucial point in its early history, the latter group opted for Prohibition, even though beer-drinking had been customary in Dutch culture. The persuasive argument was that the Bible commanded that we should love our neighbors as ourselves. Since evangelical religion aimed to teach Christians how to live by that standard, the strong must help the weak by forswearing alcoholic beverages, and thus encourage total abstinence among poor people![58]

Conclusions

First, today's Evangelicals for Social Action, World Vision, Sojourners, and the Evangelical Roundtable are not signs of surrender to modern liberal influences but, rather, marks of a

revival of the old-time religion. Although today certain modern ideologies, whether those of liberal democracy, of liberation theology, or of either Christian or Marxian socialism, aim also at social justice, they are much less originators than imitators of an evangelical renewal that has gone on since Wesley's day. True to its several traditions, earnest Christianity roots compassion in the Old and New Testaments.

Second, since the day when John Fletcher tried to mediate the labor grievances of the poor miners in England's Severn Valley, evangelicals have declared that the pursuit of social justice is best carried on by non-violent and moral means. That is true whether Christians champion women's rights, the access of children both born and unborn to a decent existence, or the needs of the poor in Brazilian barrios, Nicaraguan villages, and Ethiopian deserts. It is also true of today's tragic divisions in the Union of South Africa. There, Black and Colored peoples are now rejecting any substitute for a just access to the wealth and opportunities of their beloved country.

Third, spiritual Christianity, living on daily instruction and inspiration from the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, is, as it ever has been, the source of that moral power by which many evils in society can be done away. The chief explanation for repeated outbursts of reforming zeal in our several evangelical communties has not been political ideology, but the ethics of Moses and Jesus. St. Paul was doubtless thinking of both of them when he wrote that all of the moral law is summed up in the words "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." That some evangelical Protestants refuse to accept this simple lesson from Scripture, in an age when Philippine and Polish Roman Catholics seem to have grasped it, is beyond my comprehension.

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[1] The sermon is being reprinted in my volume, *Whitefield and Wesley on the New Birth*, fall, 1986 (Zondervan Publishing: Grand Rapids, Michigan) the introduction to which spins out the evidence for the preceding points.

[2] Henry M. Muhlenberg, *The Journals . . .*, trans. Theodore G. Tappert and John W. Dobestein (2 vols.; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1942, 1950), I, 85, 8, 121, 141-2, 145.

[3] Winthrop S. Hudson, *Religion in America . . .*(3rd. ed.; New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1981), 179-81; Emory Stevens Bucke, ed., *The History of American Methodism* (3 vols.; Nashville. Tenn.: The Abingdon Press, 1964), I, 115-20, 131, 141-4, 187, 223-5, 238, 296-301; Donald S. Mathews, *Religion in the Old South* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), 28-38.

[4] C.C. Goen, *Revivalism and Separatism in New England: Strict Congregationalists and Separate Baptists in the Great Awakening* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962); George A. Rawlyk, *Ravished by the Spirit* (Kingston, Ontario: McGill-Queens University Press, 1981).

[5] Mathews, *Religion in the Old South*, 22-8.

[6] Alexander Campbell *The Christian System . . .*(4th ed.; Cincinnati: H.S. Bosworth, 1866), 15-23, 30-32, 34, 149-53; Robert E. Hooper, *Crying in the Wilderness: A Biography of David Lipscomb* (Nashville: David Lipscomb College, 1979), 30-3, 123-25, J.W. McGarvey, *Autobiography . . .*(Lexington, Kentucky: College of the Bible, 1960).

[7] Timothy L. Smith, "Religion and Ethnicity in America," *The American Historical Review*, 83 (December, 1978): 1155-1185. cf., for examples, Milton L. Rudwick, *Fundamentalism and The Missouri Synod . . .*(St. Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 1966), 1-86; James D. Bratt, *Dutch Calvinism in America . . .*(Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1984), 1-82.

[8] Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The "Invisible Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); Owen D. Pelt and Ralph Lee Smith, *The Story of the National Baptists* (New York: Vantage Press, 1960).

[9] Timothy L. Smith, "The Evangelical Kaleidoscope and the Call to Christian Unity," *The Christian Scholar's Review*, 15 (Spring, 1986): 125-40 (reprinted, with minor revisions from *Midstream*, 22 (July/October, 1983): 308-25; Mark Noll, "Evangelicals and the Study of the Bible," and George Marsden "Introduction," in Marsden, ed., *Evangelicalism in Modern America* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1984), vii-xix, 103-21.

[10] See the essays by Athenasios F.S. Emmert, Walter J. Holweger, Donald L. Gelpi, S.J., J. Massyngberde Ford and Kilian McDonnell, O.S.B., in Russell P. Spittler, ed., *Perspectives on the New Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1976).

[11] Thomas C. Oden, *Guilt Free* (Nashville, Tennessee: The Abingdon Press, 1980), 80-137, is an example. George C. Marsden's forthcoming history of Fuller Theological Seminary will chronicle its influence upon the Baptist and Presbyterian denominations, especially in the Far West.

[12] Joel A. Carpenter, "From Fundamentalism to the New Evangelical Coalition," and Richard N. Ostling, "Evangelical Publishing and Broadcasting," in Marsden, ed., *Evangelicalism*, 3-16, 46-55.

[13] Even such a neo-conservative ecumenist as Richard John Neuhaus, in his *The Naked Public Square: Religion and Democracy in America* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1984), 22. Cf. James Luther Adams, *Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Culture, Science, and Religion* (New York: Schocken Books, 1970), 1-3, and *passim*.

[14] Richard V. Pierard, "The New Religious Right in American Politics," in Marsden, ed., *Evangelicalism*, 161-74; David O. Moberg, *The Great Reversal: Evangelism versus Social Concern* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1972), 8-45.

[15] James M. Gustafson, *Christ and the Moral Life* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968; reprint, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 197?), 70-83, analyzes Wesleyan ethics. See also, Leon O. Hynson, *To Reform the Nation: Theological Foundations of Wesley's Ethics* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Francis Asbury Press, 1984); and Sydney V. James, *A People Among Peoples: Quaker Benevolence in Eighteenth-Century America* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963).

[16] Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution* (New York: Viking Press, 1972), 11-5, 70-121; Gary Scott Smith, *The Seeds of Secularism: Calvinism, Culture, and Pluralism in America, 1870-1915* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1985), 141-57.

[17] Paul Althaus, *The Ethics of Martin Luther* (Philadelphia: The Fortress Press, 1972); Gustafson, *Christ and The Moral Life*, Chaps. 3-4.

[18] Ernst Stoeffler, *The Rise of Evangelical Pietism* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965).

[19] William G. Crystal, "'A Man of the Hour and the Time': The Legacy of Gustav Niebuhr," *Church History*, 49 (December, 1980): 416-32.

[20] Richard McMaster, *Land, Piety, and Peoplehood: The Establishment of Mennonite Communities in America, 1685-1770* (Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1985); James C. Juhnke, *A People of Two Kingdoms: The Political Acculturation of the Kansas Mennonites* (Newton, Kansas: Faith and Life Press, 1975).

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[42] Timothy L. Smith, "Protestant Schooling and American Naitonality, 1800-1850," *The Journal of American History*, 53 (March, 1967): 679-95; Cremin, *American Education*, 148-85.

[43] Timothy L. Smith, "Slavery and Theology: The Emergence of Black Christian Consciousness in Nineteenth-Century America," *Church History*, 31 (December, 1973): 497-512; Vincent Harding, "Religion and Resistance Among Antebellum Negroes, 1800-1860," in John M. Mulder and John F. Wilson, *Religion in American History: Interpretive Essays* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1978), 270-87.

[44] James M. McPherson, *The Abolitionist Legacy: From Reconstruction to the NAACP* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1975), 143-60, and *passim*, recounts the evangelical legacy, both black and white.

[45] Loveland, *Southern Evangelicals*, 213-6. Cf. P.J. Staudenraus, *The African Colonization Movement, 1816-1865* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961).

[46] McPherson, *Abolitionist Legacy*, 161-295, spells out the long story. See above, note 23; and Cf. Timothy L. Smith, "Progressive and Americanism Education, 1880-1920, " *The Harvard Educational Review*, 31 (Spring, 1961): 168-93.

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[49] Smith-Rosenberg, *Religion and . . .the City*; and Aaron I. Abell, *The Urban Impact upon American Protestantism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1943).

[50] Robert T. Handy, "The Early Days of Christian Socialism in America, 1900-1920," *Church History*, 21 (1952): 39-54.

[51] Bernard Semmel, *The Methodist Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 96-110, and *passim*.

[52] Robert T. Handy, ed., *The Social Gospel in America, 1870-1920: Gladden, Ely, Rauschenbusch* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966).

[53] Norris, Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums: Evangelical Social Work, 1865-1920* (Metuchen, New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1977). Cf. Ross L. Finney, *Personal Religion and the Social Awakening* (Cincinnati: Methodist Book Concern, 1913), 1-35.

[54] Ruth Fritz Meyer, *The Role of Women in the Church From Bible Times Up To and Including a History of the Lutheran Woman's Missionary League . . .(St. Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 1967).*

[55] Leroy Edwin Froom, *Movement of Detiny* (Washington, D.C.: Seventh-Day Adventist Publishing House, 1971).

[56] Flyer, dated October, 1895, in Bresee Archives, Point Loma Nazarene College, San Diego, California.

[57] Gary S. Smith, *The Seeds of Secularism*, 142-45.

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The Black Contribution to Evangelicalism

by James Earl Massey

The evangelical faith has meant, and continues to mean, much to Black Americans. At this time when Evangelicalism has re-emerged as a potent presence in American life, I want to discuss what Black Americans have contributed to this mosaic-like spiritual grouping and movement.

It has been difficult to trace those contributions. Almost since the beginning of the black presence, in this land, blacks have been receiving from a biblically-based message, testing and proving the viability of that message, sharing their spiritual experiences, and passing on the evangelical heritage with concern, creativity, and gusto.

I

Foremost among the many conributions blacks have made to evangelicalism is *the development of black evangelical churches.*

In speaking about "black evangelical churches," I am referring to those congregations and denominations which took their rise in history under the evangelical witness and work of alert and intense black preachers. More often than not, these were servants of the Lord who found no full welcome in white churches because of racist barriers against open fellowship.

Black religious separatism was not initially something that evangelical blacks desired. Historian Albert J. Raboteau, assessing the black experience in American Evangelicalism during and after slavery, commented:

> The opportunity for black religious separatism was due to the egalitarian character of evangelical Protestantism; its necessity was due, in part, to the racism of white Evangelicals.[1]

But something more must be said. The separateness forced upon black evangelicals became a vehicle for the full assertion of black independence and black pride. The very fact that blacks became and remained Christian in the face of racist barriers against them was proof that the essence of Christianity was not the white man's creation or property. When black believers designated their groupings as "African Methodist" or "African Baptist," it was their way of affirming themselves while staking their claim in a distinctive system of spiritual life. The existence of black churches allowed blacks a spiritual home, a meaningful social setting, and a political base from which to engage the forces of a racist society.[2]

The majority of black churches across our nation are rooted in the evangelical faith. There are some critics who seek to dispute this fact. Having identified some evident weaknesses within black churches—i.e., a seeming self-preoccupation, a lack of historical perspective regarding the wider Church, and the presence of a strong folk religion culture at work in black belief—some critics have questioned whether an adequate biblical frame of reference still informs and controls black faith.[3]

The truth is that a strong commitment to the gospel message still pervades the majority of black church groups. The black churches still insist on a biblically-based faith, still teach that the revelation of God is in Jesus, and that Scripture is the Word of God for all of life. There is still strong concern among black believers to accent the saviorhood, lordship, and "onliness" of Jesus Christ. The biblical message is still being proclaimed in black pulpits about the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit, the expected return of the Lord, and final judgment of history by a just God. These faith tenets I have mentioned are some of the theological factors which mark evangelicalism.[4] Black evangelicals are not deficient in their theology, even though they often differ with white evangelicals over what should be understood as the social implications of the faith.

II

A second contribution blacks have made to evangelicalism is *a musical tradition that encourages self-expression in worship.* It is a tradition that not only honors biblical faith but personal experiences of life as well. This musical tradition allows the whole self to be expressive in the public worship of God.

This tradition of personal expressiveness in worship dates back as early as the slavery era, when black slaves created such Spirituals as "Nobody Knows De Trouble I See," "Steal Away to Jesus," and "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?" to name a few,[5] but it became increasingly evident to others through the traditional Gospel music that developed and flourished in the black urban churches. The many compositions of the Rev. Charles Albert Tindley (1851?-1933) fall into this category. Tindley was a famous black United Methodist preacher and song-writer, and his soul-stirring musical works became widely known and used. Tindley's style and focus on personal experience heavily influenced the later development of the sacred Gospel Songs under such composers as Thomas A. Dorsey (b. 1899), the "Father of Gospel Music." This later style was characterized by a piano (or organ) improvising on the melody and harmonics of a song while the singer(s) improvised on the words.[6] Tindley's work also influenced Lucie Campbell (1885-1963). Campbell wrote "I Need Thee Every Hour" and "He'll Understand, and Say 'Well Done!'" Still further development in the Gospel Music tradition took place under Sallie Martin (b. 1896), who wrote "Just a Closer Walk With Thee," and W. Herbert Brewster, Sr. (b. 1899), who wrote "Surely, God Is Able." Martin and Brewster added to the tradition by giving it a stronger flavor from secular rhythms, a less formal use of religious themes, a more entertaining flair, and the use of gospel groups that catered to "Paid Admission" audiences.

While these additional changes in the Gospel Music style after the 1940s still involved words about personal religious

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James Earl Massey is Dean of the Chapel and University Professor of Religion and Society at Tuskegee University. *This material was originally presented at the Evangelical Roundtable June 4-6, 1986, and is used by permission.*

experience, they had carried the tradition to a point quite removed from the hymn-like style Tindley established in his Jesus-centered songs.

Charles A. Tindley's songs have been incorporated into white denominational hymnals and songbooks. It is not unusual to find white evangelical soloists singing such songs as "Nothing Between," and white choirs doing "Beams of Heaven."[7] Interestingly, both of these songs illustrate the ever-present focus in black Christian worship upon Jesus as religious *subject*, on the one hand, and as religious *object* of faith, on the other, with concern on the part of the singer to be companioned and assisted by him in life's struggles. The refrain in "Beams of Heaven" affirms this:

> *I do not know how long 'twill be, Nor what the future holds for me. But this I know, if Jesus leads me, I shall get home some day.*

Tindley's "Nothing Between" is an affirmational statement of faith and an admonishment to the singer(s) to remain true and faithful to Jesus. The first stanza begins:

> *Nothing between my soul and the Savior, Naught of this world's delusive dream, I have renounced all sinful pleasure, Jesus is mine; there's nothing between.*

and the refrain admonishes:

> *Nothing between my soul and the Savior, So that His blessed face may be seen, Nothing preventing the least of His favor. Keep the way clear! Let nothing between.*

Tindley's song "Stand By Me" is a prayer addressed to Jesus, asking his companionship and assistance as the changing seasons of life make their demands.

Far more could be said about the way black church music encourages self-expression to God and fellow believers. The acknowledged contagion of this expressiveness stands documented in the continuing popularity black singers and gospel choirs enjoy in inter-racial gatherings. But far more important than such popularity, it must be said—and without fear of over-simplifying a now-complex music culture in the wider Church world—that the present sacred concert culture within which The Gaithers, Sandi Patti, and other whites shine like stars owes more than a little to the black musical tradition. This is so at the level of the free vocal style, the lively instrumental accompaniment, and the devotional focus on Jesus. The evangelical world would be musically poorer apart from the rich and engaging musical contribution from Black Americans.

III

A third major contribution Black Americans have made to evangelicalism is *an active witness against racism in the Church* and an insistent call for white believers to become more socially responsible and active.

In 1973, historian Earle E. Cairns wrote:

> Contemporary Evangelicals, who for a time ignored their responsibility as Christians in Society, are becoming increasingly aware that . . .they have a responsiblity to put the principles of Christ into action . . .in the social order in which they live.[8]

Although Cairns did not dwell at length on what had stimulated that awareness, we must remember that he wrote after the Civil Rights Movement had prodded major changes on the social scene during the decades of the 1950s and 1960s. To be sure, some change in evangelical social views was stimulated by Carl F.H. Henry's writings in *Christianity Today* and in strategic books such as his *Aspects of Christian Social Ethics*.[9] Sherwood Wirt also called attention to several clear issues for response in his *The Social Conscience of the Evangelical*.[10] But we must not overlook the fact that both Henry and Wirt, among others, wrote after much sensitizing about the American social scene had been initiated by socially active black leaders. The "increasing awareness" among evangelicals about social responsibility as Christians was stimulated either directly or indirectly by the clear ethical demands victimized blacks had been calling into attention across the nation.

I am reminded about something that happened in this vein during a world convention of evangelical leaders during the late 1960s. While attending the World Congress on Evangelism in Berlin, Germany, in November 1966, delegates heard many position papers which treated aspects of the Congress theme: "One Race, One Gospel, One Task." But as the Congress continued across those ten days, we blacks discovered that no attention had been devoted in any of the position papers to the first part of the theme, "One Race," nor had any papers on it been distributed for private reading. The Congress delegates had been drawn together from across the world, literally, and the vast assemblage—representing the largest ecumenical and evangelical gathering of the Church since Pentecost A.D. 33—reflected great diversity of backgrounds, nationalities, geographical locations, and color distinctions, and yet no major statement about the oneness of the human race had been given.

We black American delegates discussed this among ourselves and finally gained an audience with Carl F.H. Henry, the Congress Chairman, to question the evident omission (interestingly, it later came to our attention that some delegates from India, Africa, and South America had also noticed the omission). When we had finished talking with Dr. Henry it was evident that the aspect of the theme had been taken for granted; the planning committee had not assigned anyone to treat it. Dr. Henry apologized on behalf of the planning committee, and he asked us if we would be willing to work at developing a summary statement about "One Race" which would be included in the final report to be distributed to the world press as an outcome of the Congress. A number of us agreed to help develop that statement on race: Jimmy MacDonald, Howard O. Jones, Bob Harrison, Ralph Bell, Louis Johnson, and myself.[11]

We worked into the late hours of the night, but we managed to finish with a clearly focused statement on race. We called attention to the fact that racism hinders efforts to evangelize. We wrote forthrightly about human equality as a biblical principle following the oneness of the human family under God as Creator. We stressed the imperative of agape love in our dealings with all humans, and the need to reject racial and national barriers which forbid full fellowship and cooperative ministry in the Church. As it turned out, the section we helped to prepare about the worldwide problem of racism was un-

The evangelical world would be musically poorer apart from the rich and engaging musical contribution from Black Americans.

doubtedly the strongest statement evangelicals had ever made on that subject until that time.[12] But given the concern for evangelizing the human race in the present century, we knew that the time had long since passed for making such a clear and forceful statement. We did not offer any distinct strategies for dealing with racism, but our concern at that point was not to prod decision about strategy; it was to give a basic statement that declared our biblical understanding of racism as a social evil, an unjust pattern in society, and a barrier to cooperative evangelism.

It might be helpful to mention a few of the more noted evangelical black leaders who have helped to promote change in race relations within evangelicalism.

> without adequate appreciation of our own social, political, economic, and religious realities, or with insufficient understanding of our capabilities and gifts—to view ourselves as others see us, the first step toward answering the question of who we really are must come from the awareness of the frame of reference we are to locate within in order to know ourselves. In this we do not deny the correctness, within limits, of the view of ourselves others have of us. We cannot see ourselves as others see us. But the point made is that we cannot allow the *determination* of who we are to be placed into, or remain as the case may be, outside ourselves and in the hands of others, no matter who they are.[19]

A strong commitment to the gospel message still pervades the majority of black church groups. The black churches still insist on a biblically-based faith, still teach that the revelation of God is in Jesus, and that Scripture is the Word of God for all of life.

1. Howard O. Jones, associate evangelist with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Asssociation since 1958. To understand the responsible level at which Jones has helped in the struggle, one need only read his book *White Questions to a Black Christian.*[13] The questions Jones treated in that book were those asked him on the "race question" during evangelistic crusades, at Bible conferences, during missionary conventions, college and seminary engagements, and those sent to him in response to his radio ministry. The motive behind the writing was to provide "a bridge of communication between the races." The book gained a wide hearing and went into several editions.

2. Tom Skinner, national evangelist, whose book *Black and Free* chronicled his movement from a street gang leader in Harlem to a converted spokesman for Jesus across the nation and into other parts of the world.[14] When several hundred black evangelical young people were attending the 1970 Inter-Varsity Missionary Convention at Urbana, Illinois, it was Tom Skinner who used his scheduled address there to interpret their militancy and the need for the rest of the Church to understand it in a positive light.

3. William E. Pannell, an activist-interpreter-evangelist, whose book *My Friend, the Enemy* vividly set forth his personal story of how the Civil Rights Movement helped him to understand how his membership in a majority white church group culture obscured the meaning of his black heritage.[15] Pannell is now a Professor of Evangelism and Director of Black Church Studies at Fuller Seminary.

4. John Perkins, whose Voice of Calvary Ministries in Mississippi, and whose books *Let Justice Roll Down*[16] and *With Justice For All*[17] have marked him as a master planner for racial betterment and church witness. Will Norton, Jr.'s cover story on Perkins in the January 1, 1982 issue of *Christianity Today* was aptly done and properly titled: "John Perkins, The Stature of a Servant."[18]

5. William H. Bentley, a Chicago-based minister-theologian who has given steady leadership to the National Black Evangelical Association (founded in Los Angeles in 1963), and has actively sought to promote a distinctly biblical, theological, and social framework of study within which the black perspective can be adequately reflected. During his presidency of the Association, Bentley has stirred the members toward theologizing about social action. In his published history of the NBEA published in 1979, Bentley explained the origins and focus of the organization:

> Because as evangelicals, we have been taught, often

The concern was to understand blackness as a given distinction and God-given distinctive, gaining a proper self-understanding out of which to serve and relate with dignity. "Fellowship and Ministry—these are the poles around the Association resolves."[20]

William H. Bentley's theological leadership among black evangelicals has been recognized by the wider evangelical world, and it was he who accepted the assignment to write the chapter on "Black Believers in the Black Community" for the book *The Evangelicals*, which was edited by David F. Wells and John D. Woodbridge.[21] In that chapter, Bentley correctly explained black evangelicalism as a very distinct phenomenon originally rooted in the theology and cultus of the Bible school movement which had trained many of the black evangelicals. The chapter goes on to explain why blacks had dared to differ with white evangelicals over social matters, and why blacks found it necessary to re-define the issues for which white definitions were inadequate. The development of Black Theology is a case in point, and so is the involvement of black evangelical scholarly-pastors who have been active in black caucases mounted to help effect change in denominational systems where blacks have been in the minority position.

IV

This has been a rather limited survey, treating only three areas of major contribution from among several which more space would have allowed to be added. I have reported with some pointedness about the development of black evangelical churches, the continuing effects of the black church music tradition on the Evangelical music scene, and the prodding work of black evangelicals to help white evangelicals become socially responsible. It was necessary to treat this last contribution at some length because at the very time in the mid-1970s when evangelical Christianity was growing faster in America than any other "brand" or religious movement,—a group of more than forty million by 1977,[22] its influence at the social level of American life was not one of strength.

There is more which should be surveyed, i.e., the impact on the evangelical pulpits of the black preaching tradition,[23] insights from black urban churches about ministering in the city, to cite two more. But at this stage I must voice the plea of the writer of the Letter to the Hebrews: "For time would fail me to tell . . ."(11:32b).

[1] "The Black Experience in American Evangelicalism: The Meaning of Slavery," in Leonard I.

Sweet, ed., *The Evangelical Tradition in America* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1984), p. 183.

[2] On these benefits, see Gayraud S. Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism* (Garden City: Anchor Press, Doubleday, Inc., 1973), esp. Chapter IV, pp. 103-135.

[3] See the early criticisms from James M. Washington, *Black Religion* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964). In his *Politics of God*, a later work (1967), Washington altered a few of his initial criticisms of the black churches, and also in his more recent "The Peculiar Peril and Promise of Black Folk Religion," in *Varieties of Southern Evangelicalism*, ed. by David E. Harrell, Jr. (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1981), pp. 59-69.

[4] See the explication by Donald G. Bloesch, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology*: Vol. I, God, Authority, and Salvation (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), Chapter II ("The Meaning of Evangelical"), pp. 7-23.

[5] See Eileen Southern, *The Music of Black Americans: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1983 Sec. Ed.), esp. pp. 172-177, 197-200.

[6] *Ibid.*, see pp. 451-453.

[7] For the text of these and other Tindley songs, see Ralph H. Jones, *Charles Albert Tindley: Prince of Preachers* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1982), App. B, hymns. See also *Gospel Pearls* (Nashville: Sunday School Publishing Board, National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., 1921), one of the earliest "ecumenical" collections containing black church songs.

[8] Earle E. Cairns, *The Christian in Society* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1973), p. 162.

[9] Carl F.H. Henry, *Aspects of Christian Social Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964).

[10] Sherwood Wirt, *The Social Conscience of the Evangelical* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968).

[11] Personal reports about the Congress were published in books written by two of this group. See Bob Harrison, with Jim Montgomery, *When God Was Black* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1971), pp. 145-146; James Earl Massey, *Concerning Christian Unity* (Anderson: Warner Press, 1979), pp. 121-126.

[12] The full text of the Congress Statement is available in *One Race, One Gospel, One Task*, Vol. I, Carl F.H. Henry and Stanley Mooneyham, editors (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1967), pp. 5-7.

[13] *White Questions to a Black Christian* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975).

[14] *Black and Free* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1968).

[15] *My Friend, the Enemy* (Waco, TX: Word Books, Inc., 1968).

[16] *Let Justice Roll Down* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books).

[17] *With Justice For All* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1982).

[18] *Christianity Today*, January 1, 1982, pp. 18-22, with his picture featured on the cover.

[19] William H. Bentley, *National Black Evangelical Association: Reflections on the Evolution of a Concept of Ministry* (Chicago: 1979), p. 67.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

[21] (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975).

[22] See *Time* Magazine, December 26, 1977, feature story, pp. 52-58.

[23] The three preaching textbooks by black author James Earl Massey have had wide use in evangelical theological seminaries: *The Responsible Pulpit* (Anderson: Warner Press, 1974); *The Sermon in Perspective: A Study of Communication and Charisma* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976); *Designing the Sermon: Order and Movement in Preaching* ("Abingdon Preacher's Library") (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980).

The Authority of the Bible: What Shall We Then Preach?

by Paul J. Achtemeier

Let me begin with a passage of Scripture from Paul, and it concerns preaching. He writes to the Roman Christians: "Now how are people going to call upon one in whom they have not believed? But how are they going to believe in the one of whom they have never heard? But how then are they going to hear unless there is preaching?" (10:14). The importance of preaching is thus established: faith depends on it. But that passage also made clear earlier how preaching is to be shaped: to summon forth faith in Christ as Lord (see v. 9). Thus, preaching must be authoritative if it is to summon people to faith in Christ, and to be authoritative it must let God's own call to faith be heard through its words. What we are to preach, therefore, is the authoritative Word of God.

All that only raises the key and critical problem with which we must deal: where do we find authoritative witness to God's Word, so that we may responsibly conform our preaching to that Word, and so fulfill the mandate Paul put upon preachers? Obviously, to know something about Christ, we must turn to the place where we find witness to Christ, and that is in the Scriptures. Our problem is again solved: to preach authoritatively, we must preach the message of Scripture.

But our solution has raised a new question: how do we know Scripture is authoritative? Again our answer is to be found in the witness of the Bible to Christ. Since Christ is God's Word (John 1:14; note well, Christ, not Scripture, is God's Word), the witness to him will be authoritative because finally what we hear is God's own voice through the Scriptural witness to His Son.

Now another problem: how do we know it is God's voice? In the cacophony of culture, ancient as well as modern, how do we know it is God's voice we find in Scripture, and not the voice of an impostor, or even of Satan himself who, Paul tells us, can pose as an angel of light (II Cor. 11:14)? The solution to that problem must come from God himself, whose own Son, sent for the redemption of sinful humanity, is the center of the witness of Scripture. And the God who does not leave himself without witnesses has in fact sent his Spirit, to testify to our spirits what is the true voice of God. This has found its classical theological formulation in the phrase *testimonium internum spiritus sancti;* the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit, who helps us in our weakness so we may both in our prayer and in our hearing recognize God's own voice.

How do we know that the Spirit that confirms to us that the voice we hear in Scripture is God's voice and actually comes from God? How do we know it is not some deceitful spirit, to whom we should not give heed? After all, we are warned not to believe every spirit we hear, since many are false; rather, we are to test the spirits, to see whether they come from God or from another source (I John 4:1).

What is the test? It is the confession that Jesus, come in the flesh, is our Lord and Savior (I John 4:2; I Cor. 12:3). But that very same Spirit that moves one to that confession is also the Spirit that is given to the Christian community, indeed that constitutes the Christian community through the variety of its gifts (I Cor. 12:4-13). We know we find God's authoritative voice in Scripture therefore when we hear it within the community which confesses Christ as Lord, the community which the Spirit of God has called into existence, which Paul can call the "Body of Christ." It is within the body of Christ, therefore, that we hear the voice of God who speaks through the Word that is his Son.

It is finally the Christian community, created and sustained by God's own Spirit, who determines what in fact constitutes the authoritative speaking and hearing of the Word of God. Such an exegetical and theological conclusion has confirmation of its correctness in the history of the Christian community, since the determination of the boundaries of the canon of Scripture, and hence of the authoritative witness of God's Son, that is to God's Word, is an act of that very community. It was a decision made over several centuries, and within the context of the life and worship of that community. The authoritative canon is therefore based on the collective confession of faith of the Christian community who, having been called into being and sustained by God's own Spirit, has at the prompting of that same Spirit recognized in those Scriptures the true witness to God's own word, namely his Son. The authority of Scripture, therefore, and hence the authority

Paul J. Achtemeier is General Editor of Harper's Bible Dictionary, and a Professor of Biblical Interpretation at Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, VA. This material was originally presented at the Evangelical Roundtable June 4-6, 1986, and is used by permission.

of what we preach, is grounded in the Christian community's trust in the faithfulness of God to speak to us, and to send his Spirit so we may hear and understand what God says to us in his Son. So long as the community is faithful to its own confession of faith in God's Son as his Word, that is, so long as it is faithful to Scripture, it can confidently preach the content of that Scripture as the authoritative witness to God's act of mercy for us sinners in his Son.

quest led not to certainty but to misunderstanding so destructive that Jesus could only label it satanic (Mark 8:33). If Mark is correct that it was God's will that such post-resurrection certainty about who Jesus was was not possible to obtain during Jesus' pre-resurrection life (cf. 6:52, with its divine passive, implying God has "hardened their hearts," that is, prevented them from understanding), then to seek comparable certainty now about the authority of Scripture through theories about

The church will sicken and die from sermonic opinions which are not based on the authoritative canon of Scripture.

We are not finished; a few questions remain. How, for example, are we to listen to Scripture, to hear the voice of God witnessing to his Son for our own time and for our own culture? After all, our world is not the world of the New Testament. Few of us converse in Koine Greek, or feel the threat of Roman political power whenever we gather as Christians. How are we to find, and then use the authoritative Scriptures, so that what we preach may also share in that authority and that power?

It is at this point that our difficulties arise, as difficulties always arise at the point where theory intersects with hard reality. The desire to be faithful to the faith of the early Christian community which heard in the canon the authoritative witness to God's word to them in his Son, is a powerful and indispensable Christian desire. Such faithfulness is also necessary if we are to carry out the mandate implied in that passage from Romans with which we began, namely that for our preaching to be effective, it must summon those who hear it to confess of Christ as Lord of their lives. Such faithfulness also implies our confidence in the authority of Scripture, so we base our preaching on it; only in that way will our preaching truly summon to Christ. Anything else is to preach not Christ but ourselves as Lord. The church will sicken and die from sermonic opinions which are not based on the authoritative canon of Scripture.

It is precisely the mandate to summon sinful humanity to the confession of the Lordship of Christ, however, that can get those who preach from Scripture into trouble. For preaching to be recognized as authoritative, the authority of its source must be acknowledged. After all, to deny the authority of Scripture is to deny the authority of any preaching which takes that Scripture as its basis, and so it is quite easy to become preoccupied with insuring that our base of authority is recognized and recognizable. We want to secure the authority of Scripture as the authoritative basis of our preaching, so we may fulfill our missionary mandate. It is in the course of doing that that we tend to forget that even within the Christian community, we continue to walk by faith, and not by sight. We tend to forget that the authority of Scripture is not given into our hands to defend and use as we see fit. Its authority remains the Word of God, that is, his Son, to whom Scripture points.

We easily go astray when we seek to assure ourselves and others of that authority of God's Word, instead of letting that Word take its own course. How we would like to walk by sight at least one or two steps, at least in the matter of the authority of Scripture. How we would like at least a little post-parousial vision in our pre-parousial world of faith. Yet to seek such post-parousial certainty in the pre-parousial age is as likely to be successful as were the disciples, according to the Gospel of Mark, in their attempts to find post-resurrection certainty about Jesus during his pre-resurrection life. Their

the origin or composition of the text would also be unproductive. To press too far is finally the sin of idolatry, in this case seeking to take responsibility for Scriptural authority out of God's hands and to ground it in ways we find useful or even necessary.

The Historical-Critical Method: Two Propositions

All of that raises the question of how we are to listen to Scripture so its authority is preserved, without trying to make it an instrument of sight in a time when only faith is possible. To answer that question, I want to say something about a current method employed in studies of the Bible, the "historical-critical" method. I want to do that by means of two propositions. First: It was precisely the ongoing attempt to understand Scripture that made the rise of the historical-critical method inevitable, if not necessary. Second: The historical-critical method must now be redefined in such a way that it becomes a valid and useful tool for listening to the Scriptures in a way appropriate to their authoritative status.

A variety of historical influences came together to launch what is regularly called the age of critical study of the Bible. First, there was the way the Bible was being used in theology. In the age of Protestant Orthodoxy, which began about the mid-seventeenth century and continued as a dominant way of doing theology in to the mid-to-late eighteenth century,[1] Scripture was regarded as basically a collection of sentences, each having theological meaning in and of itself, a meaning which could be adequately determined apart from the literary context in which the sentence was found. The sentences could thus be used in any order, and indeed a basic task of theology was to arrange them in a systematic order, so the theological intent of Scripture might be unfolded in a coherent way. This demanded that all sentences bearing theological freight be regarded as having equal significance, and that that significance be regarded as remaining, regardless of any context into which they might be placed.

Second was the growing knowledge of the natural world, and a concomitant confidence on the part of secular sciences in their ability to reach final truth about the world. In the process, much of the cosmology and biology of the Bible was recognized as no longer conforming to new discoveries.

A third factor, which originated with the Enlightenment and its motto *ad fontes* ("back to the sources"), had to do with the increasing study of the sources of the ancient world, many of which were becoming available as a result of the beginnings of biblical archaeology. Discoveries of ancient, non-biblical Semitic texts showed that myths of creation and flood were common in the period of the composition of the Old Testament, leading to the perception that if the Bible shared the conceptual and linguistic world of its time, it should be treated as any other literature produced in that time. Again, discov-

eries of papyri from the period of late Greek antiquity showed that the Greek of the New Testament was not a special Greek written by those whose native language had been Hebrew or Aramaic, nor was it the language written by those inspired of the Holy Spirit. New Testament Greek was shown to be not special at all, but rather to be common language (Gk. *koine*) spoken by common people as the *lingua franca* of the ancient world of that period. These discoveries gave further impetus to the idea that one ought to approach the biblical literature in the same way one approached other literature from the same periods.

It was the confluence of these and other factors that led to the rise of the "historical-critical" method of study of the Bible. It meant scholars had to look with the same critical eye at the content of the Bible as they looked at the content of any documents from the same period, and subject them to the same canons of truth to which any other ancient writing was subjected. The confidence of secular science now dictated that what was unacceptable in *any* ancient writing (for example errors in history or natural science) was to be regarded as unacceptable in *all* ancient writings, and hence had to be explained in terms of its mythic origins or else explained away. The historical imperializing inherent in the dominant philosophy of the modern world, namely Hegelianism, dictated that what was old was wrong and the product of ignorance; the task of the modern world was to correct, not to learn from, earlier periods of history.

One can see all these attitudes to the biblical text being applied to the canonical Gospels, for example, in the lives of Jesus written during the latter two-thirds of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A look at A. Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus,* will demonstrate that. There it is evident what it meant that one had to apply the canons of historical truth to the content of the Bible, and subject it to the same critical scrutiny to which one would subject, say, the writings of the elder Pliny or the younger Seneca in their descriptions of the world, and of the gods.

In sum, the "historical-critical method," conscious of the historical periods within which biblical literature originated, applied to that literature the critical methods of study derived from examination of other documents and traditions of the same period, informed by a (Hegelian) attitude that as history moved forward, truth was disclosed which had been unavailable to earlier periods, and it sought to find the (reliable) "truth" behind the (basically unreliable) "forms" of biblical literature.

It is not my intention to condemn out of hand that method of biblical study. The results of the historical-critical method, for example, allowed scholars to recognize that biblical literature responded to the same kind of analysis of intention, authorship, readership, date, and provenance as did any other ancient literature of comparable type. It also allowed scholars to recognize different kinds of literature within the Bible; for example, poetry (Psalms), fable (Judg. 9:8-15), prophecy (Amos, Isaiah), history (I Sam.-II Chron.), dialogue (Job), novel (Jonah), letters (the Pauline corpus), "Gospels," (there is still much discussion of their genre; Luke for example seems to be a *bios*), and even a kind of account of the future (Daniel, Rev.).

With the recognition of different kinds of literature there came the realization that each type had different intentions which need to be taken seriously in their interpretation. One does not treat poetry, for example, as one treats history, or a fable as one treats prophecy. Thus, the major service of the historical-critical method was to rescue us from imposing on ancient literature the suppositions we bring to contemporary literature, and from assuming ancient peoples thought just as we do, and had the same questions we do, and applied the same canons of truth that we do. It effectively demonstrated that the Bible was ancient literature, and came from a conceptual world different from ours.

In application, the historical-critical method eventuated into biblical "Introduction," which, when I went to Seminary, was the content of the required New Testament courses. Introduction in that sense freed Scriptural study from its imprisonment within the theological systems of Protestant Orthodoxy, and allowed it to assume its place within ancient writings among which it was produced. Yet just as one does not need repeated introductions to people, one does not need to continue freeing the Bible from an imprisonment it no longer suffers. A prisoner with a saw does not spend his time sawing all the bars of his cell into smaller and smaller pieces. Once the bars are sawed, it is time to get on with something else.

The same thing is true of the historical-critical method in its original formulation: once it achieved its task of allowing us to see Scripture as ancient documents, its task was finished. In its original configuration, therefore, the historical-critical method was necessarily a transitory phenomenon.

I want to urge that we retain the intention of the historical-critical method, but redefine it to make it more appropriate to a less imperializing attitude toward the past.

This brings me to my second proposition, namely, that the time has come to redefine the historical-critical method so it can continue to be a valid method of biblical study. The need for it surely continues; it is the need to protect Scripture from all attempts at domesticating it, as it was domesticated by Protestant orthodoxy. A good current example of that continuing need is the invidious system of apartheid, which basically has theological roots, and which resulted from the uncritical identification by the Boers with Israel, South Africa with Canaan as the promised land, and the indigenous population as the Canaanites. In that perspective, one reads the stories of the conquest in just the way as a part of the South African white population continues to do, seeing itself as the chosen people upholding God's righteousness against the threat of admixture with the Canaanites. Fundamentally, therefore, apartheid represents a hermeneutical error, and it displays the mischief that can result from an uncritical application of ancient traditions to a contemporary situation.

Therefore, I want to urge that we retain the intention of the historical-critical method, but redefine it to make it more appropriate to a less imperializing attitude toward the past, on the assumption that our task is to learn from that past, not to correct it.

First, let me suggest that we understand the term "historical" in the historical-critical method to mean the continuing necessity to recognize that the Bible is the product of another time, and that this must be taken into account whenever we attempt to use it to solve contemporary problems. It points to the distance between our situation and that of the text. Our world is different at least in degree from the historical world of the Bible, and we must keep that in mind. To ignore that fact means inevitably to misinterpret the Bible.

As a direct consequence of that, I would suggest that we regard the term "critical" in the historical-critical method as continuing to point to a critical attitude on our part, but a critical attitude to what *we* think a given passage of Scripture means. We are not to assume that what seems obvious to us as modern people is necessarily the meaning of that passage when seen in its total historical and literary context.

The point of such a "historical-critical" method is to protect the text from us through our own self-critical attitude toward what we find in this text. All ancient artifacts are fragile; they must be given special care or they will be destroyed. That is also true of the biblical text. History has shown, and continues to show, that interpreters can carry on a form of cultural imperialization that will blind us to what the text in fact can tell us about the ways of God with humanity. In that case, the authority of the Bible for our task of preaching will be ignored, as we resolutely preach ourselves, rather than Christ as Lord, and as we bend our precious biblical heritage into forms we are sure it ought to have assumed.

What shall we then preach? We are to preach Christ as Lord, as the only authority for a God-starved world, and in a way that allows the text to speak its word of judgment and grace to us who preach, as well as to those to whom we preach.

[1]. For a summary of this kind of theology, the best handbook for the Reformed positions is Heinrich Heppe, *Reformierte Dogmatik*, new ed. Ernst Bizer; Kreis Moers: Buchhandlung des Erziehungsvereins Neukirchen, 1935); for the Lutheran positions see Heinrich F.F. Schmid, *Die Dogmatik der Evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche*, 7th ed.; (Guetersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1893).

The American Hour, The Evangelical Moment

by Os Guinness

Raymond Aron once remarked that few people are contemporaries of their own generation. Usually behind the times and largely gaining our understanding second-hand, most of us find it hard to keep up with what is happening and harder still to make sense of it. And the modern explosion of information only makes the problem worse. Most people therefore find themselves strung out somewhere between the extremes of the "Happiness-is-a-small-circle" philosophy and the phenomenon of Daniel Boorstin's "Homo-up-to-datum," the one irresponsible and the other both idolatrous and illusory.

How are we as followers of Christ to steer a course between these extremes and become unriddlers of our times? The challenge is to turn from the modern preoccupation with "know yourself" and to direct the alternative, "know your moment," toward the biblical task of "reading the signs of the times" and "interpreting the hour." In an era calling forth such claims as "an opportunity unprecedented in the twentieth century" for evangelicals (Ron Sider) or "the greatest opportunity since the Reformation" (Richard Lovelace), this goal is obviously vital.

Well aware of the perils of prediction, whether spiritual or secular, and renouncing all pretensions to be a prophet or futurist, I offer the following observations as one Christian's attempt to assess one aspect of the extraordinary times in which we live. The thrust of the argument is carried in raising three sets of questions—three preliminary ones, three main and three concluding.

Whose Moment?

For Christians the form of this first preliminary question must always be, "Whose?", and, "For Whom?" Quite different from current terms such as "window of opportunity" or being "on a roll," a biblical moment is never chosen or interpreted at will. It is essentially God's moment and a matter of his sovereign initiative.

Yet it is God's moment for someone, and one question today is, For whom? After his visit to the U.S. in 1921, G.K. Chesterton wrote, "So far as democracy becomes and remains Catholic and Christian, that democracy will remain democratic. Insofar as it does not, it will become wildly and wickedly undemocratic." Six-and-a-half decades later, this comment appears prophetic rather than simply partisan or an instance of Chestertonian cleverness.

With Rome as the center of gravity in the Christian world, the Roman Catholic Church has become the largest community in Christendom and the largest single denomination in the U.S. Considering such strengths as its ancient tradition, its hierarchical structures, its aesthetic richness and its cogent (if somewhat delayed) defense of democratic pluralism, there is little wonder that many observers, such as Richard John Neuhaus and William Miller, have declared that this is "the Catholic moment."

Yet alongside this estimate, the present period is surely also an "evangelical moment." For, culturally speaking, it is no accident that evangelicalism has given rise to the strongest social, political and religious movements in the late Seventies and early Eighties while also representing the oldest, closest religious ties to American life and history. Through its capacity to rise to the challenge of this moment, the evangelical community will reveal its character and strengths or weaknesses today.

What Stage?

For Christians, an accurate answer to this question is virtually an impossibility. Since ignorance is insurmountable, humility is a necessity as well as a virtue. And because of the dire hunger today for a sense of meaning and belonging, false predictions are proliferating on all sides.

Yet no Christian is let off the hook. For running beside the biblical record of those who missed their moment is the relentless insistence on their responsibility for doing so. Further, the pages of history continue the biblical record right up to our day. So the challenge for faith and obedience is to recognize and seize the moment, however difficult that may prove. Speaking as an Englishman, and conscious of the sad genealogy of convictions in English evangelicalism between 1830 and 1900, this point is poignant as well as strong.

The answer to what stage has been reached depends of course on prior questions as to the character of the moment. But to preempt later discussion, I am arguing that the present developments are in the later stages of their unfolding. While still a remarkable and genuinely open opportunity, the present moment shows signs that it may be closing.

Os Guinness, noted author and lecturer, is presently a Fellow at Brookings Institute in Washington, D.C. These remarks are taken from an address he delivered at the Evangelical Roundtable in June, 1986 and used by permission.

Why Significant?

The claim that this period is a crucial moment for evangelicalism must be distinguished from two kinds of similar claims. On the one hand, it is not to be confused with mere trendspotting labels, such as *Newsweek's* celebration of 1976 as "The Year of the Evangelical." If it amounts to a *kairos* moment at all, the present moment is so only because of the perspectives and priorities of the Kingdom of God.

On the other hand, though close in spirit to estimates such as those of Richard Lovelace and Ron Sider mentioned earlier, it differs slightly because pivoting on an assessment of the turning point itself rather than on that of its consequences.

The crux of the claim is as follows: On the one hand, American culture is at a turning point, primarily (although not solely) because of its changed relationship to faiths. Compared with their role in the past, the influence of faiths is too little and too little positive. On the other hand, American faiths are at a turning point, primarily (although again not solely) because of their changed relationship to culture. Compared with its role in the past, the influence of culture is too much and too negative.

The reemergence of evangelicalism in the last decade is therefore greatly significant. Currently the strongest religious movement while historically the oldest, the evangelical community faces an "evangelical moment" that is part of the wider "American hour." The faithfulness of the community and the fortunes of the nation are, for the moment, intimately linked.

What Is The Context Of This Claim?

The first main question concerns the context of this claim and therefore the significance of the wider "American hour." Just before he retired as Secretary of State, Dean Acheson remarked to a prominent Austrian, "Looking back, the gravest problem I had to deal with was how to steer, in this atomic age, the foreign policy of a world power saddled with the constitution of a small, eighteenth-century farmers' republic."

Today this remark could apply equally well in many areas, because it raises a recurring issue: How does the U.S. currently stand in relation to its origins? Few other Western nations give so proud and prominent a place to their origins, but if current analysis is correct, the question of the present's relationship to the past is being raised sharply in the Eighties and in ways which mean that the next decade's answers may be decisive for many years to come.

Doubtless a large part of "turning point talk" is pure hype, but when this is removed, three recurring claims about a turning point stand above all others: first, that the U.S. is experiencing social changes, shifting from an industrial society to an information society; second, massive political changes, shifting from the old Democratic alignment to the new Republican alignment; and third, massive international changes, adjusting to world realities after Vietnam.

What is more striking, though, are aspects of the turning point that are ignored in serious national discussion—and none more so than the fact that the religious issue is central to the grand cultural clashes of the last generation. Repeatedly misunderstood or misrepresented merely as a non-issue ("purely private and should remain so") or a nuisance factor ("all those misguided millions believing what nobody believes anymore"), the religious issue is key to current cultural clashes because it underlies the principles and patterns by which personal lives and public life are ordered.

In fact, a deeper consideration of the U.S. in the 1980s reveals how important the faith factor is. Not only do the deepest national issues (such as the status of "Americanism" or the strength of the "public philosophy") have a critical religious component, certain of the most distinctive national institutions (above all, the First Amendment) require a critical religious contribution. So misunderstood and misrepresented yet so vital is it that religion amounts to the wild card factor in the American future.

Repeatedly misunderstood or misrepresented merely as a non-issue or a nuisance factor, the religious issue is key to current cultural clashes because it underlies the principles and patterns by which personal lives and public life are ordered.

What Are The Likely Consequences?

The second main question concerns the likely consequences for the faith and for the nation which grow out of the present time of transition. What follows is not a prediction, but an outline of the four broad directions which may conceivably be taken. In the first two, the common assumption is that in the future religion will not prove socially decisive, the first outcome assuming that this will cause no problems to the nation and the second one that it will. In the last two outcomes, the common assumption is that religion will prove decisive in the American future, the third outcome assuming that this might be harmful and the fourth that it might be beneficial.

The future, of course, may have none of the neatness of these categories, but they at least provide a theoretical test bed for examining various options and possibilities.

1. *The triumph of secular liberalism*: This outcome does not depend on either the disappearance of religion or the dominance of secularism, both being unlikely in the American context. Instead, it sees secularism growing ever more dominant in the public square. Despite its front-runner status, this scenario probably carries the seeds of its own destruction, because it is doubtful whether secularism can replace religion as the bedding for traditional American values.

2. *Crises and decline*: This outcome requires no grand catastrophe nor period of lurid national decadence. All it envisages is the steady erosion of the spiritual and moral foundations of the social order, in a manner and at a rate which no post-religious substitute (such as prosperity, law or technology) can prevent.

3. *Semi-religious authoritarianism*: This outcome assumes that, in order to counter the sort of crises perceived in the second outcome, the attempt will be made to reassert "traditional values" by giving them a religious base—religion being used not because it is true, but useful.

4. *Revitalization via revival and reformation*: This outcome assumes that American assumptions, ideals and institutions could be revitalized profoundly yet peaceably by genuine revival and reformation. A hope which at first sight appears to be the last resort of the marginal pious—"praying well is the best revenge"—is actually a possibility considered seriously on the basis of scholarly, rather than purely believing, considerations.

What Is The Capacity Of Evangelicalism To Rise To The Occasion?

The third main question concerns the capacity of the evangelical community to respond. Will evangelicalism rise to the occasion as its record, numbers and the demands of the present moment (not to speak of biblical obedience) would lead one to expect? At a time when American "exceptionalism" is reckoned to have declined, religion in America is the last great exception to the decline of exceptionalism. And evangelicalism in particular appears in many ways to be thriving as almost never before.

Yet a closer examination shows that at just those places where a culture-shaping faith must be strong, evangelicalism at large is alarmingly weak. On the one hand, instead of demonstrating a powerful *claim to truth,* traditionally the source of the Church's strength in its role as the protagonist of its own culture, popular evangelicalism betrays a widespread loss of a Christian mind that is a fatal handicap to cultural transformation in the modern world.

On the other hand, instead of demonstrating a powerful *challenge to tension,* traditionally the source of the Church's strength in its role as the antagonist to other cultures, popular evangelicalism betrays such a lapse into worldliness and cultural captivity that it is fatally handicapped again.

These two comments are sweeping generalizations that require substantiation outside the scope of this article. They are also offset by many magnificent exceptions, especially in the world of evangelical parachurch movements and the world of evangelical colleges and seminaries. But excellent and exceptional though the latter are, their weakness is their intellectual, social and cultural distance from popular evangelicalism. Whereas fundamentalism has largely retained its strong sense of social and theological cohesion, evangelicalism has developed so great a gap between its "elites" and its "masses" that it appears and acts as socially disjointed.

Short of revival and reformation, severe weaknesses like these are likely to prevent evangelicalism from making a constructive and enduring response to the present moment. Certain concluding questions sharpen the challenge now facing evangelicals.

Who? Whom? Lenin's famous question poses the central challenge to the evangelical community: Are evangelicals as "people of the Gospel" to be shaped radically by the Gospel, or are they as "the earliest and most American" religious community to be shaped more decisively by American culture?

Will Evangelicals Be Evangelical To Others? Evangelicalism, which is conspicuously lacking as a distinct and separate religious tradition, comes into its own as renewing force within the wider church and wider community. Will evangelicals lose their distinctiveness in seeking to protect it, or will they find it in sacrificing themselves to bring life to the wider church and peace and justice to the wider community?

Will God Be God To Evangelicals? If the American republic both requires metaphysical premises yet rejects any official statement of them, making its own enduring vitality a gamble on the dynamism of its "unofficial" faiths, evangelicalism pivots on the same promise and the same problem. One of the least self-derived and self-sustaining of all traditions, evangelicalism without living, personal faith is nothing. G.K. Chesterton's prophetic comment on the American republic can therefore be translated to apply aptly to American evangelicalism: "Freedom is the eagle, whose glory is gazing at the sun."

North American Evangelical Missions: The Last 100 Years

by Marvin Bergman

Approximately 100 missions scholars and practitioners gathered on the campus of Wheaton College June 16–19, 1986, to assess "A Century of World Evangelization: North American Evangelical Missions, 1886-1986." According to the prospectus for the conference, "It is high time that scholars and practitioners of world missions give the missionary experience of the self-consciously evangelical party of American Protestantism the same careful scrutiny now being afforded to the old-line denominational endeavors."

In part, the conference represented an attempt to bring together scholars—especially religious and cultural historians—to promote a better understanding of the evangelical contribution to the American mission enterprise and its interaction with other cultures; this, in turn, can offer insight into the character of American Christianity and the values of American culture generally. But this kind of understanding can be just as valuable for those who are presently committed to the global mission of Christianity as it is for scholars. Again in the words of the prospectus, "the current concern to know intimately the various 'contexts' and 'situations' in which the Christian faith operates and is communicated can be enlightened by examples from the past. 'Contextualization' of the Christian message can also be enhanced by a nuanced knowledge of the cultural heritage of the missionary."

Usually one expects the keynote addressed at conferences to be the highlights. Occasionally, as in this case, that expectation is rewarded. Andrew Walls, the director of the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World, kicked off the conference in fine style on the first evening with his address, "The American Evangelical Factor in Twentieth Century Missions." He raised in a provocative way many of the issues that resurfaced throughout the conference. But his broad comparative perspective—both geographically and temporally—and his status as an outsider to the American scene helped bring some of those issues into sharper focus. Perhaps his major contribution was to assure evangelicals that as we move into a new era in missions history, we need not fear cultural determination; after all, when God became man, he became culturally determined man. And this relatively brief, remarkably successful, one-hundred-year period of missionary activity is just a small part of the long history of Christian expansion in which brief periods of cross-cultural exchange are always followed by long periods marked by the development of local forms of Christianity.

The other two keynote addresses dealt with shortcomings

Marvin Bergman is Acquisitions Editor at Mercer University Press, Macon, Georgia.

in traditional approaches to studying missions history and suggested new avenues for research. Ralph Winter's banquet address, "The Student Volunteers, Their Heirs, and the Unofficial Missionary Enterprise," used data gathered and analyzed with the aid of computers to assess the continuities and discontinuities and the relative strength of the Student Volunteer Movement, which provided the impetus for the past century of North American evangelical missions, and its successors, especially InterVarsity Fellowship. But his larger aim was to show the dangers of relying on the documents of missions institutions and the rhetoric of their spokespersons.

Arguably the climax of the conference was the address by Lamin Sanneh, assistant professor of the History of Religion in the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard University. In his address, entitled "Mission, Translation, and the Future Imperative: Charting a Course," Professor Sanneh insisted that it is now time to move away from both of the traditional ways of studying missions: "secular" scholars have viewed the missionary enterprise as an offspring of colonial imperialism, an epiphenomenon of cultural fashion; missiologists have assessed the success or failure of mission activity by using ideological and statistical measures arising from the missions boards. But, Professor Sanneh insisted, scholars should focus not on missionary motivations but on field performance—not on the basis of the number of converts but on the long-term consequences of their actions. This can best be assessed, he suggested, by paying serious attention to translation work, which ran directly counter to colonial imperialism's efforts to centralize power.

For the remainder of the conference, the organizers divided the "century of world evangelization" into three areas: 1880-1920, 1920-1945, and 1945-present. For each period they apparently intended to establish a dialectic between papers that would focus on the American context for evangelical missions and other papers that would present "case studies" of actual missions in the field.

Dana Robert of Boston University and Grant Wacker of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill established the context for the first era, 1880-1920. Professor Robert's paper, "Premillennial Mission Theory and the Origins of Evangelical Missions," focused on A.T. Pierson and A.J. Gordon, especially their development of the missions slogan, "the evangelization of the world in this generation," as a premillennial theme. In fact, Robert reported, one basis of the division of missions in this period into ecumenical, denominational missions and the more evangelical "faith missions," whose desire was to win souls, or at least to preach the gospel to all, was the premillennial basis of the evangelical missions. In her conclusion, Professor Robert echoed the call made by Joel Carpenter in his introductory remarks that it is time for evangelical historical scholarship to turn its attention from battles over the Bible to other concerns such as missions, which is one of the main reasons for the existence of evangelical institutions today. Grant Wacker's paper, "The Liberal Protestant Search for a Missionary Mandate, 1880-1920," focused on the attitudes of liberal Protestants in America toward non-Western religions. After cautioning that the differences between liberal and evangelical missions are often overdrawn—both assumed Western cultural superiority—he turned his attention to the very real differences between them, especially in their attitudes toward non-Western religions. The assumption of the *ultimate* worthlessness of all non-Christian religions, he argued, led evangelicals to ignore the serious study of the rituals, beliefs, and social and cultural origins of non-Christian religions; such study has largely been left to liberals, who have generally been more interested in the effects of "general revelation" and in the relationship between religion and its cultural context. Then Professor Wacker went on to trace four stages of development of liberal attitudes toward non-Western religions and to issue a challenge to evangelical scholars to become involved in the serious study of "history of religions."

As if to bear out the claims of Lamin Sanneh and others that the conflicts and theories of Protestants in the North American context had much less impact in the field than one might expect, the three case studies in this era, as in the others, bore little relation to the contextual papers. Leslie Flemming, of the University of Arizona, called attention to the importance of women missionaries as role models in her paper, "New Models, New Roles: American Presbyterian Women Missionaries in North India, 1870-1910." Alan Winquist of Taylor University employed a biographical approach in his study of "Scandinavian-American Missions in Southern Africa and Zaire." And Lillie Johnson Edwards used insights gleaned from theories of sociologists and cultural anthropologists to illuminate an especially interesting case of cross-cultural interaction: "We've Come This Far by Faith: Afro-American Missionaries in Africa."

The division of North American Protestants and their mission activities became even more pronounced in the next era (1920-1945). James Patterson's (Toccoa Falls College) description of "The Loss of a Protestant Missionary Consensus: Foreign Missions and the Fundamentalist-Modernist Conflict" established the context, while Gary Corwin's (SIM International) paper, "Evangelical Separatism and the Growth of the Independent Mission Boards: Some Preliminary Observations from the Sudan Interior Mission," revealed some of the effects. The case studies, "Missions Under the Mandate: German-American Baptists in Cameroon, 1920-1940," and "Through Many Dangers, Toils, and Snares: China Inland Mission, 1920-1945," were presented by Charles Weber of Wheaton College and Alvyn Austin of Toronto, respectively.

Since 1945 evangelicals have come to play an increasingly dominant role in the missionary enterprise. In the first paper in this section, "Pax Americana and the Evangelical Missionary Advance," Richard Pierard of Indiana State University showed how the effects of World War II contributed to an upsurge of evangelical missions after the war. By relating some personal experiences and some lively quotations, he was able to capture the excitement and enthusiasm of the immediate postwar period. But the evolving maturity and changing status of evangelicalism in the North American context, along with radical changes in the world context in succeeding years, have precipitated corresponding changes in evangelical theologies of mission. These were traced schematically in an ambitious paper, "Developments in Evangelical Theology of Mission, 1946-1986," presented by Charles Van Engen of Western Theological Seminary.

The case studies in this section offered some interesting contrasts. "Born Again Taiwan: Evangelical and Pentecostal Communities in the Republic of China, 1945-1985," contrasting established evangelical Protestant missions with an indigenous Chinese church, the True Jesus Church, was presented by an outsider to the evangelical community, Murray Rubinstein of Baruch College, City University of New York. The other two papers were more or less "in-house" treatments of sharply contrasting approaches to missions in Latin America: "Rebels with a Cause: Origins of the Evangelical Revolution in Latin America" by Everett Wilson of Bethany Bible College, and "American Catholic Mission to Latin America" by Edward Cleary, O.P., of Josephinum School of Theology.

The final session of the conference was appropriately de-

voted to "Global Evangelicalism: Third World (or, as most of the participants referred to it, "Two-Thirds World") Theology and the Church's World Mission." C. Rene Padilla, general secretary of the Latin American Theological Fraternity, called attention to "Evangelical Mission Perspectives from Latin America." In "Leadership Training, A Top Priority in Asia," Bong Rin Ro, general secretary of the Asia Theological Association, made an urgent plea for evangelicals to encourage the training of Asians *in Asia* to evangelize Asia. Finally, in his paper, "The Right to Difference: The Common Roots of African Theology and African Philosophy," Tite Tienou of the Alliance School of Theology argued that African theologians have wasted the past thirty years because they have been forced to establish the legitimacy of "the right of difference" for African theology and philosophy rather than actually doing African theology and philosophy. But he feared that as long as the West controls the African economy and educational institutions, the quest for identity will need to continue.

Several tensions surfaced repeatedly during the conference, but were never resolved or even fully confronted because of the highly structured nature of the conference, which crammed twenty papers, a panel discussion, and an audio-visual presentation into less than three days. At the base of these tensions was a tension regarding the fundamental attitude toward the history of missions: should we distance ourselves from the undeniable participation of past missionaries in various forms of cultural imperialism, or should we celebrate the remarkable but equally undeniable success of the past century of evangelical missions? The problem of confronting this tension was compounded by the diversity of the participants, which was at once the greatest strength and the greatest weakness of the conference. The ISAE should be congratulated for inviting the best historians of evangelical missions regardless of their theological (or atheological) perspective. And gathering diverse participants can, in fact, be one of the best means of confronting the issues this conference raised; but not in such a structured format, where participants tend only to speak past each other rather than engage in real dialogue. The participants never even agreed on who was to be included: Ralph Winter kept pushing in questions from the floor for the inclusion of evangelicals from the "mainstream," ecumenical denominations, not just the separate "faith missions."

Nevertheless, the conference succeeded admirably in launching a serious reassessment of the role of missions in the history of the North American evangelical community—a reassessment that would take into account the diverse actions of missionaries in the field as well as the already established motivations and theories of the mission boards. Since that, after all, was apparently the goal of the conference, it must be considered an overwhelming and welcome success.

Missiology Students Form Society

by Thomas Russell

"As 1886 marked the beginning of a missions movement around the rallying cry of evangelization, 1986 now marks the beginning of a new missionary dimension, of scholars throughout the world linking to study and advance the kingdom on earth."

George Hunsberger, president of the newly-formed Fellowship of Students Missiology (FSM), made this remark at the first meeting of the society, held last June in Chicago. This meeting was held in conjunction with the annual gatherings of the American Society of Missiology (ASM) and The Association of Professors of Missions. Eight of the group's charter members were present including: George Hunsberger, Scott Sunquist, Garry Parker and Efiong Utak (all of Princeton Theological Seminary), Kathleen Dillman (Golden Gate Theological Seminary), Ruy Costa (Boston University School of Theology), Richard Jones (Toronto School of Theology) and Tom Russell (Vanderbilt University). Several of the group's founding friends offered their advice as well.

At the June meeting FSM members had some intriguing discussions. On Thursday evening, June 19th, the group met with Dr. Matthew Zahnizer of Asbury Theological Seminary and Dr. Zachery Hayes of The Catholic Theological Union, both of whom offered presentations concerning Christology and Pluralism. Zahnizer spoke out of his experience as a missionary to Moslems, and presented Jesus Christ as the only and unique means for salvation. Hayes spoke of a cosmic Christ who is present in the world's religions. Conferees noted how well the speakers complemented each other and how they were willing to interact with them. Friday morning Ruy Costa offered a paper on the relationship between religion and liberation. All participants were inspired by these interactions and felt the value of FSM fellowship!

On Friday afternoon the group held a business meeting to organize itself. Hunsberger reminded the society of its reason for existence at this time by stressing the need for budding missiologists to be in contact with each other. This contact would provide a locus for scholarly interaction and fellowship. As one FSM member put it, "I appreciate the fact that the FSM gets me in touch with others who have an interest in this field. I am the only one at my school with an interest in missiology and you know, it gets lonely out here!"

Meeting attendees established three purposes for the society. These young scholars affirmed the world mission of the church and stressed their need to provide mutual support and encouragement for each other. They also decided to cultivate relationships with the broader community of missiologists, particularly those of the ASM.

The FSM drew up plans to form a local and international network of missiology students, to publish an annual journal (beginning in January, 1987) and to hold an annual meeting (in conjunction with the annual meeting of the ASM).

Membership in the FSM is limited to students in Master's and Doctoral programs in Missiology and students in other graduate programs with an interest or concentration in Missions. The organization has been delighted to have student members representing Fuller Theological Seminary, Westminster Theological Seminary, Wheaton College, San Francisco Theological Seminary, Southern Methodist University, Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, The University of

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Thomas Russell is a Ph.D. student in Modern European Church History at Vanderbilt University in Nashville.

Chicago, The University of Basel, Lutheran School of Theology and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The FSM was thankful to receive the hearty endorsement of the American Society of Missiology, and for its founding friends, including: Charles Forman (Yale), Larry Nemer (Chicago), Joan Eagleston (Orbis Books), Joan Chatfield (The Institute of Religion and Social Change), Arthur Glasser (Fuller Theological Seminary), Gerald Anderson (Overseas Missions Study Center), James C. Wilson (Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary) and Samuel Moffett (Princeton Theological Seminary).

The FSM organized its leadership and appointed committees to write a constitution, and to form an advisory board for both the group and the journal—boards made up of current missiologists. The society also asked Richard Jones, Scott Sunquist and Ruy Costa to begin to plan next year's meeting to be held at Dusquesne University, June 18-19, 1987. Rumors have it that the meeting promises to be very exciting! Attendees at this year's meeting are already looking forward to the opportunity to meet new graduate students in this field and to discuss "hot" topics in current missiological studies. As usual the conference will include a presentation by at least one missiologist and a presentation of a paper by at least one budding scholar. Discussions will follow all presentations. The group will also hold a business meeting. Everyone is looking forward to interacting with members of the ASM.

Anyone Can Get Involved

Area membership coordinators—Ruy Costa, Garry Parker and Tom Russell—are looking for you.

Kathleen Dillman, the FSM Journal editor, is now receiving articles which reflect the cutting edge of your research and reflection. She also has space for book reviews. Dillman is now collecting materials for the January, 1988 issue.

Anyone can join the FSM by paying annual dues of $10.00, which includes a subscription to the FSM Journal. Anyone who wishes to become a friend of the society can join the FSM for an annual contribution of $10.00 or more. Secretary/Treasurer Scott Sunquist is receiving all inquiries, dues and gifts at the FSM address: The Fellowship of Students of Missiology, CN 821, Princeton, NJ 08542.

In summing up the importance of the founding of the FSM, organizers have commented:

> "This fellowship offers rising missiologists an opportunity to interact with their peers and scholars in the field."
> "It affords me a chance to publish!"
> "I find it extremely significant that the FSM has a similar zeal, but a totally different frame of reference. Instead of Western missionaries going out to mission fields, the FSM forges a much-needed link between budding missiologists worldwide."

The Case of *Brave New People*: A Shadow and a Hope

by Stephen Charles Mott

Pulled off the market in the face of controversy by its original publisher, *Brave New People: Ethical Issues at the Commencement of Life*, by D. Gareth Jones was republished in a revised edition in 1985 by Eerdmans (224 pp., $8.95 pb.). The book is significant both on its own merits and in terms of the issue of censorship that surrounds the circumstances of its publication.

Upon its publication by InterVarsity Press in 1984, adverse reviews were published, some of which the author and the publisher argued significantly misrepresented the book. One group in its newsletter urged its readers to write to the publisher stating that because of its position on the question of abortion, the book should not have been published. The publisher found that many who did register their objection had not read the book. At the annual convention of the Christian Booksellers' Association, InterVarsity Press was picketed; and a leader of another group circulated a letter threatening a boycott of bookstores carrying their books. The letter was never received by the publisher, nor did the writer ever personally contact the Press. Some of the literature critical of the book contained such language as "foully dishonest," "satanic," "garbage," "monstrous," "noxious," "unregenerate," and "reprobate." The book was represented as "blatantly pro-abortion" and "eugenics." Guilt by association arguments were used, including comparison of the author with Hitler. His evangelical standing was denied; he was even condemned to hell (for example, when a critic mentioned "The heat that he will face approximately ten seconds after his death"). I would like to point out that many supporters of a strong position against abortion were embarassed by much of these tactics; this behavior should not be used as an *ad hominem* argument against the pro life position. Leading evangelical scholars, such as Carl Henry, Kenneth Kantzer, and Arthur Holmes, defended the publication of the book. But for various reasons Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship decided administratively to withdraw the book from the market. The Press, however, wanted to stand behind the book; and many people in the organization were in support of its continued availability.

The question which remains is not to point a finger at this particular organization or publisher, but to indicate why the author should not have been left in such a vulnerable position. Perhaps the nature of the argument on bioethical issues may thus be advanced to a higher plane, and a genuine evangelical pluralism in the evangelical publishing enterprise may be encouraged. There are two books to review: the one which the author actually wrote; and, in terms of its context in the abortion debate, the one which he is believed to have written. First, we will present the argument of the book with minimal commentary, requesting the reader to consider if this indeed is a book which no evangelical press should publish.

Issues in Bioethics

Gareth Jones is an evangelical medical biologist at Otago University in New Zealand. *Brave New People* is not a book

Stephen Charles Mott is Professor of Christian Social Ethics at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

on abortion; the concern is broader. His purpose was to help Christians formulate principles adequate for responding to several issues posed by biomedical technology which relate to human life around the time of its inception. Before discussing the ethical concerns relating to specific issues, he provides a framework in terms of the doctrine of human nature and of general theological and ethical issues presented by technology, particularly medical technology.

Human nature has the tension, Jones argues, of being tinged with infinity in our ability to have thoughts about God and eternity while dwelling in all too fallible bodies. Biomedical technology has accented our urge to break "the tension by viewing ourselves either as impersonal biological machines or as personal ethereal spirits" (p. 3). What is required of us is to face the issues of bioethics squarely but to do so in light of our being creatures of God. The creation account of Genesis, including the concept of humanity in the image of God, shows the exalted distinction of God from humankind and consequently an utter dependence upon God which cannot be conditioned by technology. We are an integral part of the natural world, yet in God's image we are beings who have a moral responsibility for the world. Because of our fall, side by side with the benefits of technology are hazards which pervert the good. Our redemption in Christ makes fully human experience possible and provides motivations and aspirations to use technology for good. When technology rather than God is central, not only is essential relationship with God lost, but so also are the moral guidelines for ethical decision making. Technology then affirms only the immediate and physical. If we misuse our responsibility in the area of biomedical technology, the implications are immense. Not only does our natural environment suffer, but we do as well since what is being changed by this technology is not merely the environment but we ourselves.

A significant contribution of the book is that the author carefully evaluates the particular issues in terms of the principles established in this framework. Amniocentesis, the sampling of the amniotic fluid around the fetus, is the primary tool for prenatal diagnosis. The inexorable logic of a technological innovation is that it should be used simply because it exists and it can be used with relative ease. Jones cautions against the routine use of amniocentesis, however. Some specific goal should be in mind for it to be undertaken. There is some risk involved, and for most cases the only intervention possible is abortion. Its original medical purpose can be misused to circumvent having a child of the wrong sex. And even when there is valid concern for a specific condition of risk to the mother, is it ethically justifiable to use this diagnosis if there is not ethical acceptance of therapeutic abortion? Similarly, he rejects random use of genetic screening; it bestows upon the genetic scientist too much control over the lives of people. Such elitist control contradicts the responsibility and self-control which is a theological character of human nature.

Open spina bifida is a condition in which infants are born with a protruding spinal cord covered by a membrane. A high proportion die before two years. One criterion for performing operations to reduce disability in these infants excludes those likely to be paralyzed, incontinent, or mentally retarded. An opposing criterion is to operate on wounds reparable surgically on all such infants likely to live more than a few days on the grounds of not adding years to their lives but life to their years. Jones favors the latter philosophy on grounds of his theological view of the dignity of human beings, while seeing the former approach as having undue reliance on technical criteria which reduce moral value to conformity to biological norms. Similarly, he rejects experiments on embryos which have been preserved for in vitro implantation (see below). Rejecting the utilitarian arguments of great potential human good from such research, Jones sees the experiments as denying respect for embryos' significance as potential human beings.

In vitro fertilization fertilizes a human egg outside of the body and reimplants it in a woman's uterus. Jones ethically evaluates this process in terms of his theological view of the normative character of the human family. Helping a married couple have a child of their bodies and as an outcome of their marriage strengthens natural biological roots within a family, serving an important therapeutic purpose since medicine deals with a whole human relationship beyond mere diseases. In vitro fertilization should not be used, however, when the more human form of a natural fertilization could be used, such as through restorative surgery, because that would give technology a place beyond its supplementary role. By this family criterion this process also should not be used when the egg, sperm, or uterus are not those of the married couple. Similarly, this theological view of the family governs Jones' position regarding forms of artificial insemination, where semen is directly introduced into the woman's uterus. When it involves the artificial introduction of the husband's semen into his wife's uterus, it is a commendable therapy in their longing for children; but when used in a separation by death or distance, its impersonal and artificial side may be highlighted too heavily. On the other hand, when the donor is a third party, the technological inroads separate too radically marriage and parenthood. Since an equality exists among human beings in the perspective of the radical distance of all humanity from God, the eugenic program of a bank of semen of Nobel Prize winners bears the further moral impediment of wrongly elevating creative scientists and their genes.

Cloning presents similar concerns. In this process, which has occurred with animals but not yet with human beings, the nucleus of a woman's egg would be replaced with the nucleus of the cell from another person, who would then be exactly reproduced when the cloned egg matures upon reintroduction into the woman's womb. Here a "No" must be said to that which is possible through technology. It may create ethical consequences beyond our present knowledge and society's ability to handle them, it violates human dignity in not seeing new life as important and free as so to develop in its own characteristics, and it exalts a human being rather than God as the model for human life.

Jones' View on Abortion

As Jones turns to abortion inasmuch as it relates to this ethical consideration of medical technology and therapy, he provides a fuller background because of the complex and controversial nature of the topic. Conception, which constitutes for many a clear and obvious beginning of both human life and personhood, is not the beginning of human life. It is the continuation of human life in general. Human life is present, potentially or actually, in all the stages from ovum and sperm to birth. Conception also is less distinct than often thought. For as long as two weeks after fertilization, the embryo, or zygote, is capable of splitting to form two individuals. During this time the cell divisions merely produce a cluster of equivalent cells; only after a few days do the cell divisions give rise to a distinction of the embryo proper from what will form the placenta. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists defines conception as the process of the implantation of the fertilized ovum in the wall of the uterus, completed at the end of two weeks. One of the leading ethicists in support of the very restrictive position on abortion, Paul Ramsey, holds that individual life begins in the blastocyst stage of 60-100

cells. Helmut Thielicke, who also defends the inviolability of fetal life, views possession of the circulatory system and brain as establishing the fetus as a human person. Of course there are other distinct stages in the development of human personality: the first signs of nervous system functioning at six weeks; more sophisticated nervous system development at twelve weeks; quickening around twenty weeks; and visibility around twenty weeks.

The Bible indicates that the fetus belongs within the human community and receives God's care, but it does not impart knowledge about the precise state of fetal life, including the significance of the unborn relative to that of adult human life. Jones (in a section not in the first edition) also notes Augustine's position that the soul did not come to the fetus until the moment of quickening, Gregory of Nyssa's distinction of the fully and potentially human, and the distinction of fetus animatus and fetus inanimatus in the Roman Catholic Church until the late nineteenth century. Jones, however, rejects the position that the moral status of the embryo changes at the point of implantation. Human material always deserves respect. Jones' position is always to regard the embryo or fetus as a potential person.

> According to this *potentiality principle*, a potential person is an existing being which, while not yet a person, will become an actual person during the normal course of its development. A human fetus is such a potential person. This principle takes seriously the continuum of biological development, and refuses to draw an arbitrary line to denote the acquisition of personhood. At all stages of development the fetus is on its way to personhood and, if everything proceeds normally, it will one day attain full personhood in its own right. It is part of a continuing process, the end-result of which is the emergence of an individual human being characterized by full personhood.
>
> Inherent in a potential person is high probability of future personhood. With this goes a claim to life and respect, a claim that in very general terms may be proportional to its stage of fetal development. The claim is always present but, just as the probability of an older fetus becoming an actual person is much greater than that of a very early embryo becoming a person, it becomes stronger with development until, at birth, the potential person is so similar to an actual person that the consequences of killing it are the same as killing a young person (p. 156f).
>
> A corollary of the continuum-potentiality argument is that there is no developmental point at which a line can be drawn between expendable and non-expendable fetuses, that is between non-personal and personal fetuses. It may be preferable to carry out abortions earlier rather than later during gestation, but that is a biomedical and not an ethical decision. Under all normal circumstances, a fetus has a right to full personhood (p.163).

The moral character of human nature mandates accepting responsibility for the consequences of sexual intercourse freely undertaken. Abortion on the grounds of convenience is morally abhorrent. "Only the most extreme circumstances can provide ground for abortion, which should be undertaken only in response to otherwise unresolvable dilemmas" (p. 176f. [not in the first edition]). When the mother's physical health is in jeopardy, her actual humanity is of more value than that of the unborn's potential for it. Practically all ethicists agree to abortion in this situation, "converting all absolute stances into relative ones" (p. 177). In the revised edition, Jones discusses abortion in the cases of rape and incest. In rape the rights of the actual person, the mother, again take precedence over the rights of the potential person. In the case of incest, he agrees with Norman Geisler that we should not allow evil to blossom under the name of a potential good.

Jones' interest in abortion concerns abortion for genetic reasons—when there is fetal abnormality. He allows abortion in the extreme situation of severe fatal deformity combined with a family situation in which a host of adverse social conditions may lead to an inability to cope. Moreover, in such a case there must be no alternatives such as institutionalization or adoption (which are sometimes prevented by feelings of guilt by the mother over relinguishing the child). The deformity must be extreme so that the fetus has no potential personal qualities. Down's Syndrome or pregnancies affected by German measles do not qualify, therefore. But relevant cases might be found with an anencephalic fetus (in which major brain centers are lacking), the rare Lesch-Nyham syndrome, or Tay-Sachs disease. The criterion is the normativeness of the family in that even in these extreme cases abortion is permissible only where the family cannot cope with the challenge.

On the other hand, when the decision to abort becomes merely one of the mother's decision, the integrity of the family and the reciprocity of its members is violated as well as the wholeness in her life. Decisions to abort because of defects of the fetus violate the dignity of humanity and reduce human worth to biological criteria of wholeness. Although responsibility entails making ethical decisions rather than merely allowing natural forces to have their way, malformed fetuses are not generally the result of human irresponsiblity; and we should avoid the temptation of undue activism to eliminate or rectify fetal deformity. Here we are reminided of our less than godlike status.

Brave New People and the Abortion Debate

In placing the controversy over *Brave New People* in the context of the abortion debate, we are reminded of the intimate relationship of justice and truth. The critics of the book who tried to stifle its publication have a praiseworthy commitment to justice for human life as they understand it. But a commitment to justice must also be a commitment to truth and respect for the processes by which truth is disclosed. Ability to share ideas broadly through the printed page is an important process of truth. Pressure upon publishers who print viewpoints which differ from our own is not a respect for the process of truth.

Publishers need not print the works of all viewpoints; certain publishers represent certain communities, including faith communities. Evangelical publishers may legitimately seek to serve those authors who belong to the evangelical community. But Gareth Jones not only belongs to such a community, but his work manifests clear understanding and commitment to the doctrinal standards of the evangelical movement, including the forms of religious knowledge. His book is a careful application of the principles of evangelical doctrine to a sphere of human behavior for which he has understanding. The only significant objection to his book must be found in the consequences of his thought, not in its foundations, which are evangelical. His temperate response to his opponents is a further sign of genuine Christianity (I Jn. 3:10) not obvious in this context, I fear, in some of his opponents. The damage of voluntary groups stifling the expression of members of their community can have a negative impact on truth comparable to public censorship. A characteristic of the prophet is one

who criticizes the accepted positions of the majority or of powerful minorities in his or her community. Justice needs the voices of prophets, and we must be careful that we do not yield to the pressures of powerful groups to stifle them. The community then can judge for itself who are the true prophets.

The abortion controversy is strangely marked by volatile emotions. High ethical stakes are combined with the ambiguities which lie at the very foundation of all positions in defining the nature of unborn human life. Excess zeal for the truth of one's position and defensive hostility against opposing views may reflect, as H. Richard Niebuhr noted about the Fundamentalist movement, not an excess of faith but rather a deficiency of faith, even in proponents highly motivated by piety and justice. Consciousness of ambiguity at the foundations of one's argument can lead to efforts to prevent the ambiguity from rising to the surface. Obstructing the publication of contrary viewpoints is a form of prevention, as is pressure to make one's own position the official position of various institutions (Wheaton College is one of the evangelical organizations which recently have rejected such pressure). Vilification of opponents and misrepresentation of their position are other forms of preventing examination of the weaknesses of one's own position.

In the face of such threatening ambiguity one may seek a false security by magnifying the religious character of one's position. Then the adversaries oppose not only truth but God. All the zeal of religious defense then can be used in defense of the particular position. Thus Jones, despite all other evidence to the contrary, receives the accusation of not being an evangelical or a Christian; and he or his position is described with the terms of satanic and reprobate. Jones may appear particularly dangerous because he does not fit the stereotype of the human centered, individualistic opponent that the critics' teaching presents.

The lack of the discernment of genuine ambiguity also arises in a bipolar view of the world, in which as Jones notes, his "critics recognize only two positions on abortion: the absolute protection of all fetal life, and abortion on demand." If a position does not fit the former, it must fit the latter; and if the holder of the position does not admit this characteristic, he or she is being superficial, inconsistent, or devious (p. xiii).

Ambiguities on Both Sides

The process of truth, however, demands that all ambiguities be brought to the light and examined. And there are important ambiguities in the position represented by Jones' critics. The following items are not presented as arguments against the critics' position on human life and abortion, but as areas requiring serious public discussion:

1. Scripture does not deal with the topic of abortion. The effort to use Scripture to establish the beginning of human life at conception has important difficulties in light of valid hermeneutical principles regarding due attention to the nature, function, and purpose of the passages involved, whether the materials be poetic or historical. Furthermore, a different theme in Scripture associating human life and spirit with breath would seem to connect personhood with birth at the latest or at the earliest with the development of the respiratory capacity near the end of the second trimester; but this argument has similar hermeneutical problems. The one passage which deals with the unborn in a legal context, Exodus 21:22-25, has been exegeted differently so as to give the fetus either equal or unequal protection. In fact there are cases of the same evangelical Old Testament scholar having published articles defending each interpretation. Unfortunately, the text is unclear as to whether a miscarriage or an induced premature birth is involved and to whom the "permanent harm" applies. There thus is need for public discussion of what are the most basic assumptions from an evangelical point of view; and if the most basic assumptions need public probing, certainly then do the consequences drawn from them. The different arguments for the beginning of human personhood appear in reality to be natural law arguments; while this is valid, the holders should be aware of the more finite basis of their position. Some proponents of the critics' position in the light of this ambiguity have disparged the importance of the question of when personhood begins. This position is weakened, however, if the strong deontological claim from personhood beginning at conception is replaced by an argument that no human intervention should take place because of a tradtional fatalism about the mysteries of the reproduction process.

2. When those who hold the position that the fetus is a full human person from the time of conception justify abortion to save the life of the mother, they are, in terms of their position, defending the taking of an innocent life. This appears to violate a basic tenet of Christian social ethics, and it could open the door to further weighing of innocent human life against innocent human life.

3. An ethicist recently argued that there is no life after death on the grounds that science shows that consciousness is connected to brain waves. Is not the same biological reductionism present when it is argued that personhood (or soul) begins at conception because "science shows that human life begins at the moment of conception?"

4. The reluctance to deal with the difficult exceptional cases where the rights of the fetus conflict with the rights of the born is a further ambiguity. Often the statistical rareness of such cases is pointed out. The strong condemnation of Jones' case is thus hard to understand because the very limited exceptions that he allows also add minutely to the number of abortions.

5. There appears to be a lack of sophistication regarding social-psychological factors. For example, the argument for adoption as an alternative can be a rationalistic posture insensitive to the difficulty of giving up a child once bonding through birth has occurred. Similarly, there is insufficient understanding of the trauma of carrying the offspring resulting from rape or incest.

The critics' position on abortion might still be the best position even with these ambiguities. We are not making a critique of that position but rather making a critique of a critique. A view of the fallibility of human reason and the unique character of divine revelation demands greater humility with respect to our positions and continual self-criticism. Preventing the possibility of the expression of other viewpoints does not encourage such re-examination.

Jones' position also has significant ambiguities. Is it coherent to speak of different degrees of the actuality of personhood (with consequential different worth when confronted with the claims of the born) and still speak of that life being a person throughout the reproductive cycle? Can one be a person without the full status of personhood? If the basic claims of those in a family outweigh those of a fetus with which it cannot cope, why then does therapeutic abortion also depend upon the fetus being devoid of the potentiality of personhood? Jones speaks about the process of the actualization of personhood continuing into young adulthood. A possibility of undercutting the life claims of infants is thus created, although he himself does not use the conceptual framework in that way. Likewise, when human personhood is defined by empirical categories, there is a possibility created, although not supported by Jones, of persons with severe disabilities after birth

being denied the full protection as human beings. The significance of birth requires firmer attention than he provides, because of the absence of biblical or theological grounds for any doubt of the presence of full human status after birth. Thus there is an epistemological question that causes the issue of abortion to differ from such issues as the Jewish Holocaust, South Africa, or slavery in which there is no possible doubt if the nature of human life involved.

The Need for Open Discussion

The abortion question is full of assumptions and issues which need full discussion. Truth must be pursued because the stakes involve basic claims of life and community. If a position is true, open discussion and probing by those sensitive to Scripture, theology, and the realities of human life can only strengthen it.

Will the opposition to this book discourage others from speaking openly on these issues? It appears rather that a diversity of evangelical viewpoints is again appearing. Frank Anthony Spina, Old Testament professor at Seattle Pacific University, in this journal called for an advance from the options which have been dominating the abortion debate. A broad presentation of options is made available in a recent book by Robert N. Wennberg, a philosopher at Westmont College: *Life in the Balance: Exploring the Abortion Controversy* (Eerdmans, 1985). Perhaps now reappearing, after a seeming silence in the debate following upon the Roe vs. Wade United States Supreme Court decision, is the diverse yet sound thinking on medical ethics supplied by evangelicals several years ago, such as in *Birth Control and the Christian*, edited by Walter O. Spitzer and Carlyle L. Saylor (1969), and the articles on medical ethics in the *Baker Dictionary of Christian Ethics*, edited by Carl Henry (1973).

Out of the shadow of the attempts to stifle this book comes the hope that many committed to God's truth and justice will delve into these concerns and have the courage to speak openly. The title "Brave New people" originally was a take-off on the "Brave New World" of biological and technological reductionism of Aldous Huxley's novel. It represented those who in the face of that challenge frankly pursue the bioethical questions from a biblically informed perspective. Whether or not one agrees with all of his position, appreciation should be offered to both Jones and Eerdmans for their contribution to the discussion of these issues. Our hope is that through further open and honest exchange, God might mold brave new people better prepared to deal with the emerging issues of bioethics.

Abortion: Four Reviews

Life in the Balance: Exploring the Abortion Controversy
by Robert N. Wennberg (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1984, 192 pp., $7.95). Reviewed by Richard H. Bube, Department of Materials Science and Engineering, Stanford University.

There are few books on the controversial ethical issues—especially a complex issue such as the abortion debate—that grip the reader's interest and call for continuous stimulating interaction as well as this book by Robert N. Wennberg, Professor of Philosophy at Westmont College in Santa Barbara, California. Time and again the author cuts through the confusions of rhetoric, the misleading implications of naive thinking, and the temptation to present an emotional, ideological position, to provide the reader with a thought-provoking and well-balanced analysis of the various theories and ethical positions that have been proposed to deal with the abortion issue. By publishing this book together with the recent re-issuing of D. Gareth Jones' *Brave New People*, Eerdmans has made a major contribution to the abortion debate. Both books deserve serious reading and consideration by all Christians.

In three initial chapters Wennberg sets the stage for the discussion to follow, in order to achieve his purpose of providing a systematic moral evaluation of the abortion issue, combining the most effective contributions available from professional philosophy with a theological tradition that is orthodox and biblically based. Growing out of a course on "The Morality of Killing," given at Westmont College, the book argues that "biblical and theolgical considerations do not *narrowly* limit the position open to us," and seeks to formulate its arguments in a form useful not only to evangelical Christians but also to the secular community.

He points out that considering the implications of an ethical theory is one of the first steps in evaluating it. In particular, if a person is morally compelled to reject the implications of a particular theory, then it is also necessary to reject the theory that leads to those implications. Similarly, if one is led to act in a certain way in response to authority, one must be sure that the action does not conflict with one's "persistent and deeply felt moral convictions." In all such considerations, however, the Christian community must consistently maintain that abortion is a moral issue, not simply a social or utilitarian issue.

Wennberg explores the principal factors that have contributed to making an abortion such a serious social problem today: (1) great improvements in safety with decrease in seriousness of the procedures, (2) a number of significant reasons for which women may be led to seek an abortion, and (3) the fact that abortion involves ending the life of what is at least a potential person. The author promptly avoids some of the confusing circumlocutions that confound discussions of abortion. He is clear from the start that the fetus at any stage is indeed alive, and is unquestionably a case of human life; certainly abortion terminates a human biological life.

In several places in the book the author emphasizes the difficulty of maintaining any essential difference between a fetus before birth and an infant after birth. Both are "subcortical" organisms, i.e., it is not until the tenth day after birth that the neocortex, that part of the brain responsible for the higher mental functions, shows signs of change. Thus the fetus and the infant have similar claims to life since both are subcortical creatures, but at the same time efforts to build a case on fetal behavior like thumb-sucking, feeding response, etc. are not the final evidence often argued, since the same responses can be found in an anencephalic, which has no chance of developing into a person.

No discussion of abortion can be complete without an evaluation of such questions as, "Is the fetus a person?" and what is the role of the "soul" in these considerations? Although acknowledging that the answers to these questions may play a significant role in these considerations, the author also suggests that they may not play the ultimate role often ascribed to them, i.e., "the abortion issue would not be settled by a simple determination of whether the fetus is a person." One of the problems in using the concept of "person" revolves around whether one who has the potential for rationality is intended, or one who has the actuality of rationality.

> To be sure, the biological basis for personal life is developing as the fetus grows, but personal life itself does not emerge in the womb at all, nor will it begin to emerge until some time after birth, when the socialization process begins . . .If an acquired rational capacity is the mark of personhood, then infants are not persons. Thus whereas both fetuses and newborn infants possess *biological* human life, neither one yet possesses *personal* human life. (p. 35).

In the development that follows, Wennberg essentially equates the terms "human person" and the "image of God," and presents a useful analysis of what is meant by speaking of a fetus "having a soul" and concludes that one may well conclude that a soul is not some immaterial part of a human being, and that the contention that souls are intrin-

sically immortal is essentially non-Christian. This portion of his discussion, particularly in view of the "gradualist" position he later advocates, would be assisted if he did speak continually of souls as something persons "have," but rather of something that persons "are," systems properties of the whole human being. His conclusion is that "the question of whether fetuses have immortal souls is essentially irrelevant to the abortion debate."

The author then considers in detail the various theories that have been advanced to relate the "right to life" to some decisive moment such as conception, implantation, human appearance, viability, beginning of brain development, attainment of sentience, and birth. Such "decisive moment theories" are in contrast with "gradualist" theories, which claim that becoming a human person with a strong right to life is a gradual process extending over an appreciable period of time. In the course of this discussion, Wennberg deals forthrightly with such key biblical passages as Psalm 139:13-16 and Jeremiah 1:5, often supposed to provide key insights into the nature of the fetus and the permissiblity of abortion, and concludes that "these verses, then, do not teach—either directly or by implication—that the zygote or fetus is a person, an individual fully in the image of God."

The author also deals effectively with the "fallacy of the continuum," the argument that since a newborn infant clearly has the right to life, and since there is no clearcut moment of conception, then it follows that "there is no difference between a newborn infant who has a right to life and a newly fertilized ovum." His treatment of each of the "decisive moments" is always to the point, clearly setting forth the positions on each side and driving to the heart of the matter.

Three chapters then examine the major principles that have been proposed to provide guidelines for abortion considerations: the actuality principle, the potentiality principle, and the species principle. The way in which he unravels the complexities of each of these principles, deftly showing their strengths and weaknesses, is nothing short of beautiful. As a reviewer I am tempted to describe many of the vital insights, but, alas, review space is short and I must leave this enjoyment to the reader. When all is said, the actuality principle (the right to life comes only when full personhood has been actualized) leads inevitably to the conclusion that infants do not have the right to life, a conclusion totally incompatible with the Judeo-Christian tradition. This consideration leads to the key conclusion:

> Indeed, *the only way to have a morally permissive position on abortion is to deny that infants have a right to life,* for as soon as one holds that infanticide is intrinsically objectionable, abortion will inevitably be rendered problematic and morally risky (p. 91).

The potentiality principle affirms that "a right to life belongs not only to persons but to all who in the course of the normal unfolding of their intrinsic potential will become persons." After carefully laying out a path between the various problems associated with this principle, Wennberg finally arrives at what he calls "the gradualist variant of the potentiality principle." It is also not free from all problems, but it moves in the direction that seems most consistent to the author.

> It holds that the right to life gradually becomes stronger as the newly fertilized ovum develops into a newborn infant, that there is no decisive all-or-nothing moment, that just as there is a continuous and gradual line of physical development from conception to birth (and beyond) so there is a continuous and gradual development in the right of life. This means that as the pregnancy progresses the reasons required to justify an abortion have to become increasingly more substantial (pp. 112, 113).

Finally the author considers the species principle, which specifies the same strong right to life to all members of the human species. This he concludes, after his usual careful analysis, to be deficient since it gives full moral standing to those "with no potential whatsoever for personal existence."

Wennberg then examines the various considerations necessary for actually making a decision concerning abortion. These include the degree of the woman's responsibility for the pregnancy, the extent of the burden the woman will have to bear as a result of her pregnancy, and the degree of fetal development. He then explores the possible grounds usually advanced to argue for an abortion. Throughout he is careful to be clear as possible about what we mean by "the right to life" and on what this right depends.

He recognizes that moral decisions concerning abortion are not synonymous with legal decisions and provides a penetrating and helpful analysis of the difference between these two kinds of decisions. Certainly the political debate focuses on whether abortion should be legalized or criminalized. He explores a dimension of the problem not often discussed:

> It would seem, then, that the advocate of restrictive abortion legislation not only has to show that the fetus has a right to life but also has to show that the right to life includes the right to use another's body for life-sustaining purposes against that person's will (p. 155).

This leads him to a careful analysis of Judith Jarvis Thomson's "Case of the Famous Violinist" and its relevance for abortion questions. One of his conclusions is that the illustration "serves to undercut an assumption that often leads to an uncompromising anti-abortion position—namely, the assumption that if fetuses have a person's right to life, then abortion is murder." From this approach the author argues strongly that we ought to use moral persuasion to decrease the incidence of abortion, but not legal coercion.

Finally Wennberg provides a summary and some reflections on the various dimensions of the issue. He holds that conception marks "the beginning of moral standing, the beginning of a right to life, the beginning of a unique center of emerging value." This right to life increases in strength as the fetus grows and develops, following the gradualist thesis. Such a position does not demand moral neutrality with respect to abortion, but rather is fully consistent with a view that sees abortion as morally objectionable. He rejects the common argument that "abortion involves a conflict between the woman's right to bodily self-determination and the fetus's right to life," because the fetus's right to life does not entitle the continued use of another's body to sustain that life. While recognizing that the moral argument is often kept socially alive because of the debate on the legal argument, still Wennberg feels impelled to conclude that we must uphold both the morally objectionable nature of abortion and the right of the pregnant woman to make the abortion decision.

It is clear that a genuine concern for the issues involved in abortion leads one to recognize the intricate complexity of a justifiable and authentic evaluation of those issues. The author is well aware that he has provided no simple set of answers. But this is exactly the best thing he can possibly do: by cutting away the false arguments and the misleading caricatures, he opens the way for Christians dedicated to following Christ in faith to face the issue in their own lives, in the lives of others, and in the society in which we live.

This review was written originally for the Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation.

***Rachel Weeping: The Case Against Abortion* by James T. Burtchzell (Harper & Row, 1984, 381 pp., $10.95). Reviewed by Christine D. Pohl, MATS student in Social Ethics, Gordon-Conwell Seminary.**

In a collection of five essays, Burtchaell carefully analyzes the abortion controversy. He compares aspects of the abortion issue with the language, presuppositions and actions of the Nazi Holocaust and of the Dred Scott Decision on the status of American slaves. He further compares and connects abortion with infanticide. His title essay examines studies done by Linda Bird Francke and Katrina Maxtone-Graham on women and men who had direct experience with abortion. Burtchaell uses their recorded interviews to isolate certain recurring themes running through decisions to abort. He examines, challenges and occasionally demolishes the major pro-choice arguments.

The length and detail of this book by a Roman Catholic scholar at Notre Dame make it appropriate for well-educated lay persons or students. Burtchaell's skillful presentation is restrained yet profoundly moving. Although the basic comparisons of abortion to

the Holocaust, slavery and infanticide are familiar, the author moves beyond superficial observations to note very disturbing fundamental similarities. His conclusions from the study of the interviews are both perceptive and unsettling. Especially interesting are his comments on the use and misuse of language in the debate. His strong pro-life bias is evident throughout the book and occasionally results in repetition and overstatement of the position. However, any minor weaknesses are far outweighed by the exceptional quality of the writing and the insights Burtchaell brings to the issue.

Abortion and the Christian: What Every Believer Should Know
by John Jefferson Davis (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1984, 125 pp., $4.95). Reviewed by Frank Anthony Spina, Professor of Old Testament, Seattle Pacific University.

John Jefferson Davis takes on the complex problem of abortion by calling attention to the current American *Zeitgeist* (we have evolved from traditionalism to permissiveness), rehearsing the ethical options available (Fletcher's situationalism, Geisler's hierarchalism, Brown's absolutism), providing information about the medical realities (abortion is far more dangerous than commonly believed), working in biblical texts (personhood exists from conception, therefore abortion is unbiblical), advocating abortion only when the mother's life is threatened (which is rare), and calling for a constitutional amendment (the Human Life Amendment).

Doubtless many who read this book will want the author's arguments to succeed. But will thoughtful Christians be any less frustrated when, in any end, they are still faced with the simplistic and largely ideological options of "pro-choice" or "pro-life?"

It seems there would have been no problem had not America veered from "traditional" values and replaced them with "permissive" ones. But this is argument by "labeling;" nothing is right or wrong because it is traditional instead of permissive. Sexism, racism and materialism are traditional in our society! Davis allows that abortion is a complex moral issue with psychological, social, medical and political dimensions, but he hardly seems to take that seriously. What is complex about a point of view that abortion is wrong except when the mother's life is threatened? The psychological, social and political factors which make the abortion question an anguishing one are largely swept aside. Thus, were it nor for the "personal goals and career plans" of women, abortion would not be so problematic. The "complexity" seems primarily to be a function of women balking at the agenda males have set for them.

Nor is it clear how a review of the medical dangers involving abortion is helpful. If David is correct about this, might not one conclude either that we need medical procedures or that abortion will be ethical when it becomes less dangerous?

In my opinion, Davis is weakest when appealing to the Bible. To be sure, he cannot be faulted for emphasizing the biblical concept of *imago dei* or the many texts which underscore the sanctity of life. Nor should one quarrel with his contention that life is life in the biblical tradition, whether pre- or post-natal. The problem is rather that he strains so much to make the biblical case that he loses credibility; in addition, he glosses over the complexity of the biblical witness.

Are we really to believe that the disciples dismissed the children huddling around Jesus because they did not regard them as persons "in the whole sense?" How much are we to make of poetic statements about pre-natal life in the Psalms, or of John the Baptist leaping for joy in the womb?

More importantly, does establishing that the Bible teaches the sanctity of life conclude the discussion? How are we to incorporate those texts in which life, even innocent life, is sacrificed to some larger purpose (e.g., Joshua)? Or, why is it presumably legitimate for Christians to derive a "just war" position from the Bible notwithstanding its pro-life slant (are there any just wars in which innocents, including children, are truly safe?), but for them to be limited to a single absolutist position on abortion? There are biblical statements which strongly suggest pacifism, yet that has always been a minority position with the Church, even among those who would be adamantly against abortion. Davis cites the biblical text, but does not *engage* it.

As a fairly predictable contribution to the so-called pro-life side, Davis does little to advance the abortion debate beyond the current options, which continue to be unsatisfactory to a great number of Christians. It will probably take a "paradigm shift" to move beyond this impasse, something which Davis does not provide.

Our Right to Choose: Toward a New Ethic of Abortion
by Beverly Wildung Harrison (Beacon Press, 1983, 334 pp., $9.95). Reviewed by Esther Byle Bruland, Ph.D. student in Religion and Society, Drew University, co-author of *A Passion For Jesus, A Passion For Justice.*

Procreative choice for women is the centerpiece of this scholarly and impassioned work. Beverly Harrison sets forth perhaps the most rigorous ethical thinking to date to enter the abortion debate from the pro-choice perspective. In this recent work she both responds to pro-life claims and lays the foundation for what she calls a new ethic of abortion which has women's well-being as its main focus.

Harrison characterizes herself as a mixed theorist, combining utilitarian-consequentialist considerations with deontological concerns. Her major approach, however, is that of feminist liberation theology. Her work is self-consciously revisionistic, rejecting what she refers to as patriarchal, misogynistic approaches. Much of Scripture is thus set aside; rather, the ethical bases of Dr. Harrison's work are derived from feminist-liberationist notions of justice, rights, and the good society.

This book is cast in terms of a power struggle—the struggle of women to control their procreative potential. History is viewed in terms of women being defined and confined by their reproductive capacities. In this scenario, women have suffered subservience not only to male-dominated social relations and structures, but also to their own fertility. Harrison cites historical evidence of abortion and infanticide as aspects of this struggle of women to cope with their fertility.

Harrison envisions a society characterized by procreative choice as one in which the resort to abortion is minimized. Safe and reliable contraceptives would be available to prevent unwanted pregnanacy; women would take active responsibility for managing their fertility; and for those women choosing to bear children, there would be adequate economic and social supports, including daycare and fair pay.

This vision is one of the most salient aspects of the book, particularly for those who do not share Harrison's pro-choice perspective. She indicates a point of potential agreement between pro-choice and pro-life advocates concerning policies that would enhance the options open to women and so minimize the resort to abortion as a form of birth control.

Harrison, however, would retain elective abortion as an option. She insists that to deny access to legal abortions is to deny women their status as fully capable moral agents. She would shift the onus of restricting abortions from the state to pregnant women themselves. To do otherwise, according to Harrison, is to invade their bodily integrity (she apparently does not consider abortion to be such an invasion).

Toward the end of the book, Harrison turns to evaluate the morality of the act of abortion itself. She refutes the belief that human life begins at conception as a naturalistic fallacy, i.e., a transmutation of scientific findings into moral norms without ethical deliberation. She sees humanity as socially rather than biologically determined. Her question then becomes, at what point ought we to *impute* human life to the fetus? She concludes, rather arbitrarily, that while a fetus may be considered "a form of life" during early gestation, we should not consider it "a human life" until it reaches viability. In her ethic, abortions are a necessary form of birth control of last resort; early abortions are far preferable to late abortions, but the will of the pregnant woman should take precedence up until birth.

Indeed, "will" and "want" play an important role in Harrison's ethic. Control is pivotal. Her approach is *so* concrete and matter-of-fact that a sense of awe and welcome for the miracle of new life is absent. Rather, pregnancy is treated as a problem that can be solved.

Harrison's focus on will and control is inconsistent, however. While calling for the moral agency of women to be respected, she says little about their agency in regard to sex-

ual activity. She regards the Christian sexual ethic as patriarchal and misogynistic. In her view, abortion as an issue should not be tied to a sexual ethic. Procreative choice has to do with fertility, but not chastity.

Harrison makes an important contribution in envisioning a society characterized by procreative choice in which the anguish women often experience in connection with their fertility *and* the resort to elective abortion are minimized. Her concern for the well-being of women and her desire that every birth be welcome are genuine. Harrison rightly stresses the material, social, and emotional hardships incurred through unwanted pregnancies. She fails, however, to acknowledge the psychological, emotional, and spiritual damage suffered by women (and their mates) as a result of choosing abortion. Nor does she acknowledge the loss of choice experienced when women are pressured into having abortions. Her concern for women's well-being, though genuine, does not go far enough. It must extend to the welfare of the fetus and to the intangible aspects of women's lives.

BOOK REVIEWS

***Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective 2 vols.* by James M. Gustafson (University of Chicago Press, 1981, 1984, $25.00 (vol. 2). Reviewed by Donald G. Bloesch, Professor of Theology, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary.**

In this work, James Gustafson, professor at the University of Chicago Divinity School and one of the most articulate and probing ethicists of our day, presents the case for a radically theocentric ethics. He readily acknowledges his indebtedness to H. Richard Niebuhr, his teacher at the Yale Divinity School, who tried to make a place in theology for God's majesty and power. He also shares Niebuhr's appreciation for Ernst Troeltsch, the theologian of historicism, who maintained that our religious beliefs and moral values are inextricably bound up in the web of history and culture. But while Niebuhr made a valiant effort to transcend relativism by a commitment to "the absolute faithfulness of God-in-Christ," (*Christ and Culture*, p. 239), it is an open question whether Gustafson can avert this peril.

Because he approaches ethics from a contextualist or historicist perspective, it follows that there are no absolute, timeless truths but only historically and culturally conditioned insights that need to be tested scientifically. Indeed, he claims that not only culture but also nature is a source of moral wisdom. This is why it is necessary to draw on both the natural and social sciences in any assessment of theological and ethical assertions.

The author's approach is theocentric because he holds that human values and goals must be subordinated to trust and wonder in the God whom he defines as "the ultimate ordering power in the universe." God does not exist for the sake of humanity, but humanity can serve this power who both bears down on us and sustains us.

At the same time, Gustafson is also admittedly naturalistic. He sees God not as a transcendent personal being who intervenes in nature and history but instead as an impersonal power (or powers) that works through the processes and patterns of nature and history. His court of appeal, moreover, is not divine revelation but human experience that is tested by the scientific method. The credibility of theological assertions rests on their consistency with the evidence about the universe provided by the natural and behavioral sciences. Revelation is simply the awakening of religious sensibility to the mystery and wonder of Nature; it definitely is not the communication of meaning by a living God who confronts people personally in a divine-human encounter.

Given this radical departure from biblical faith, it is not surprising to find Gustafson using "God" and "Nature" interchangeably, though he resists identifying the Orderer of nature with the works of nature. His position is remarkably akin to that of ancient Stoicism, which practically divinized Nature. It seems that Gustafson's God is the soul or spirit of the world rather than the Creator and Lord of the world. Like the Stoics, he calls for a courageous resignation to and cooperation with the powers that are at work in the cosmos. He speaks highly of natural piety, which is characterized by awe, reverence and gratitude for what is. The physical orderliness of Nature becomes the paradigm for the moral order of humanity.

In this scenario, biblical authority fades into significance. The Bible is a source of support for Gustafson only as a record of the religious experiences of a particular people in history. We can learn from this record how people in another day responded to the awesome powers that shape the cosmos, but we cannot be bound to their myths, which are the product of a particular historical matrix and are now shown to be outdated, though not irrelevant. Gustafson almost completely ignores the Old Testament, though he does appreciate Jesus as exemplifying "theocentric piety and fidelity." At the same time, he rejects the Jesus Christ of orthodoxy—the preexistent Son of God made flesh—as well as the resurrection of Jesus from the grave. He also denies any kind of life after death and is content to face the future with the courage to live and endure in a world of uncertainty.

The God that Gustafson upholds is inaccessibly remote, and this has led some of his critics to accuse him of deism. Yet his God is not detached from the universe but is actively at work within it reshaping and remolding it. All we can know about this God, however, are "signs" or "signals" of the divine ordering of nature. We cannot even be assured that this God is one whose essence is love, for Gustafson points to the destructive as well as the beneficent powers at work in nature.

The goal of ethical action seems to be the common good, but the precise content of this good is arrived at through a partnership of religious tradition with the natural and behavioral sciences. Even then, it is a good that pertains only to our particular period in history, and it may well change when circumstances change.

What Gustafson has given us is a refurbished natural theology that makes a place for law, even for rules, but not for the gospel, which celebrates God's act of reconciliation and redemption in Jesus Christ. For Gustafson, the foundational criterion for ethical action is the Book of Nature as seen through the eyes of the empirical sciences.

The author identifies with the Reformed tradition because of its emphasis on the sovereignty and glory of God, but he admits that he is very selective in what he chooses from it. He appreciates Calvin's perception of the inseparability of Nature and God (though he misreads this), but he rejects Calvin's Christology and high view of biblical authority.

Karl Barth is seen more as a foil than as a positive support. In contradistinction to Barth, he tells us that his model is not "one of God personally relating to human beings as persons in the spheres of their moral activity" but rather "one of powers that are impersonally ordering the world of which human activity is a part."

Gustafson can be commended for perceiving the importance of the historical and cultural context in ethical action, but he has gone too far by losing sight of the transcendent ground for Christian moral decision. In his view, there is no sharp distinction between the natural and moral order. Revelation is reduced to insight into the divine ordering of human experience; piety is reinterpreted as awe and wonder before the mystery of Nature; theology is transmuted into an enterprise that ventures to say some things about God on the basis of an examination of our affective responses to the world; God is no longer transcendent Lord and Savior of the world but "the power and ordering of life in nature which sustains and limits human activity." At the price of being relevant to the world of science and philosophy, Gustafson depersonalizes the God of Scripture and ends with a philosophical construct that may well arouse the curiosity of the world but certainly not command its allegiance.

***Unmasking the New Age* by Douglas R. Groothuis (InterVarsity Press, 1986, 192pp., $6.95). Reviewed by Ronald Enroth, Professor of Sociology, Westmont College.**

The brochure describes a weekend workshop which will enable participants to deepen their capacity to serve others. The approach of the workshop emphasizes "a trust in intuitive or inner wisdom" and "a connectedness to universal life force or spirit." Another four-day seminar, "The Art of Empowerment," is billed as "a mode of facilitation/guiding/healing that is highly empowered, profoundly growthful, and full of joy."

Such invitations to experiences of human "transformation" are indicative of the proliferating influence of New Age thinking in contemporary society. On the surface these opportunities for human betterment seem in-

nocuous enough. However, after reading *Unmasking the New Age*, one will have a clearer picture of how such activities are part of a new world view which is fast gaining popularity in the Western world, a "grand vision" of personal and planetary transformation which is based on the release of human potential—the "divine within"—and other non-Christian assumptions.

This comprehensive and well-organized book begins with an excellent introductory chapter which provides glimpses of the diverse aspects of the New Age movement and which identifies the primary distinctives of New Age thinking: the notion that "all is one"; that "all is god" (pantheism); the divinity of humanity; the need for awareness of the divine within through a change in consciousness; the view that all religions are essentially one; and, finally, a vision of cosmic evolutionary optimism.

Groothuis then proceeds to map out the roots of the new world view from its inception in the counterculture of the 1960s. He sees New Age thought supplanting secular humanism to form a "new cosmic humanism" which has been especially influential in both the ecology movement and radical feminism. "By inflating human potential to cosmic dimensions, cosmic humanism has captured much of secular humanism without being ensnared by its narrow, repressive elements."

The bulk of the book is devoted to a careful analysis of the influence of New Age thinking in holistic health, psychology, science (especially physics), and politics. The chapter on psychology represents a more reasoned approach than that of the popular New Age critic, Dave Hunt, although Christian professionals will be disappointed with Groothuis' brief discussion of hypnosis, which amounts to a restatement of the controversial positions taken by Hunt and the Bobgans that hypnosis invariably involves an occult connection.

Unmasking the New Age presents a welcome alternative to the view, popular in many evangelical/fundamentalist circles, that New Age groups represent a political/economic/spiritual network or conspiracy intent on overthrowing the existing social order. Little concrete evidence for such a conspiracy can be documented. Groothuis observes that while a case can be made for a general conspiracy of evil in the world, "the New Age movement is better viewed as a world view shift than a unified global conspiracy."

The chapter entitled "New Age Spirituality" addresses the revival of neo-paganism in Western culture, especially the renewed interest in goddess worship and shamanistic practices. The author helps us understand that while the obvious occultism of such phenomena does not yet have broad appeal, the same basic assumptions underlying the neo-pagan manifestations are invading our corporations, schools, and even the U.S. military under the guise of "growth seminars," self-improvement programs and "confluent education." In making that important link, Groothuis provides invaluable assistance in the continuing and crucial task facing modern Christians—the development of discernment skills.

Groothuis concludes by challenging Christians to become culture watchers, to evaluate what they encounter, and to act on the basis of information received. I cannot think of a better stimulus to watching, evaluating, and acting than to read this timely book.

The Bible and Liberation: Political and Social Hermeneutics
edited by Norman K. Gottwald (Orbis, 1983, 542 pp., $18.95). Reviewed by Pheme Perkins, Professor of Theology (New Testament), Boston College.

A revision of *A Radical Religion Reader* (1976), this volume of twenty-eight articles includes an impressive number of the major statements on sociological study of biblical material published since that time. This new emphasis along with four articles on women in the Old and New Testaments provides a balance to the Marxist orientation of the earlier material. Because the editor is himself a major contributor to the sociological approach to Old Testament traditions, he has chosen selections that are established statements and are of uniformly high quality.

Several of the articles deal with Gottwald's approach to the sociology of Israel. He explains the method and includes an address on the task ahead. Reviews of Gottwald's work are included along with a major schematic statement by Walter Brueggemann, "Trajectories in Old Testament Literature and the Sociology of Ancient Israel." Robert Wilson's essay on prophecy in ancient Israel uses anthropological material to suggest that the relationship between the prophetic tradition and society must be seen as more complex than that of advocate for social change. Some prophetic works may speak from the margins of society. Others may serve to stabilize and hold together the social order. Henri Mottu's ideological analysis of the struggle between Hananiah and Jeremiah (Jer. 28) uses a Marxist approach to describe the conflict of prophetic visions. A slightly different use of Marxism appears in Joseph Hardegree's treatment of Hosea. Finally, for the Old Testament student the collection includes fine essays on women in Israelite society by Phyllis Bird and Carol Meyers.

Several of the New Testament essays deal with the methodological question of applying social sciences material to the NT. Bruce Malina argues for the use of anthropological insights as a corrective to our cultural biases. He warns us, however, that there is no unified social sciences model. His essay describes three major options: (1) structural functionalism treats expected interactions and relationships between persons; (2) conflict models focus on coercion, power and interests of conflicting groups in a society; (3) sociology of knowledge or "symbolic anthropology" treats societies as shapers of powerful and long-lasting perceptions through their symbols, whether in language or rite. Essays by Gerd Theissen, John Gager and Robert Smith treat the problems of describing the "social class" of persons in the early Christian movement and the various approaches that have been taken. Robin Scroggs also has a review essay on sociological research and the New Testament.

The New Testament material which claims the NT for a "radical theology" is divided between essays from George Pixley and John Pairman Brown that argue for a liberation understanding of Jesus' preaching and ministry and two recent pieces from the feminist camp by Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Luise Schottroff on women disciples in earlier Christianity.

Finally, and probably least interesting to biblical students, there are several essays describing Marxist approaches to the Bible or the use of the Bible in liberation theology. Essays by Sergio Rostagno and Kuno Fussel defend the legitimacy of Marxist class analysis in biblical study. Carlos Mesters, Arthur McGovern and Juan Luis Segundo describe different facets of South American liberation theology.

Obviously, there is too much in this reader to be encompassed in a single course. But the essays it contains might serve as secondary reading for a number of different courses from OT and NT sources to courses in Political Theology, Women's Studies or Social Ethics. The editor has taken great care to balance the material among different interests. In the end, the strongest segment of the book remains the work on the Old Testament.

Money, Sex and Power: The Challenge of the Disciplined Life
by Richard J. Foster (Harper & Row, 1985, 260 pp., $13.95).
Sex, Money and Power: An Essay in Christian Social Ethics
by Philip Turner (Cowley, 1985, 135 pp., $7.95).
Reviewed by Douglas J. Miller, Professor of Christian Social Ethics, Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

One would be hard pressed to list any more significant and controversial facets of human experience than money, sex and power. Richard Foster, a popular Quaker writer, and Philip Turner, an Episcopal academic, broach their subjects in diverse ways and with contrasting input, but come to remarkably similar conclusions. Foster is more oriented to the lay reader with his always fascinating anecdotes, occasional flashes of insight and convincing blend of traditional and avant-garde theology. His creative spirit and genuinely compassionate approach will both delight and stretch most Christians.

Turner, on the other hand, is less open and tolerant than Foster to contemporary trends. Moreover, this reviewer became somewhat entangled in his lengthy and often ponderous discussions of alternative positions against which he developed his own ideas. These foils seemed too artificial, even unreal; and one wonders whether the advocates would ever see themselves in the narrow pictures Turner paints of them. I felt he was more defensive than stretching.

I found Foster's discussion of sexual morality most engaging. His sensitivity to the questions of divorce, oral sex, masturbation and fantasy was refreshing. His courageous stand on the equality of women is to be applauded. I felt his own inner agony as he sympathetically dealt with the sexuality of singles. Nevertheless, I was deeply disappointed in his treatment of homosexuality. While he does exhibit unusual compassion for the plight of gays, his theological views on this subject are grounded upon a discredited exegesis of Scripture, a static hermeneutic, a jaundiced Barthian anthropology, and just bad ethical reasoning. His presentation will do little to halt the spreading fire of bigotry against this vulnerable outgrouped minority.

Turner's book, being more academically oriented, will better suit those who wish to examine the ethical dimensions of money, sex and power. He attempts to reconstruct a new model for doing Christian ethics that rejects the social indifference of mysticism, but weaves its way between the narrowness of sectarianism (which sees social action limited to the church only) and the over extension of "neo-Constantinianism" (which sees social action primarily in changing social structures). Change must begin in the church and flow out to the broader world.

While Turner's position has some credence, his approach seems almost "Christ against culture," especially in his restatement of the more traditional church views. For instance, he tries to salvage the hierarchical relationship between husband and wife—although he does qualify this by disclaiming male domination. But this seems hollow once one justifies the scheme. Furthermore, in his section on money, his claims that liberation theology by-passes the poor, that the poor sometimes abuse the rich, that only God can eliminate poverty, and that "inner freedom" is what really matters seem to be but restatements of the common apologetic for continued injustice and oppression.

The fundamental problem of both books is the lack of a consistent hermeneutic. This permitted Foster to justify capitalism on the basis of Jesus' parable of the talents, and Turner to discuss slavery in the Bible simply within the context of obedience, goodwill and forbearance without further moral comment. Both authors seemed unable adequately to bridge the historical gap between the biblical text and the contemporary context. In the final analysis, ethical questions for Christians rest heavily upon one's hermeneutical axioms.

Joy in the New Testament
by William Morrice (Eerdmans, 1984, 173 pp., $8.95). Reviewed by Larry R. Helyer, Associate Professor of Religion, Taylor University.

The fruits of an Aberdeen dissertation are here distilled by William Morrice, New Testament Tutor and Librarian at St. John's College, Durham, England. Fastening upon a keynote of the Christian message, the author carefully summarizes the reasons why "joy is more conspicuous in Christianity than in any other religion and in the Bible than in any other literature."

For the aspiring graduate student, the book is a model of a sound biblical theology. Divided into two parts, the book explores the vocabulary of joy in Part One. In eleven short chapters, each root word in its various grammatical forms is surveyed from the classical period through that of the Septuagint, Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, and New Testament. Morrice usually concludes each word group with a summary of nuances and comments on the theological significance of the discussion.

Realistically, students untutored in Greek will probably not persevere with Part One. What it does, it does well; but a nuts and bolts analysis of linguistic phenomenon will attract primarily specialists. Part Two, on the other hand, consists of a more engaging discussion of the contribution each biblical writer makes to the development of the concept of joy (Jesus' teaching is dealt with first as a separate chapter in Part Two). This section of the book contains passages which not only fill the head, but warm the heart.

Here are some gleanings from Morrice's study: "Luke 15 [the three parables about things lost] is the most joyful chapter in the whole of the gospel of joy"; "We can sum up and characterize the Johannine contribution to the New Testament conception of joy by picking out the phrase 'the fulness of joy' "; "Christianity for Paul was a religion not only of grace but also joy"; "The joy of Paul comes to its climax in the letter to the Philippians"; "The source of Paul's joy is always the redemption won for men by Jesus Christ. So it comes about that 'joy in the Lord' is the most adequate way of summing up Paul's contribution to the Christian conception of joy"; "The paradox of joy in suffering . . . comprises the main contribution of Peter to the Christian conception of joy according to the New Testament"; "The letter of James stresses the possibility and even the duty of joy in the midst of trials and temptation"; "The writer of the Book of Revelation declares that the joy of the opponents of Christianity is short-lived . . . the joy of the redeemed is eternal"; "Finally, Christians should always live as on the threshold of joy."

The author's scholarship is evident and he expounds his subject with an eye to the critical issues raised by New Testament studies. For those who are interested, Morrice is chary of Matthean authorship of the gospel of Matthew, of Pauline authorship of the pastorals, and of Petrine authorship of 2 Peter. Otherwise, he follows a generally traditional approach toward the NT documents.

I would say that, in general, Morrice does a good job popularizing his dissertation. For those looking for a thoughtful exposition of the findings of a *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* or *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* for the complex and often joyless days in which we live, this book is highly recommended.

Jesus, the Compassion of God
by Monika K. Hellwig (Michael Glazier, 1983, 159 pp., $12.95). Reviewed by Christian D. Kettler, Ph.D. student, Fuller Theological Seminary.

Contemporary Catholic theology is usually a tradition of which evangelical Protestants are often all too ignorant. This is obviously an unfortunate state of affairs. Interaction with a theological tradition other than one's own cannot help but bring a freshness and vigor to one's own theology. Monika Hellwig, professor of theology at Georgetown University has provided a short, yet stimulating introduction to the world of contemporary Catholic Christology which will be beneficial both to those who desire a survey of the mood of contemporary Christology, as well as to those who wish to engage the author in a discussion of her theme of Jesus as the "compassion" of God.

Part One is entitled "The Task of Christology." Hellwig differentiates between two methods of doing Christology: The first is based on speculation by inference from one's experience of Jesus. The second is also based on one's experience of Jesus, but is to be preferred because it is a direct interpretation of the experience itself. A speculative approach tends to degenerate into rigidity and dogmatism, and not allow for the validity of differing viewpoints. The author states her preference for the second option in her declaration that the intent of the volume is "to reflect on Christian claims for Jesus by the method of interpreting and thematizing the Christian experience of salvation and hope arising from the impact of Jesus within the community of faith and in the world and in its history at large" (p. 18).

This approach includes honest questions posed for the traditional method of doing theology. The basic question of what difference does Jesus make must be dealt with in the context of Christian experience. When traditional symbolism hinders the relationship between humanity and Jesus, it must be amended. This is true concerning Chalcedon, or, more specifically, the wrong interpretation of Chalcedon which overemphasizes the deity of Christ at the expense of his humanity. Tradition should not be bypassed, but we

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should also be free to see the impact of Jesus upon the political, social, and psychological issues of our day, issues which were foreign to the age of Chalcedon.

Hellwig sounds a clarion call for a return to the "sources" of Christology. She finds these sources in the church's experience of God in worship and prayer. A change from the early church's emphasis upon worship and prayer as the source of Christology to a later emphasis upon correct doctrinal formulation has only been resolved in the twentieth century by such theologians as Karl Rahner and the liberation theologians, who again acknowledge the contemporary believer's experience as a source for Christology. It is a mark of a mature theology which "takes one's own experience seriously" (p. 60), according to Hellwig. Therefore, while the history of the individual life of Jesus is of undoubted importance, it is incomplete if it is not studied along with "the history of the impact of the Risen Christ as it continues up to and in the present" (p. 71).

In Part Two, the author presents a "Proposal towards a Constructive Christology" which considers the preaching, the death, and resurrection of Jesus as a basis for understanding him as the Compassion of God. At each of these points, Jesus' compassion is made manifest in the experience of those who believe in him. This is not simple pity, but includes help, movement toward others, solidarity with the poor and oppressed, and a total sense of involvement. Where the experience of the believer does not reflect a particular point of tradition, one should be feel to jettison such an idea, e.g., the pre-existence of Christ.

Part Three considers briefly, but insightfully the tough issues of "The Believer's Christ in a Pluralistic World," which includes Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, Marxism, and Gandhi. Buddhism is appreciated for addressing the problem of salvation, but Hellwig views the compassion of Jesus as much more than a negation. Judaism and Islam are found wanting because of their emphasis upon the extrinsic law, not the law of freedom. Marxism's analysis of social situations are accepted, but need to be augmented by a Christian anthropology in terms of relationship and love, not simply the worker and his work. A quite positive appreciation of Gandhi follows, whom Hellwig considers to be one who "has personified the divine Compassion in our time to an extraordinary degree" (p. 155).

This volume is not meant to be an exhaustive Christology, but does raise interesting issues with the author's forthright declaration of a theological method based on Christian experience. This is certainly to be applauded in one sense. A Christology which does not take seriously the reality of Christian experience does not take seriously either the humanity of Christ or our own humanity. Nonetheless, Dr. Hellwig's book raises some critical questions about such a methodology, a methodology which is dominant in theology today. How does one critique Christian experience or elements within our Christian experience? If we believe that God has spoken a word which originates from outside our existential needs and desires, how can that Word critique us if Christian experience is the foundation of our theology? Furthermore, has not Kant taught us about the problem of *interpreting* our experience? Do we not need an interpretation which originates beyond ourselves, in God himself, what T.F. Torrance would call "the epistemology of the Holy Spirit" (in his *God and Rationality*)? Is this not the meaning of the Incarnation, in which God provides both the revelation *and* the response in the divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ? Hellwig mentions at one point the need "to enter into the compassion of (Jesus') experience" (p. 108). Unfortunately, the author does not build upon what could be a most fruitful relationship between the humanity of Christ and our humanity.

Notwithstanding these criticisms, this is a well written volume which will be very useful to all those interested in trends in contemporary Catholic Christology, whether they be Protestant or Catholic, teacher or student.

Why Believe in God?
by Michael Goulder and John Hick (SCM Press, 1983, 111 pp., $3.00). Reviewed by Clark H. Pinnock, Professor of Theology, McMaster Divinity College.

An interesting trend in British theology these days is the rise of radical theology. The *Honest to God* modernism of two decades ago has flowered again in the new scepticism of certain Anglican clergymen. Recently there was a call for the resignation of the Bishop of Durham for calling the resurrection of Jesus a conjuring trick with bones. At least in Goulder's case a man has had the decency to renounce his orders, not wanting to join Don Cupitt in the ranks of the ordained atheists society.

This book is a dialogue between Goulder, a man who has lost all his faith in God, and Hick, a man who has lost most of it. It is difficult for the reviewer to know whom to cheer for—whether the atheist who is at least honest, or the quasi-theist who clings to at least a remnant of precious belief. Goulder puts his finger on the problem when he says that Hick has given away most of what he has but stopped short of giving it all away.

The first chapter is interesting because in it the atheist Goulder gives his testimony how he moved from evangelical conversion at Cambridge (in the CICCU no less) to unbelief as a priest in the Church of England. Hick of course has also moved from an evangelical faith to theocentric syncretism. Although this tends to confirm my Arminian beliefs (people *do* fall from grace), it also troubles me and I ask myself, what do evangelicals have to do to conserve our talent once we have it?

The book began in a jointly taught course in Birmingham in which the chapters were pairs of lectures given by these two gentlemen. If you want the bottom line here, why Hick does believe in God, rather than not believe in Him, then the answer is religious experience. The testimony of the world's religions suggests that there is a limitlessly higher and better Reality to come into contact with, and Hick pictures it in a Christian way: "God is gracious and opens to us the richness of his eternal life." It is curious how, having gotten away from Christocentrism, Jesus Christ remains the chief inspiration of Hick's theism. It is difficult to imagine where he could have gotten that sentence from the religions at large, so to speak.

Since Hick bases theism entirely upon religious experience, it is not too difficult for Goulder to cast doubt upon its value for proving that there is a God. For if religious experience *alone* is the proof for God, belief in God is rationally shaky. For evangelical apologists like me, it would be important to buttress this appeal to experience with other kinds of arguments. Here I could refer to the fine book by Stuart Hackett, *The Reconstruction of the Christian Revelation Claim* (Baker, 1984).

So this is not a great book in itself, but an example of the travail of the alienated liberal theologians.

Micah: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Micah
by Delbert Hillers (Fortress, 1984, 116 pp., $22.95). Reviewed by A. J. Petrotta, Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies, Sterling College.

If one had undertaken a study of the book of Micah a decade ago, one might have gotten the impression that the critical questions regarding this "minor" prophet were more or less settled since there were no current critical commentaries. A quite different picture is evident today—not only are there several critical commentaries, but the commentators scarcely agree on any of the critical questions. Delbert Hillers' recent volume in the Hermeneia series is an excellent addition to the growing interest in Mican studies.

The central debate in the study of Micah concerns the composition of the book. The older literary critics found authentic Mican material largely in the first three chapters, the "judgment" section of Micah. The bulk of chapters 4 through 5 and 7:8-20, the "hope" sections, was said to come from the post-exilic time; the remainder of chapters 6 and 7 were similarly thought to be later than Micah's time (though not all agreed on this).

The current debate over composition is carried out along form-critical and especially redaction-critical lines. Two observations can be made from these studies: first, in spite of the common assumptions and methodology, little common ground is agreed upon in the results of the redaction-critical studies. That is, studying the growth of the book and assigning sections and snippets of text to different times and different groups of tradents is confidently argued, but which snippet, and what time and group, are not commonly agreed upon. Second, in spite of the newer methodology of redaction-critical approaches, the constrictures of the literary criticism of a century ago continues to dominate the discussion. This is especially true regarding the authenticity of the hope oracles in the book.

Two questions arise: Does the disparate results of the redaction-critical approach stretch the credibility of the method beyond what it is able to support? Simply because they disagree is no reason in and of itself to discard the method, but the hypothetical nature of the method and the disparate results combine at least to raise the question of its appropriateness to the material. Perhaps we are asking the wrong questions, or stopping short in our inquiry. Is there not a fundamental tension, if not outright difference, between the methodology and assumptions of the older literary critics and the redaction critics? If this is true, the difference should somehow show in the results, yet the redaction-critics have not moved significantly beyond the literary critical results of the previous generation of scholars.

Hillers, however, breaks ranks with the redaction-critics by positing a single situation for the composition of Micah. Hillers locates this situation in a particular social context; specifically, "a unifying explanatory approach is sought which has recurred over and over in human history, a movement of 'revitalization,' a 'millenial' movement" (p. 4). This millenial movement looks to an "imminent, radical reordering of life on earth" (p. 4). An effort is made by the oppressed, so Hillers argues, to alter radically the state of affairs in order to bring about a more satisfying situation in which there is peace and plenty for all.

Hillers finds support for this theory from the book of Micah itself, from Isaiah, and from archaeological evidence. Two factors that cause these millenennial movements are economic deprivation and the demise of authority. These factors are common in Micah (cf. e.g. 2:1-2, 9; 3:9-12; 6:9-11; etc.), and similar complaints can be found throughout Isaiah. Historically, Uzziah and Hezekiah carried out extensive armament and fortification programs. This greater influence on the populace by the centralized government is borne out by potsherds found with the inscription *lmlk*, "to the king." Thus the socio-political situation was ripe for this revitalization movement. The elements of this movement include the removal of foreign elements, a "time of troubles," the reversal of social classes, the idea of a righteous ruler, and the vision of a new age (cf. pp. 6-7).

The approach, though vastly different from the approaches outlined above, is not, however, a return to some pre-critical exegesis. The difference lies in Hillers' conscious effort to avoid the diachronic approach in which a reconstruction of the book is sought through explicating its literary history (Hillers does make redaction critical comments at certain junctures in his study, but an effort is made to avoid such observations). Though he criticizes the paucity of common results of the redaction-critical method, he does not reject the method for this reason; rather, he adopts a synchronic approach for the promise this approach affords for the exegete.

Regarding the authenticity of the hope oracles and the exegesis of difficult passages in the book (two other perennial problems for commentators), Hillers is rather conservative. An example is the famous passage in 4:1-4 (paralleled in Isa. 2:2-4). After a brief rehearsal of the options—Micah, Isaiah, or a third, anonymous prophet—and a response to the arguments against Mican authorship, he cautiously relates this to the overall thesis of the commentary that the book arose out of a revitalization movement. The possibilities are that Micah wrote it as part of the vision of the new age; that Isaiah wrote it and it was added to Micah as fitting with his thought; or that the passage is from an anonymous prophet. In other words, he is conservative regarding what he can confidently affirm—there is not enough evidence in the text to say without doubt or without lingering problems who wrote it and when, but he does

not reject Mican authorship out of hand.

On matters of text he is similarly cautious. Micah 4:1-4 does not pose the problem for translators that other passages in Micah present, but it is representative of Hillers' method and approach regarding textual matters. For example, in 4:1 Hillers omits "of the house of" before Yahweh, thus agreeing with the LXX. He further notes that Isa. 2:2 agrees with the Mican parallel, and that the LXX there has "the mountain of the Lord and the house of God," which appears to be a conflated reading (pointing to early variants for this phrase). The additional word in the MT (*beit*), might have been added on the basis of 3:12 or 4:2. What is the witness of the other versions? Does the LXX translator have a penchant for altering his text or conforming his text to stock phraseology? Is there influence on the LXX translator from other passages in the LXX? What about the LXX translator of Isaiah—is he faithful to his *Vorlage* as a general rule? Hillers may have asked all these questions in his study, but no mention of this is made in the commentary.

This commentary can be highly recommended to advanced students for its mature and stimulating exegesis, and for the creative approach Hillers takes. The approach is not without its problems: the social location of a revitalization movement is far too specific to gain many adherents; the text itself is not able to support this thesis any more than it can the redaction-critical approaches it seeks to overcome. However, the synchronic approach to the book has merit and should be pursued for the insights it may yield.

One might have wished for more comments on the text, the characteristics of the versions and their relationship to one another and the MT, or even some interaction with the history of the interpretation of Micah. Yet there is no one among us who could not learn from the brevity of this commentary. One cannot but be amazed at how much insight and punch Hillers packs into his brief comments. Anyway one looks at it, this is a refreshing commentary.

BOOK COMMENTS

Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology
edited by David G. Benner (Baker Book House, 1985, 1223 pp., 39.95).

The Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology is clearly the most comprehensive work in psychology to date from a Christian perspective. David Benner has pulled together nearly all of the evangelical scholars in the field of psychology to produce over 1,000 articles spanning the entire field of psychology. By far the greatest number of the articles focus on more applied areas such as personality, psychopathology, psychotherapy and the psychology of religion. More experimentally oriented fields like developmental, social and physiological psychology are purposely given much less space since the book is written primarily for "pastors and others in various kinds of ministry."

The Encyclopedia is a goldmine of information for the pastor and student of theology and Christian ministry. Nearly all major schools of psychology and psychotherapy are presented as well as the major mental and emotional disorders. The reader can quickly find basic information, for example, on Sigmund Freud, Carl Rogers, Albert Ellis, Hobart Mowrer and a host of other influential psychological theorists. Reviews of Christian writers like Bill Gothard, Jay Adams and Lawrence Crabb are also included as well as summaries of major maladjustments such as depression, neurosis, psychosis, personality disorders and obsessive-compulsive disorders. Brief descriptive or definitional summaries of psychological terms such as reinforcer, hallucination and narcissism and descriptions of specific counseling techniques like catharsis and interpretation are other very helpful portions of this volume.

The distinctly Christian features of this Encyclopedia lie in two areas. The first is its conclusion of a number of articles addressing spiritual issues such as guilt, forgiveness, confession, sin, faith and doubt. The second is a closing section in many articles which offers a brief biblical critique or Christian perspective on the theory or issue at hand. Unfortunately the quality of these biblical perspectives ranges from very thorough and biblical through very simplistic and prooftexted.

The theological sophistication and orthodoxy of the authors also varies along a relatively broad perspective as does the schol-

arly depth of the articles. This makes the Encyclopedia of less use for scholars and students looking for authoritative or comprehensive statements of issues than it is for Christian students and professionals from disciplines related to psychology who want a good introduction to a particular theorist or topic. This is not meant to minimize the immense value of the book for its primary audience. Pastors and students of theology will find it an excellent, and perhaps indispensible, introduction to most of their questions about psychology and counseling. I recommend it highly.

–Bruce Narramore

Is Human Forgiveness Possible? A Pastoral Care Perspective
by John Patton (Abingdon Press, 1985, 189 pp., $10.95).

John Patton offers an integrative approach to defining Christian forgiveness. Drawing upon biblical, theological, and psychological categories, he views "forgiveness" more as a discovery of our humanity than an imperative exercise, the consequence of which is self-serving, personal power acquisition. His emphasis on the real (though often hidden) roles of shame and power in relational forgiveness is a welcome alternative to traditional forgiveness models which too often encourage a destructive hubris more than Christian love.

Patton draws on his clinical experience as a pastoral counselor and his careful, theoretical study of important figures such as Heinz Kohut and Gershen Kaufman, to offer a contemporary interpretation of what Jesus meant by forgiveness. The hermeneutics of such a task are always problematic, and Patton's integrative approach is more instructive on psychological models than it is on biblical interpretation. But, admittedly, this is not a work on hermeneutics. The book will be valuable for Christian pastors and counselors who seek theoretical constructs for their practical ministries. The use of specific case histories will be helpful to those uninitiated in the rigors of psychological theory. All in all, *Is Human Forgiveness Possible?* is a thought-provoking challenge to the traditional concept of Christian forgiveness.

–David Murchie

The Passion According to Luke: A Redaction Study of Luke's Soteriology
by Jerome Neyrey, S.J. (Paulist Press, 1985, 232 pp., $8.95).

Modern Lukan scholarship generally focuses on questions of sources and historicity, claims Jerome Neyrey, associate professor at the Weston School of Theology in Cambridge, MA. To these approaches he proposes two additions. First, he views Luke as "a genuine author who edited and revised older traditions as well as composed fresh narratives about Jesus" (redaction criticism). Second, convinced that "Acts is the goal and completion of Luke's theology," he utilizes Luke's other composition in the hermeneutical task. The result is a fresh investigation of Luke's passion narrative in which the distinctive theology of Luke's story is brought to light.

Neyrey's exegesis centers on five episodes, handled in five separate chapters: Jesus' farewell address (22:14-38), his struggle in Gethsemane (22:39-46), the trials (22:63-23:25), his statement to the Jerusalem women (23:27-31) and the crucifixion scene (23:39-43). The final chapter draws out the significant soteriological implications of this exegetical work.

The book, although somewhat technical, is carefully written, challenging and helpful. Even evangelicals who view higher critical methods with suspicion will gleen from Neyrey insights both into Luke's passion texts and New Testament soteriology as a whole.

–Stanley J. Grenz

From Luther to Tillich: The Reformers and Their Heirs
by Wilhelm Pauck and edited by Marion Pauck with an introduction by Jaroslav Pelikan (Harper & Row, 1984, xxiii + 223 pp., $19.95).

This posthumous collection of previously published essays stands as a tribute to the life work of an exemplary scholar. The subtitle alludes to Pauck's concern to refute the Barthian idea (shared by many evangelicals) that liberal theology and classical Protestant theology are virtually unrelated, that the former is an illegitimate child of the latter. Pauck's work often linked the two kinds of theology, and his own agenda inspired the work of another generation of scholars like David W. Lotz (who contributed the subtitle) and Brian A. Gerrish.

Whether one agrees with this or not, however, one will yet profit by all of these essays. Four deal with the Reformation: The first speaks of the essence of "Luther's Faith" in a masterpiece of concision; the second two lift up the largely ignored Reformer Martin Butzer (Bucer) as important in his own right and in understanding both Luther and Calvin; and the last is an essay that helped other scholars recognize Philip Melancthon as a deeply influential Lutheran theologian.

Evangelical students in particular, though, will be helped by Pauck's treatment of nineteenth- and twentieth-century theologians outside of the heritage acknowledged by most evangelicals. Pauck describes two crucial ideas in Schleiermacher's thought (his conception of history and of church history); he surveys the astounding career and carefully nuanced thought of Adolf von Harnack; he introduces two important theologians little-known to evangelicals, Ernst Troeltsch and Karl Holl; he briefly criticizes Barth's *Dogmatics*; and he provides a major introduction to one of the thinkers of recent times most foreign to evangelicals, Paul Tillich.

Each of the essays model fine writing as they inform. Not all will wish to purchase the book at its hardcover price (although li-

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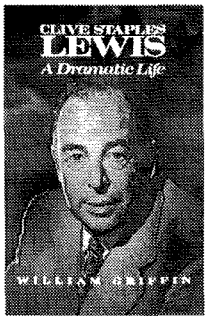

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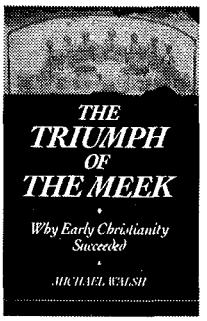

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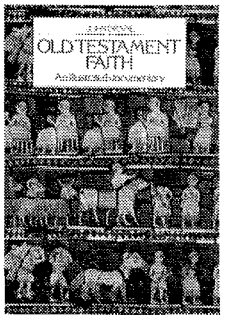

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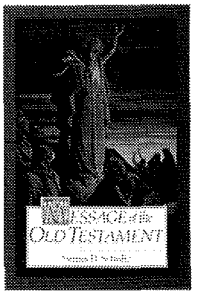

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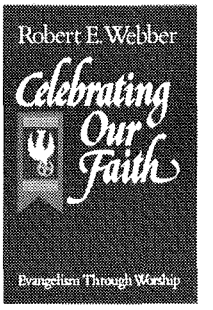

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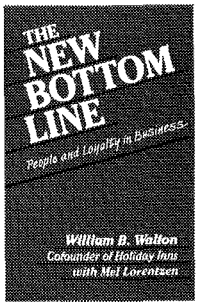

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braries definitely should get it), but students of theology should keep this book in mind: its essays provide much help in entering into the thought of a number of important theologians.

–John G. Stackhouse, Jr.

Equals Before God
by Sherryl Kleinman (University of Chicago Press, 1984, 133 pp., $15.00).

Written by a sociologist, this is a case study of a theological seminary in the Midwest. All names of persons and places are pseudonyms, but the work is based on an actual school. It is Protestant and unmistakably "liberal." The issue specifically under consideration is the response of students, faculty, and administration to the deprofessionalization of ministry which has been taking place in recent decades. The forces behind the latter process are depicted as both sociological (societal and cultural) and theological (the effect of what is called "the new theology"). The loss of a professional sense leads to identity crises, and the seminary seeks to deal with them in various ways described by the author. There is a search for a "humanistic role" in what is accepted as "humanistic religion" (i.e. religion oriented to this world). The development of a strong set of community attitudes and relationships plays a prominent part in the efforts at a solution. The special concerns of women are discussed in a later chapter.

The book is a good description of some of the problems being encountered by some seminaries and clergy in "mainline Protestantism" today. But the way forward proposed in "Midwest Seminary," as it is called, is doomed to failure. Without faith in the gracious God revealed in Jesus Christ, and without a sense of mission stimulated by the conviction that the Gospel is profound and wonderful Good News for all humankind, identity in ministry will be inescapably unstable. This volume can be read both as a warning and as a sign of hope. The sign of hope is that the warning has now in many cases been heeded. By the grace of God today "Midwest Seminary" would be the exception rather than the rule even in those circles where once the "new" theology flourished.

–George Peck

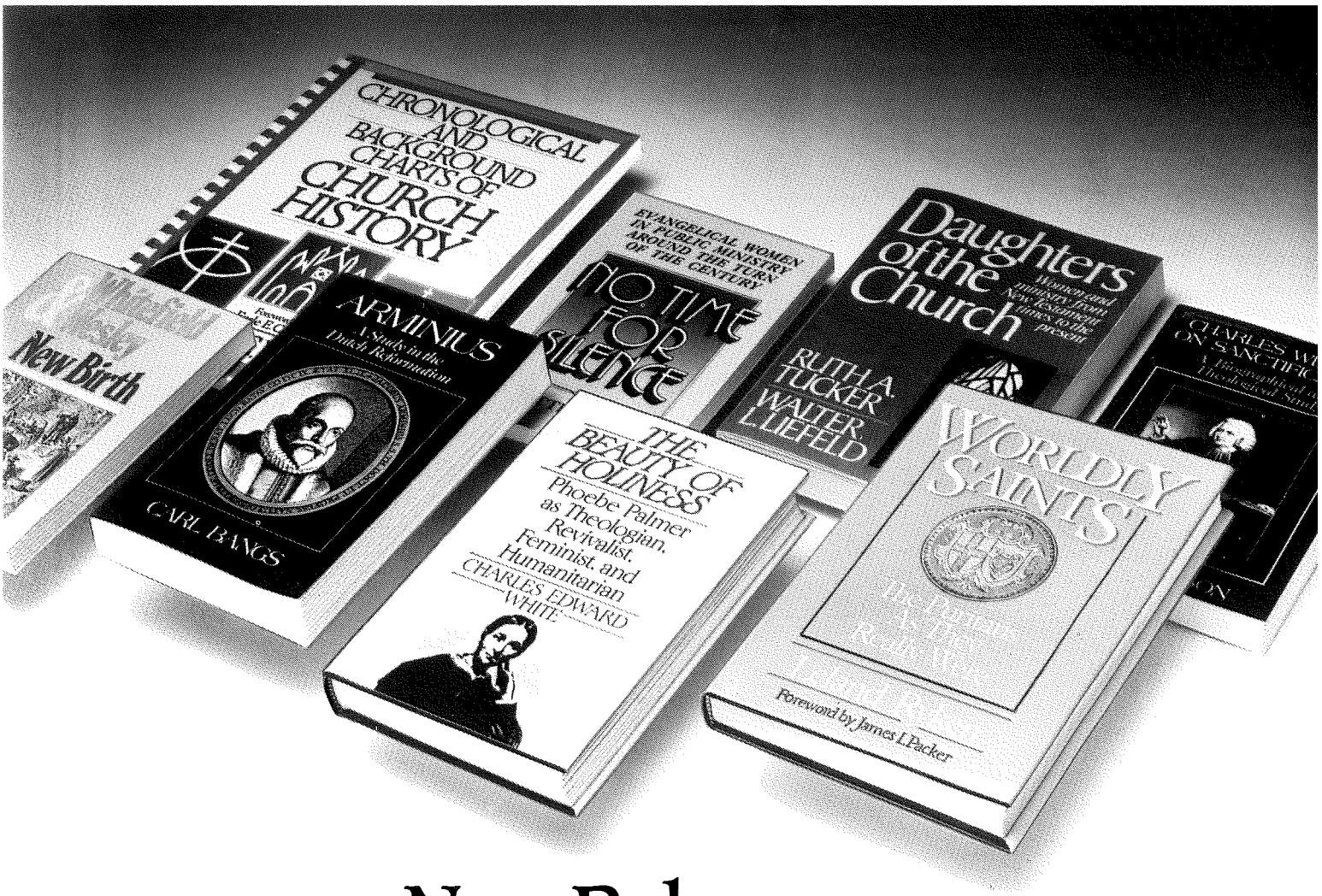
Where Gods May Dwell: On Understanding the Human Condition
by Stanley D. Gaede (Zondervan Publishing House, 1985, 186 pp., $7.95).

Stan Gaede in *Where Gods May Dwell* has written a very significant book which deserves serious consideration by Christian social scientists and by the larger community of Christians who are interested in social science issues.

The author's goal in the first half of the book (6 chapters) is to evaluate the assumptions underlying what presently passes as "objective social science." Gaede concludes that "value free" science is committed to a naturalistic world view which leads to a body of scientific knowledge arrogant in method, theory, and application by requiring that God must be irrelevant in any scientific explanation. As he evaluates the assumptions of practice of contemporary social science, Gaede relativizes the relativizers.

The second half of the book (7 chapters) attempts to describe one individual's perspective on social science which is built on Christian assumptions regarding the form and substance of ultimate reality and the nature of human relationships. In this section, Gaede lays out a prescientific set of assumptions based upon a biblical understanding of the nature of human relationships—of how God created individuals with a capacity to properly relate to nature, other human beings, and with Himself. Having explicitly stated his assumptions regarding the nature of normative human relationships, Gaede formulates a position which attempts to resolve problems created by the following sociological dialectical relationships: freedom and determinism, individualism and communalism, anomy and alienation, order and conflict, and explanation and reductionism.

Gaede's thinking relative to a Christian approach to the social sciences is explicitly and appropriately value-laden, integrative with regard to the biblical record and social science knowledge, and appreciative of both the social scientific task and of the human being who is the subject of this investigation. *Where the Gods May Dwell* is neither dog-



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matic, imperialistic, nor overly pessimistic or optimistic. Rather, it is challenging and thought provoking for social scientists who believe that Christianity should make a difference in the way they think and act.

–Michael R. Leming

The Vindication of Tradition
by Jaroslav Pelikan (Yale University Press, 1984, 93 pp., $10.95).

Jaroslav Pelikan has exerted a wholly salutary force on the study of the Christian past through his productive tenure at Yale University and even more through the compelling arguments of his magisterial *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Developmment of Doctrine* (four of whose five volumes have now been published). But he is also a scholar of wider interests, as his lectures on Bach during that composer's tercentenary and as the contents of this book indicate.

The chapters of *The Vindication of Tradition* were delivered as the National Endowment for the Humanities' Jefferson Lectures in 1983. They constitute a bracing challenge to include "the dead in the circle of (contemporary) discourse" (p. 81). Although Pelikan speaks here about the subject in general, his remarks have particular relevance for Christians, both because of his larger work and because of the intrinsic force of his argument for believers. Pelikan shows how a post-scientific age is beginning to recognize the need for tradition, how tradition ("the living faith of the dead") is to be distinguished from traditionalism ("the dead faith of the living," p. 65), and how the dichotomy that some draw between fresh insight and stale history is a delusion. This is a much needed and inspiring volume.

–Mark Noll

Wholistic Christianity
by David O. Moberg (Brethren Press, 1985, 228 pp., $11.95).

Drawing on years of experience as a sociologist of religion and an Evangelical, Moberg challenges the divisions which characterize Christians. He calls for the church to express the entire Gospel and realize the goal of wholistic Christianity. After showing how the cultural context encourages the divisions among Christians, Moberg proposes sociological imagination as a resource which will help Christians discover wholeness by acknowledging both sides of any dualism. While contemporary Christianity contains a number of areas of conflict, four basic commitments guide Christians in moving toward wholistic Christianity. Moberg identifies these as commitments to (1) the triune God, (2) an emphasis upon the Bible as the authoritative guide, (3) loving God with all the mind, and (4) the body of believers. Practical suggestions for Christians as they deal with change and fragmentation conclude the book. Moberg's commitment to the Church expresses itself by his refusal to polemicize against non-

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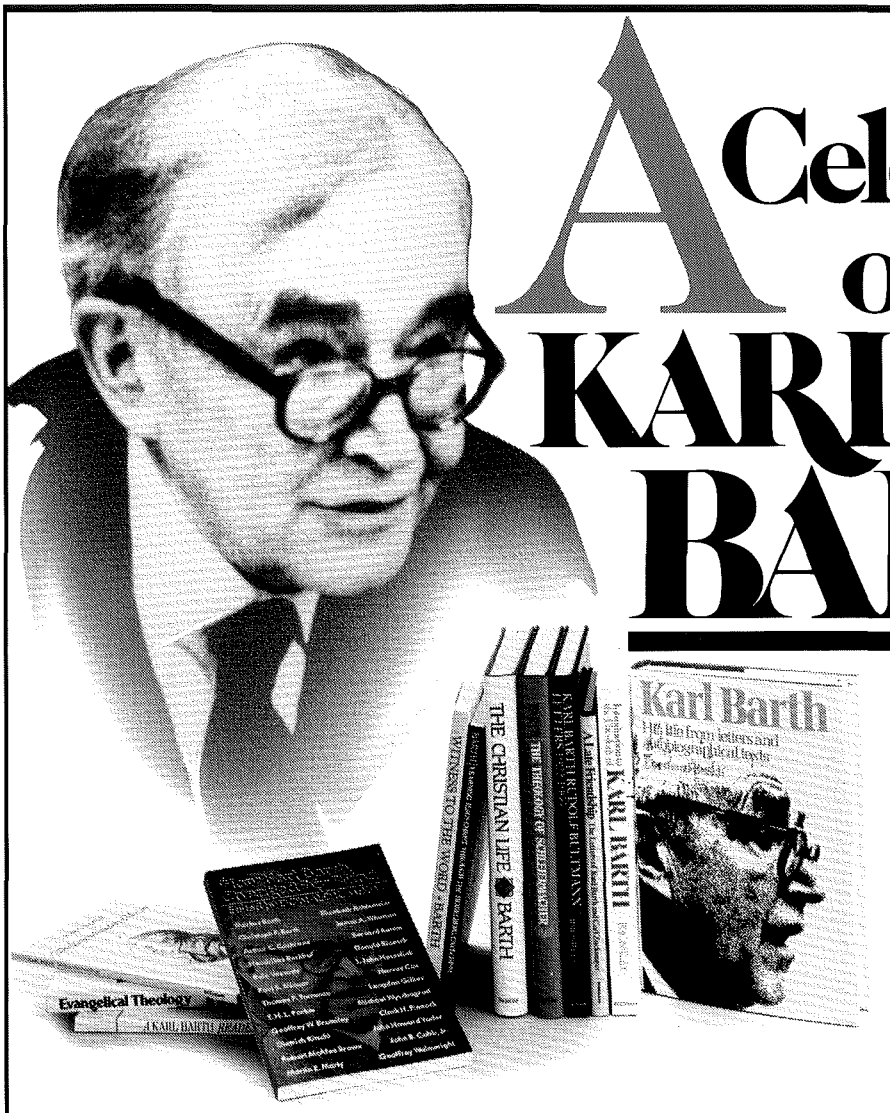

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evangelicals and by his writing in a manner which is appropriate for people without specialized study in sociology or theology.

This book provides a warning to all Christians and a timely challenge to those who identify the Gospel with one theological, political, or ecclesiological position. In his warning, Moberg offers evangelicals a specific expression of the growing concern among sociologists of religion about the dangers of individualism. While Bellah and others in *Habits of the Heart* fear for the impact of individualism on government, Moberg confronts the risk to the Church. Overall, the organization and structure of the book are clear. But the book's impact may be hindered because the flood of data at times makes some chapters appear disjointed. With regard to clarity, Bellah's book serves as a helpful supplement both because it is written more clearly and because its concerns and analyses are broader.

–John Culp

Thine is the Kingdom
by Paul Marshall (Marshall Morgan, and Scott, 1984, 169 pp., $5.25).

The overall strength of this work comes to the fore in Marshall's relating the person and work of Christ's Kingdom inauguration to concrete political questions. His mastery of the contours of redemptive history, as expressed through his evangelical use of the Scriptures, is unfolded as he substantiates God's overarching call for justice and stewardship. He has chosen and clearly demonstrates, furthermore, how such a call can be linked neither to a conservative or a liberal agenda, or, for that matter, to a Marxist or capitalist mission. In so doing, Marshall shows how the Bible can politically inspire us in a way that avoids recipe-type politicking on one hand and mere (abstract) principle-giving on the other hand. He does all of this with a scope that surpasses mere moralizing!

The cohesive profundity of this book is its essential simplicity: he amply demonstrates, without falling prey to fundamentalist rhetoric, how politics, for *all* people, is a deeply religious reality. Thus, the book can be read, because of its style and content, by a wider audience owing to its definition of religion as the basis for human self-understanding.

Some of the outline and content may confuse some readers, however. His introduction seems to presuppose the rest of the work. His occasional reference to British politics seems more like a distraction, even to the experienced ethicist. His greatest oversight comes not in what he has said, but comes in what he has left unsaid. At times his comprehensiveness leads him into vague generalizations. Typical of this problem in his definition of a Christian notion of justice and stewardship vis-a-vis various secular options (cf. p. 55). This could have been his strongest section.

I believe that this work should initiate evangelical discussions of the topics, detractors and generalities notwithstanding.

–Bob Wauzzinski

The Apostolic Imperative: Nature and Aim of the Church's Mission and Ministry
by Carl E. Braaten (Augsburg Press, 1985, 206 pp., $10.95).

A crisis of meaning is occurring in every sphere of human experience, so the Church must re-think its mission and ministry. In a readable style, Braaten takes on this task as a Lutheran and ecumenist. Although diverse, the Church can again be effective. Any conceptions of mission and ministry which are true to the Apostolic witness can be correlated and coordinated into a unified effort "under the conditions of modern ways of thinking."

Part one emphasizes the Christocentric criterion of mission. As "Theology of the Cross" and a dynamic-economic model of the Trinity guide Christian mission into humble service, socio-political concern rather than quietism results. But, today's religious pluralism requires that the principle be revised to emphasize the eschatological unity which the resurrection of Christ makes possible in the Kingdom of God. This expectation of the approaching Kingdom can provide common ground for dialogue with Judaism.

Part two fills out the theological issues of missions and evangelism. A "wholistic" approach embodying the concerns of Evangelicals, Ecumenists, Roman Catholics, Lutherans, and ultimately the Eastern Orthodox, will have the best chance at stemming the tide of secularism in our neopagan society. Furthermore, the stress must be on *praxis* but not of the Marxist variety. Instead, it must grow out of the eschatological implications of God's kingdom grasped in the primacy of the Christ event.

Part three summarizes how different Christian traditions draw upon the Apostolic witness for their ecclesiological structure. This common source leads Braaten to suggest that related offices and ministries within each tradition should pursue their goals ecumenically.

Braaten's ideas are conceptually bold, but this reader is left hesitant by at least two pervading weaknesses: an uncritical optimism which fails to examine the costs of reducing a theology of mission and ministry down to its least common denominator; and the methodological ease by which suggestions are based upon Apostolic foundations when in fact no such foundations are ever exegetically examined or demonstrated.

–Robert G. Umidi

The Authority of the Bible and the Rise of the Modern World
by Henning Graf Reventlow (Fortress, 1985, xx + 668 pp., $42.95).

This is a pleasing English translation by John Bowden of a book first published in 1980 as *Bibelautorität und Geist der Moderne, Die bedeutung des Bibelverständnisses fur die geistesgeschichtliche und politische Entwicklug in England von der Reformation bis zur Aufklärung* by the professor of Old Testament at the University of Bochum in West Germany. It is a massive, wide-ranging effort to demonstrate that roots of modern biblical criticism are properly found in England well before the better publicized appearance of such views on the continent in the eighteenth century. To Reventlow, the "Humanism" of the sixteenth century provides the key. This "Humanism" was not anti-Christian, but did display several characteristics which paved the way for English Deism and critical attitudes toward Scripture. As examples, Reventlow cites Martin Bucer's division between the Word and Spirit (in contrast to Luther) and Bucer's great authority in England at the mid-sixteenth century; the Puritan distaste for ceremonial which led to a predisposition against the cultus of the Old Testament; and the English latitudinarian attempt to derive a Law of Nature apart from Scripture which established an independent reference point for judging the statements of the Bible. Reventlow feels that these trends culminated in "the heydey of English deism" around 1700 when "advanced" thinkers systematically grounded their inquiries into science, ethics, politics, and the Bible itself in principles derived from con-

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Neil Bartlett, *Production Manager*

ceptions of nature rather than Scripture.

Reventlow's argument is especially thought-provoking for the way in which he traces later developments in attitudes toward Scripture, which most modern evangelicals would oppose, to the attitudes of earlier Protestants, which modern evangelicals affirm. Without making his own opinions crystal clear, Reventlow yet distinguishes between the magisterial reformers (i.e., Luther and Calvin) as theologians who used the Bible organically in a comprehensive conception of the Christian life, and more radical Protestants who in exalting the Bible over against other authorities also isolated it and exposed it to new perils. This argument, as indeed many others in the book, deserves closest consideration. The book's 212 pages of notes will greatly aid further researchers who may find it useful as they pursue the weightly matters of this book to consult other, more tightly focused studies of the same era like Gerard Reedy, *The Bible and Reason: Anglicans and Scripture in Late-Seventeenth Century England* (1985) or Barbara Shapiro, *Probability and Certainty in Seventeenth-Century England* (1983).

–Mark Noll

Up from Apathy: A Study of Moral Awareness & Social Involvement
by Richard A. Hoehn (Abingdon Press, 1983, 172 pp., $9.95).

Richard Hoehn wrote *Up From Apathy* to answer the question of why people are socially active. Eighty-seven interviews as well as selected biographies (or authobiographies) and magazine accounts form the basis for Hoehn's book. He chose phenomenology as the methodology and interpretive framework for his work. Hoehn divides his book into eight chapters beginning with an introduction briefly explaining phenomenology and ending with a cursory discussion of pedagogy. In between he reflects on the materials mentioned above while avoiding any particular theological or even religious position. His notes at the end of the book are not extensive.

The question Hoehn attempts to answer suggests an intriguing study. Unfortunately, the book contains major flaws. Even though Hoehn is working from a phenomenological methodology, the absence of any dialogue with theorists such as Piaget, Erikson, Kohlberg or even more recent work seriously weakens his study. The book adds little to the study of moral awareness because no account seems to be taken of previous work in this area. A second serious problem concerns the random use of the interviews. Hoehn evidences no systematic study of his materials and limits the reader to a half-dozen examples of the interviews. The idea behind the book though interesting lacks clarity and documentation.

–James A. Selby

BOOK COMMENT CONTRIBUTORS

John Culp is Professor of Philosophy at Azusa Pacific University in Azusa, CA; Stanley Grenz is Professor of Systematic Theology at North American Baptist Seminary, Sioux Falls, SD; Michael R. Leming is Associate Professor of Sociology at St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN; David Murchie is Associate Minister at Rockland Community Church, Golden, CO; Bruce Narramore is Dean and Professor of Psychology at Rosemead School of Psychology, Biola University; Mark Noll is Professor of History at Wheaton College; George Peck is President of Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, MA; James A. Selby is a doctoral student in Church Growth at Boston University; John G. Stackhouse, Jr. is a Ph.D. student at the University of Chicago Divinity School and a Visiting Instructor at Wheaton College; Robert G. Umidi is Chairman of the Dept. of Bible and Philosophy at Northeastern Bible College; Bob Wauzzinski is Scholar in Residence at the Coalition for Christian Outreach, Pittsburgh.

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Introducing This Issue

It is none other than Jesus Christ who has commanded his followers to love God with all their minds as well as their hearts. Indeed, he says God is to be loved with *all* the mind.

But what if the mind is radically estranged from God? What if, in the depths of the human psyche, there is a profound, even antagonistic alienation from God? What if every human being enters life in a stage of cognitive disharmony with God? What if the apostle Paul is right when he asserts in his Roman Letter that "the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit itself to God's law, nor can it do so"? Then there is need for a redemption which will overcome the mind's radical alienation, making it God-centered.

This, T.F. Torrance argues in his essay on "The Reconciliation of Mind" (page 4), is precisely what takes place when, in a life-changing act of faith, Jesus Christ is acknowledged as Savior and Lord. And since a cognitive transformation occurs, we may properly speak of an acknowledgement. Once by God's redemptive grace and power that reorientation has been effected in the depths of the psyche, the believer can testify with Paul, "we have the mind of Christ." Far from being a preposterous claim to omniscience, however, that affirmation really points to a process, "the renewing of the mind" which Paul urges his fellow disciples to pursue as they, in their own thinking, "take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."

The implications of this New Testament psychology are obviously so far-reaching that, as Torrance indicates, they ought to have a revolutionary impact not only on theology but society and culture as well. So to call his reflections challenging is to indulge in imperceptive understatement.

My friend Vernard Eller is a contemporary example of a Christian scholar whose renewed mind probes Scripture to discover what it really means (that, of course, is the hermeneutical task which Harvie Conn discusses in his article on "Normativity, Relevance and Relativism"). Invariably, I find anything Eller writes provocative and interesting. The interest is aroused and sustained by a refreshingly idiosyncratic style, as direct and often as humorous as his personal conversation. The insights he provides are usually provocative—and usually eye-opening. In the light of Romans 13, which he exegetes for us (page 7), can we properly call ourselves Christian anarchists? The idea seems absurd, but see how Eller develops his argument before insisting that the adjective *Christian* can never qualify the noun *anarchy.*

Augustine is perhaps the supreme example of a genius with a reconciled mind, certainly one of the greatest theologians in church history. Bernard T. Adeney shows (page 10) how the bishop of Hippo wrestled with the apparently contradictory Christian teachings on love and war to bring them into a liveable congruence. That problems persist down to 1987, agonizingly exacerbated by our nuclear weaponry. Can Christians, as witnesses to God's sacrificial love, and as embodiments (hopefully) of neighbor love, kill other persons who, like themselves, are God's image-bearers? And can they sanction killing on a scale that makes the bloodbaths of a Genghis Khan seems less of an immoral enormity? Augustine, as Adeney explains, has some answers, but they are by no means easy or uncontestable.

What, then, should we with reconciled minds, endeavoring to find and follow a distinctively Christian ethic, conclude about war in the atomic age? A vast literature on that whole subject has been proliferating. Who is able to know what is of value and what isn't? Mark Nation's bibliography (page 15) on nuclear weapons will prove a discriminating guide.

In our two concluding articles we observe reconciling minds using the resources of scholarship to help God's people better understand God's Church and God's Word. Dennis Hollinger (page 18) employs sociology to enlighten us regarding the nature of the Church which, while a supernatural reality, exists institutionally as one more organization in a world of interacting human structures. As such, he reminds us, it is susceptible of objective analysis and subject to the foibles and frailties which mark everything human. Its divine reality may be more clearly seen if, learning from Hollinger, we have a safeguarding awareness of its human nature.

Harvie Conn's analysis of hermeneutics (page 24) impresses me as the kind of updating article every seminarian, pastor, and for that matter, every serious student of the Bible ought to carefully read. Yes, we believe that Holy Scripture is God's totally trustworthy Word. Yes, as the Reformers contended, it is characterized by perspicuity: under the Spirit's guidance, a relatively unsophisticated believer can grasp its doctrinal and ethical meaning. But Biblical interpretation is at the same time a far more complex matter than some of us, schooled in historic-grammatical exegesis, may have imagined. Conn assists us in sorting out this complexity with a strengthened confidence that through this Book, God addresses us understandably.

Our book reviews are, typically, a feature of the **Bulletin** which many readers turn to first—with good reason.

I hope this issue proves as stimulating to you as it has been to me.

The Reconciliation of Mind

by T.F. Torrance

"It pleased the father that in him should all fullness dwell. And having made peace through the blood of his Cross by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him I say whether they be things on earth or things in heaven. And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now has he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death to present you holy and unblamable and unreprovable in his sight." (Colossians 1:21-22)

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Romans 12:1-2)

Paul states that we are alienated or estranged in our minds, and in fact are hostile in mind to God. This is a basic New Testament conception which was deeply resented by the rational culture of the ancient classical world of Greece and Rome, and which the rational culture of the Medieval world and rational, philosophical and scientific, culture of our modern world have found very difficult to accept. This applies not least to "evangelical Christianity" today which, on the whole, still seems to work with what I call an "unbaptized reason," for it has not thought through sufficiently the transformation of human reason in the light of the Word made flesh in Jesus Christ. Hence the *mind* of the Church and the *mind* of society are not inwardly formed by the Gospel—they remain basically unevangelized. This is because we have not taken seriously this New Testament emphasis that the mind of man is alienated at its very root. It is in the human mind that sin is entrenched, and so it is there, the Gospel tells us, that we are required to be cleansed by the blood of Christ and to be healed and reconciled to God.

According to the teaching of the Bible, man has been created in mind as well as body out of nothing. We must not forget that a creaturely human mind has "being." This is a fact which, interestingly, our neurologists, brain scientists and psychiatrists have come to recognize. Some of them speak of the mind as constituting a "fifth dimension," and others refer to the "ontology of mind." The mind is ontologically real—it has being. What they do not often recognize, however, is that it is deep in this mental being that our humanity is twisted and distorted, and indeed, to use Old Testament language echoed here by St. Paul, is "desperately wicked." We do not find in St. Paul, any more than in the Old Testament, any body/soul or body/mind dualism, for, as James Denney used to express it, man is the body of his soul and the soul of his body, or the body of his mind and the mind of his body, a unitary whole. It is as such that man has fallen and become alienated from God, and as such that he needs to be redeemed.

The mind of a human being constitutes what the Greeks called *to hegemonikon* or the governing principle, for it is the mind that governs or directs our behavior as human beings. Thus where modern people tend to refer to the will as the determining factor in human behavior, the Greek Fathers traced everything back to the mind. It is a mistake to think that they were not interested in the will and did not therefore stress the freedom of the will as modern people do, because they laid this emphasis upon the mind as the governing element in human nature. The Greek Fathers realized, however, as perhaps few people do today, that although we may have free-will we are not at all free to escape from our self-will. That is why they put their finger upon the twisted state of affairs in the depths of the human mind. It is in the heart of our mental reality which governs and controls all our thinking and culture that we have become estranged from the truth and hostile to God. And it is right there, in the ontological depths of the human mind, that we desparately need to be saved and redeemed.

The rational culture of the ancient classical world found this very difficult to accept, so that inevitably difficult problems arose whenever the Gospel began to take root and find expression in Greek life and thought. Thus we find cropping up fairly early within the Church an insidious heresy that came to be known as "Apollinarianism." It took its name from Apollinaris, a very clever theologian, who refused to believe that in his Incarnation the Son of God took upon himself our alienated, twisted mind, because it was in that mind that sin had become rooted and entrenched. If Jesus had taken our alienated mind upon himself, so argued Apollinaris, he must have been a sinner, in fact an original sinner. And so he held that the Son of God became incarnate in our human existence in such a way that in Jesus the human mind was displaced by the divine mind. It was therefore some sort of neutral humanity that the Son of God assumed, and not the actual humanity in which we sinners all share.

However, the Fathers of the Church found this idea of the Incarnation to be evangelically and soteriologically deficient. If at that point, in the heart of our mental being, we are not redeemed and cleansed by the blood of Christ, then we are not really saved at all. If in the fundamental controlling principle of our human mind we are untouched by the Incarnation and the Atonement, then we are no better off than the pagan Greeks. And so the Christian Church insisted that we must take dead seriously the fact that in the Incarnation, the holy Son of God assumed our fallen, enslaved human nature, our twisted, distorted, bent mind, but that in assuming it right from the very beginning our Lord converted it, healed it, and sanctified it in himself. In taking from us our fallen human nature upon himself, instead of sinning in it as we all do, Jesus condemned sin in our carnal mind, and was himself wholly without sin. And so by living out a life of perfect holiness and purity in his mind, he sanctified and healed our human mind in the whole course of his incarnate and redemptive life from his birth to his crucifixion. He carried our mind into the very depths of his agonizing and atoning struggle on the Cross—he descended into the hell of the utmost wickedness and dereliction of the human mind under the judgment of God, in order to lay hold upon the very root of our sin and to redeem us from its stranglehold upon us. Yes, it was not only our actual sins, but it was original sin and original guilt that the Son of God took upon himself in Incarnation and Atonement

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T.F. Torrance held for 29 years the Chair of Christian Dogmatics at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland.

in order to heal, convert, and sanctify the human mind in himself and reconcile it to God.

There is extant a fragment of a second century theologian, Irenaeus, which I like to think of in this connection. In it there seems to be a suggestion that the Incarnation may be understood in the light of the incident recorded in the Gospel when Jesus touched a leper, and when, instead of becoming leprous himself, he healed the leper. I don't know whether you have ever seen a leper. I used to pass a leper colony when I went to school every day as a boy in China. That was long ago, but I have never forgotten the horrible emaciation of face and hand and limb in leprous flesh. If I sense what Irenaeus had in mind in that tantalizing fragment, it was that Jesus had taken our leprous humanity upon himself, but that instead of becoming a leper himself he healed and transformed our leprous human nature and restored it to be like the flesh of a newborn child. But let us not forget that it was our diseased *mind* that our Lord assumed for our sakes. But in assuming it, far from sinning himself or being estranged and alienated from the Father, even when he penetrated into the fearful depths of our alienation—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"—he turned it all back again, converted it from the very bottom of our disobedient human being, from the roots of our estranged mental existence, into perfect oneness with the mind of God—"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." In Colossians, as in Ephesians, St. Paul thought of the atoning reconciliation as embracing heaven as well as earth, for all things invisible as well as visible need to be cleansed by the blood of Christ and reconciled to God—how much more the invisible mental life of human being!

It was in order to conserve this biblical teaching that great Patristic theologians in the early Church enunciated as a fundamental principle, "The unassumed is the unhealed" (Gregory of Nazianzus), or "What Christ has not assumed has not been saved" (Cyril of Alexandria). They reckoned that the Church would be soteriologically and evangelically deficient if it refused to take seriously that Christ took our fallen mind upon himself in order to redeem and save it. That is a truth which I first learned from my beloved Edinburgh teacher, H.R. MacKintosh, who had himself been profoundly influenced by the Christology of these Greek Fathers. But it was only when I studied Karl Barth's account of this doctrine that its truth broke in upon my mind in a quite unforgettable way. I refer to that section in the *Church Dogmatics* I.2, where Barth expounded the mystery of the Virgin Birth. Overwhelmed by the immense significance of what our Lord had done all for our sakes and in our place, I fell to the ground in my knees trembling in awe and wonder at the sheer miracle of God's grace in the birth, life and passion of Jesus—the miracle that foul, wicked, depraved humanity, twisted in upon itself, had been appropriated from us by the Son of God, and had been cleansed, changed, redeemed and sanctified in him.

Here we are dealing with the inner heart of evangelical theology—the transforming of the human mind in such a way that it is no longer conformed to the patterns of this world but brought through renewal into conformity to Christ, through the communion of our mind with the mind of God in him, and its assimilation to the holiness and truth of God incarnate in Jesus. That is far from being easy, but it is something which fidelity to the Gospel will not allow us to avoid. It was because Karl Barth, for example, took this so seriously that he spent so much of his life thinking out what the renewal of the human mind means in the light of God's self-revelation in Christ, and what knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus implies for the transformation of reason, intelligibility and objectivity in Christian theology. Karl Barth was above all an evangelical theologian who spent his life in evangelizing the human reason, whereas the great majority of Protestant and Roman Catholic theologians still operate, I am afraid, with an unregenerated and unbaptized reason, and thus avoid the agonizing experience of working out conformity to Christ in the ontological depths of their minds.

Sometimes the inner conflict can be very sharp, as I learned as soon as I began to teach Christian theology, so I regularly made a point of alerting students about what was involved. I used to tell them about a friend of mine who went up to Basel to study music when I went there to study theology with Karl Barth. In those years before the war there were two of the world's greatest musicians in Basel, Adolf Busch and Rudolf Serkin—it was with the latter that my friend Edgar wanted to take piano lessons. Serkin looked at his hands and asked how old he was. When he said that he was twenty-seven, Serkin shook his head and told him that he was too old for him to take on, and declined to enroll him. But Edgar hung about and when Serkin found that he had an unusually keen "understanding for music," he sent him to a friend in Salzburg who gave him exercises for six months on end, until the very shape of his hands was transformed. I recall his talking to me afterwards about the drawn-out pain and agony of that experience. But it had been worth it, for when the muscles in his hands had been sufficiently restructured, Serkin at last took him on—and in due course Edgar became a distinguished musician, and indeed a composer, himself.

As in the New Testament teaching and preaching were always interwoven with each other, so in the remarkable growth and expansion of the Church after New Testament times, theological and evangelizing activity always functioned inseparably together.

In recounting that story to my young students, I used to say to them, "Something similar may well happen to you in these classes, for as you let the truth of the Gospel have its way with you, you will find the very shape and structure of your mind beginning to change." That is indeed what the Gospel is about, a *metanoia*, a radical repentant rethinking of everything before the face of Jesus Christ. No better account of theological method has been given than that which Jesus gave to his disciples when he said: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." That is what repentant rethinking means: you cannot separate evangelical theology from that profound experience of the radical changing and transforming of your mind that comes through dying and rising with Christ.

There often came a point in my classes when I felt that the students wanted to throw their books at me, as the inner struggle between the Gospel and the frame of mind they brought to it became intense. Let us make no mistake about it: Divine Revelation conflicts sharply with the structure of our natural reason, with the secular patterns of thought that have already become established in our minds through the twist of our ingrained mental alienation from God. We cannot become true theologians without the agonizing experience of profound

change in the mental structure of our innermost being.

"Let this mind be in you (*touto phroneite*)," as St. Paul wrote to the Philippians, "which was also in Christ Jesus." The early Greek Fathers gave a great deal of thought to that injunction. They cultivated what they called "the Apostolic mind" (*phronema apostolikon*), for it was only through the mind of the Apostles embodied in the Holy Scriptures that the Church could be imbued with the mind of Christ (*phronema Christou*) himself. That is precisely what a faithful theology was about.

Thus a regular question raised by Christian theologians, concealed behind all the great debates in the early centuries, was whether they were really thinking *worthily* of God in accordance with the mind of Christ Jesus, as it has been imprinted by the Holy Spirit in the Apostolic Scriptures. All through those early centuries as the Gospel was carried from end to end of the Mediterranean world, Christian theology played a major role in the evangelizing of nation after nation, for it was only as the mind and culture of people were brought into conformity to the mind of Christ that the Church could put down permanent roots in the soil of humanity. As in the New Testament teaching and preaching were always interwoven with each other, so in the remarkable growth and expansion of the Church after New Testament times, theological and evangelizing activity always functioned inseparably together. By its intrinsic nature, an evangelical theology is an evangelizing theology, for it is concerned with the winning and transforming of the human mind through conformity to the mind of Christ Jesus—not simply the minds of individual human beings but the mind of human society and culture in which individual human beings exist.

What does this have to say to us today about what we call "evangelical Christianity?" We have been concerned with evangelizing men, women and children as individual human beings, calling for repentance and personal decision for Christ as Lord and Savior, and rightly so. But have we been concerned with the evangelizing of the mind of the society in which these people live? If not, how can a Christian Church put down roots in an unevangelized society and remain genuinely Christian? I believe this is where evangelical Christianity today has failed terribly. By and large, as far as I can see, even the mind of the Church, let alone the mind of society, is still secular in that it shares the mind of the secular society within which it exists. We have Christian people, but do we really have a *Christian* Church? We have people who profess to believe in Christ as Lord and Savior, but do we have a Church that so imbued with the mind of Christ that its members individually and as a community think *instinctively* in a Christian way?

I have been wonderfully blessed with a mother and a wife who have a profoundly Christian, and indeed a remarkably theological, *instinct*. My mother never had any academic training in theology, but her life and her understanding were so tuned into the mind of Christ that she knew at once where the truth lay and was quick to discern any deviation from it. This is also very true of my dear wife who is imbued with an unerring *theological instinct*, evident again and again in her reaction to ideas put forward by preachers or teachers. At the end of the day that was the test I used to put to my students, as I read their essays and examinations or listened to them in the chapel. "Has this person a genuinely theological instinct or not? Is his or her thinking spontaneously and naturally governed by the mind of Christ?" That is much more important than being theologically learned, much more important than being able to offer a formal academic account of some doctrine or historic debate in the Church. What really counts in the end is whether a person's mind is radically transformed by Christ and so spiritually attuned to the mind of Christ, that he thinks instinctively from the depths of his mental being in a way worthy of God.

As Athanasius used to insist, we must learn to think strictly "in accordance with the nature" (*kata physin*) of God the Father as he is made known to us through the Son and in the Holy Spirit, that is, in an essentially godly way (*eusebos*). To think like that from a center in God himself, in accordance with his essential nature revealed in the Incarnate Son, is, he claimed, what *theologia* strictly is. If any one does not think in that way, but thinks from a center in himself, governed by the devisings of his own reason, then he is bound to think of him in an unworthy or irreligious way (*asebos*)—which Athanasius designated *mythologia*. Either you think from out of a mind centered in God through union with the mind of the Lord Jesus, or you think from out of a mind centered in yourself, alienated from God and inwardly hostile to the Truth incarnate in the Lord Jesus, that is, in a way finally governed by the unregenerate and unbaptized reason.

There often came a point in my classes when I felt that the students wanted to throw their books at me, as the inner struggle between the Gospel and the frame of mind they brought to it became intense.

The transformation of the human mind and its renewal through assimilation to the mind of Christ is something that has to go on throughout the whole of our life—it is a never-ending discipleship in repentant rethinking as we take up the cross and follow Christ. That is why we cannot be theologians without incessant prayer in offering ourselves daily to God through the reconciling and atoning mediation of Christ; and that is also why we cannot be evangelists without being theologians whose minds are constantly schooled in obedience to Christ. It is, after all, with our minds that we worship God and it is only with our minds that we can preach the Gospel and evangelize the world. Is that not, in part at least, what St. Paul was concerned with in the two verses from the twelfth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans which we read? "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service (*logike latreia*—not just spiritual but *rational* worship). And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Notice the distinctive way in which St. Paul interrelates the renewing of the mind with the offering of the body as a living sacrifice and with rational worship. It is not with disembodied minds, but with the created unity of mind and body in which the human self is constituted. While stress may be laid upon the transformation of the mind and its assimilation to Christ, the whole human self is involved.

The transformation the Apostle calls for is so deep as to evoke out of the rational self an instinctive judgment about what is good, acceptable and perfect before God. That is to say, in the way I have been expressing it, we are called to be

transformed in such a profound way that there develops within the depths of our rational being a *theological instinct* in virtue of which we are able to make true theological judgments. Without such a theological instinct we have little more than people with secular minds loosely clothed with a Christian profession. A genuine theological instinct of the kind St. Paul has in view cannot be gained apart from a constant self-offering in rational worship to God, for it is through that inner relation between prayer and the transforming renewal of our minds, that we may be so tuned into God that we fulfil our service in the rational way acceptable to him.

In his scientific autobiography, Werner Heisenberg tells us that again and again when the mathematics of quantum theory proved to be as difficult as they were intricate, he would go away for three or four weeks at a time to play the piano or the violin in order, as he put it, to tune in to the "Central Order"—the name he used in that context for God. When his whole being was tuned into that Central Order, he would come back to find his mathematical equations working out more easily. It is something similar that happens in theological activity. Through study of the Holy Scriptures, meditation and prayer we tune in to the mind of God incarnate in Jesus Christ, the Source of all rationality, until our minds, healed, renewed, and sanctified in him, are instinct with his Truth—then it is that we may preach and teach the Gospel, and find it transforming the lives and minds of people and the society to which they belong.

Romans 13 (Actually Romans 12:14-13:8) Reexamined

by Vernard Eller

We need to give more detailed attention to Romans 13—in that I have come to realize how firmly we are in the grip of the passage's traditional "legitimizing" interpretation. The support for this reading falls into a most interesting alignment. Of course, the Christian Right (along with conservative evangelicalism in general) welcomes this theological view of Romans 13 as confirmation of its own *politically* conservative predilection that is committed to political establishment of being God's chosen means for governing the world.

Yet curiously enough, the Christian Left also accepts, if not welcomes, the legitimizing interpretation—although under an entirely different rationale and for a totally different purpose. In some cases the argument runs: Mark 12 shows *Jesus* to be strongly *illegitimizing* of Caesar. Romans 13 has *Paul* coming out just the other way. In this showdown, then, Jesus obviously should take precedence over Paul. Therefore, we aren't obligated to give particular weight or attention to Paul's counsel about paying taxes and honoring the authorities. Alternatively, the argument runs: Yes, Paul does legitimize established government; yet certainly he must intend this regarding only "good" governments. Accordingly, his counsel about paying taxes must apply only to governments worthy of our tax dollars; when he says to pay taxes to those to whom they "are due," he must mean to those who, in our opinion, are morally deserving. Thus, it would follow that Paul had in mind paying them only to the "good" Roman Empire of his day and not the "Evil Empire" of ours (namely, the one Ronald Reagan was *representing*, not the one of which he spoke).

Now, however, as a way out of the political sophistries of both the Right and the Left, I propose an anarchical reading of Romans 13 that has Paul *illegitimizing* the political world as a whole—and thus entirely bypassing the dispute about his legitimizing *anything*, whether of the Left or of the Right, whether judged to be politically good, bad, or indifferent. If I may, I will call mine: "A Reading of Romans 13 Under the Premise that Its Author Was a Student of the Old Testament" (I disdain to argue this premise, because anyone undertaking to challenge it is manifestly belated, bewildered, and benighted).

(1) If we respect Paul's context by examining the total passage of Romans 12:14-13:8, it is plain that his purpose in introducing "the governing authorities" is in no sense to argue their "legitimacy." His main topic is the Christian obligation to love *any person whatsoever* and live peaceably *with all*. Check it out; he opens this inning by placing his hit: "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them" (Romans 12:14). He extends that run to second base (13:1), at which point he introduces his "governing authorities" illustration. This he closes off neatly at third (13:7). He then proceeds to make his home-plate score by ending up where he started: "Owe no one anything except to love one another" (13:8). Pretty slick, I would say.

The "governing authorities," then, are brought in as Paul's example of those to whom it will be most difficult to make the obligation apply—but whom God nevertheless commands us to love, even when our natural propensity most strongly urges us to hate, resist, and fight them. As he elsewhere states the offense even more pointedly, "Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?"—which, of course, is not the easiest thing in the world for human beings to do.

Thus—just as with Jesus' praying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," and his teaching about "turning the other cheek," "going the second mile," and the like—Paul is using the governing authorities as a test case of our loving the enemy—even when doing so is repugnant to our innate moral sensibilities (which sensibilities we ought never, never, never equate as being the very will of God—but which we regularly do go on to equate so anyhow). And if this "indiscriminating love" reading be correct, then verse 7 (the final word of the "governing authorities" section) ought to agree with Paul's overall love theme.

This it most beautifully does *if* "pay all of them their dues—taxes, revenue, respect, honor" advises against withholding *any* of these items from *whatever* governing authority claims them as due. If, however, the verse is taken to mean that we are to allow these things only to nice governments who are known to be deserving of them—then we have gone from "indiscriminating love" to "highly discriminating love," and Paul has undercut his radically Christian argument merely to

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Vernard Eller is a TSF Bulletin Resource Scholar and Professor of Theology at the University of La Verne. This article is from his forthcoming book, Christian Anarchy, published by Eerdmans, and is used by permission.

mouth the trivial and obvious.

Yet that absolutist interpretation is made as much as unimpeachable when Paul proceeds to wrap up his entire disquisition on "undiscriminating love" with verse 8. He drops the "governing authorities" illustration and universalizes the principle: "Not just the taxes and honors claimed by the governing authorities, we Christians ought not resist or try to withhold anything justly (or even unjustly) claimed from us. No, the only unpaid claim that dare be found outstanding against us is that we have not given anyone as much love as God would have us give."

(2) We ought not interpret Paul's Romans-13 words without also considering what he has to say about the Roman Empire elsewhere. Elsewhere, of course, he talks about principalities and powers, rulers of the present darkness, and all such. I don't know that any of these is to be understood in direct reference to Rome; yet there is every reason to believe Paul would include Rome in that passel. And if you want the Old Testament angle, it would be this: As a well-educated rabbi, Paul would be entirely cognizant of the scriptural opinion regarding pagan oppressors of Israel from the slavemasters of Egypt through to the Seleucid tyrants of Syria. And I can't imagine anything that would lead him to exempt the current Roman regime from that long-established judgment. This in itself should warn us against a too easily legitimizing reading of Romans 13.

(3) The history of Paul's own relationship to and knowledge of Rome should also warn us against that reading. Paul would have known that Rome's was a pagan domination and military occupation of the Jewish homeland. Under the likelihood that it was as a small child he had come to Jerusalem for rabbinical training (Acts 22:3), Paul would have been fully aware of the growing Jewish restiveness and Rome's cruel, mass deportation-enslavement-crucifixion suppression of the same. Along with the rest of the church, Paul's prime name for Rome would have been "Dealer of Death to the Author of Life" (Acts 3:15). He would have known that, only a few years earlier, the Christians of Rome (to whom he was writing), under the edict of Claudius, had had their congregations broken up and dispersed. And Paul himself, of course, could point to any number of instances in which the Empire had distrupted his ministry and abused his person. Thus, to read Romans 13 as a legitimizing of *that* government should be held off as our last possible alternative of interpretation rather than welcomed as our first.

(4) In the opening line of his "governing authorities" section (13:1a), Paul tells us to "be subject" to them. I found Barth most convincing that "be subject to" has absolutely no overtones of "recognize the legitimacy of," "own allegiance to," "bow down before," or anything of the sort. It is a sheerly neutral and anarchical counsel of "not-doing"—not doing resistance, anger, assault, power play, or anything contrary to the "loving the enemy" which is, of course, Paul's main theme. Then, just as any good writer would do it, Paul's *final* reference to the authorities (verse 7) becomes a simple repetition of his opening one: "Pay all of them their dues" says nothing different from "Be subject to them."

(5) Romans 13:1b-3 proceeds to speak about government's being "instituted of God." When it is a noted Old Testament scholar who is talking so, I consider the original institution of Israelite monarchy to be our best help in understanding him. In that paradigm (I Sam. 8:1-22), it is made entirely clear, explicit, and axiomatic that the people's demand for worldly government amounts to a *rejection* of God and his government. (And if even an *Israelite* monarchy signified a rejection of God, how much more so a *Roman* one?) *But* did God therefore conclude: "That being so, Samuel, what you and I need to do is resist that government with everything we have in us. We should work at subverting Saul's government so that, in its collapse, we can convince the people to give up this crazy idea of worldly government and come back to the true government of my direct rule?"

That, surely, would pass as good *human* logic—and, I think, *is* the essential logic of today's Christian Left. But it is not the *divine* logic. God and Samuel, of course, *helped set up* the very government they so strongly disapproved. No, the word is, rather: "Samuel, if these knuckleheads insist on having a worldly government, we had better get in there with whatever influence we have left and try to limit the amount of damage such an outfit can do, see whether there is anything at all worthwhile we can manage through it."

God and Samuel accept (and honor) Israel's (bad) decision *as accomplished fact* and proceed to live with it rather than try to reverse it. God *accepts* (I didn't say *approves*) worldly government—with its taxation and conscription and all the rest—as being absolutely necessary once humanity has rejected *his* government. If you won't have *him*, you are going to have to have *it*.

And whether that government be seen as comparatively good or bad, God is using it simultaneously as a *punishment* for our having rejected his government and as a *grace*, a garment of skins making possible the continuance of the human enterprise without its falling into utter chaos and death. Of course, the ultimate promise of the kingdom still stands. But that we might stage a political revolution creating a human government which could serve us in place of the one we rejected from God—such simply is not among our options. Indeed, any effort of the kind would be just as serious a usurpation of his power as was our original move *to* worldly government. What God has *accepted* let no man put in *question*—whether by trying to resist the punishment or to deny the grace of instituted government.

So, is Paul correct in saying the fact a government exists shows that it has been instituted of God? Yes—if he be read *dialectically*, as with his Old Testament source. Paul knows that worldly government is an illegitimate usurpation of God's power—knows it as well as God and Samuel did. However, what his well-justified-in-hating-Rome readers need also to know is that God *accepted* his own rejection as accomplished fact and thus proceeded to accept (yet hardly "legitimate") worldly government as a "given," a human necessity through which he just might be able to prevent some damage and perhaps even gain a bit of good. So Paul is warning his Christians against thinking they can go God one better: if God has shown himself willing to put up with a monstrosity like Rome, your *unwillingness* to do so turns out to be, not moral heroism, but an arrogant bucking of what God has instituted (instituted by his *accepting* it, not *approving* it).

We need to give more detailed attention to Romans 13—in that I have come to realize how firmly we are in the grip of the passage's traditional "legitimizing" interpretation.

(6) In verse 4, then, Paul calls these governing authorities "servants of God." Within his dialectical framework, he can do this with the best sort of biblical precedent. In this regard, the prophet Isaiah has Yahweh say the following about the bloodthirsty Assyrian hordes poised to sack Israel:

> I have given my warriors their orders and summoned my fighting men to launch my anger; they are eager for my triumph.
> Hark, a tumult in the mountains, the second of a vast multitude;
> Hark, the roar of kingdoms, of nations gathering!
> Yahweh of Hosts is mustering a host of war, men from a far country, from beyond the horizon.
> It is Yahweh with the weapons of his wrath coming to lay the whole land waste.
>
> —Isaiah 13:3-5

Here we have caught Isaiah—in cahoots with Paul—calling the representatives of a pagan conqueror "warriors (and to that extent 'servants') of God." However, in another passage the prophet makes it plain that this carries absolutely no implications of "legitimizing":

> The Assyrian! He is the rod that I wield in my anger, and the staff of my wrath is in his hand.
> I send him against a godless nation,
> I bid him march against a people who rouse my wrath, to spoil and plunder at will and trample them down like mud in the streets.
> But this man's [i.e., the Assyrian's] purpose is lawless, lawless are the plans in his mind; for this thought is only to destroy and wipe out nation after nation.
>
> When Yahweh has finished all that he means to do on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, he will punish the king of Assyria for this fruit of his pride and for his arrogance and vainglory, because he said: By my own might I have acted and in my own wisdom I have laid my schemes.
>
> —Isaiah 10:5-7, 12-13

Later, with Deutero-Isaiah and the pagan *Persian* conqueror Cyrus, the dialectic contradiction becomes even more extreme:

> Tell me, who raised up that one from the east, one greeted by victory wherever he goes?
> [or for that matter, the one from the west that Paul knows.]
> Who is it that puts nations into his power and makes kings go down before him?. . .
> Whose work is this, I ask, who has brought it to pass?. . .It is I, Yahweh.
>
> —Isaiah 41:2-4

> Thus says Yahweh to his anointed,
> [that's the word "messiah," or "christ"—for crying out loud!]
> to *Cyrus*,. . .
>
> For the sake of Jacob my servant and Israel my chosen
> I have called you by name
> and given you your title,
> though you have not known me.
>
> I alone have roused this man in righteousness,
> and I will smooth his path before him;
> he shall rebuild my city
> and let my exiles go free—
> not for a price nor a bribe
> [but simply because I commanded my servant],
> says Yahweh of Hosts.
>
> —Isaiah 45:1, 4, 13

When Paul calls the Roman governing authorities "servants of God," it makes no sense at all to take him as meaning that they are good Christians whose deepest desire is to obey and serve God. However, read him along with his Old Testament prophetic mentors and his entire passage makes perfectly good sense. If God can make such use of Assyrian warriors that Isaiah calls them "God's boys"—and if God can make such use of a Persian Emperor that Deutero-Isaiah calls him "God's messiah"—then we better consider that God may be using Roman No-Goods in the very same way.

(7) The Old Testament parallel holds throughout verses 2-5. About as much as Paul can see as a possible godly use for God's Roman "servants" is that (precisely as with the Assyrian warriors) they are quite adept in punishing bad people (come to think about it, if this is Paul's "legitimizing" of Rome, it is a most backhanded compliment). Yes, just as with the Assyrians, the Romans always go overboard on the punishing bit—and God will have to take that little matter up with them, jsut as he did with the Assyrians. Yet this does not change the fact that God can use Roman punishment in the service of his own justifying of humanity.

Therefore, Christians of Rome, here is what all this means for you: (a) You should take care not to be an evildoer whose governmental punishment represents the just anger of God you have brought upon yourself. That God's "servant of punishment" is himself "bad" is no evidence that you are "good" and your punishment therefore undeserved. That the U.S. Government is divinely-illegitimate is no evidence at all that its punishment of the Berrigans' "civil disobedience" is wrong and outside the will of God. The expose of Assyrian evil does not amount to an argument for Israelite innocence. Rome does punish many innocent people (and God will hold it accountable for that:" 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay,' says the Lord" [Rom. 12:19]). Yet this does not prohibit Rome from being used "in God's service" to punish some who really need it for their own good.

(b)Then consider verses 4-5 in particular. Just because you Christians can see that the Roman Empire is obviously godless and wicked, don't draw the simple, human-minded conclusion that it must be God's will for you to resist, contest, and fight it.

Paul, yes; Isaiah, yes; but Jeremiah is the one most insistent that the pagan oppressor is *not to be resisted*—precisely because that rod of punishment may be acting in the service of God: "Bring your neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon [Paul words it 'be subject'], and serve him and his people [Paul words it 'pay whatever they claim as their due'], and live. Why will you and your people die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, as the Lord has spoken concerning any nation which will not serve the king of Babylon [as actually happened to the Jewish nation that ignored Paul's counsel of nonresistance, fought the Romans, and died]?" (Jer. 27:12-13).

You could find yourself resisting the particular use God has in mind for that Empire; and at the very least, you definitely are trying to take over and do his work for him, pulling up the tares he told you to leave for *his* harvesting. When he wants that Empire overthrown, he is fully capable of doing it on his own.

And if, in your fighting the Empire, you happen to get yourself killed, the fault is not necessarily that of the Evil Empire; it does not automatically follow that yours was a heroic martyr's death in the service of God. It could as likely

represent God's righteous anger against those who are just as guilty of wanting to be "lord of history" as the Romans themselves are.

(8) And so, in verses 5-8, Paul asks us again to "be subject"—always loving; never resisting, contesting, trying to impose our own wisdom and will. And this is why you pay taxes (better: do not resist their being collected), so as not to have Jesus accuse *you* (as Paul got himself accused) of "kicking against the goads" (Acts 26:14)—i.e., trying to obstruct God's *Roman* servants as Paul had tried to obstruct his *Christian* ones. Never owe anybody—*anybody*—anything except to love them.

Nobody ever said loving Assyrian warriors was going to be easy; but when they are obeying God by loving instead of resisting them, don't let any holy-joes try to make you feel guilty by telling you that you are actually approving and supporting Assyrian evil. There is not one word in Romans 13, or anywhere else in the New Testament, implying that to "not resist one who is evil" (Mt. 5:39) is tantamount to legitimizing him—this no more than Isaiah's nonresistance legitimized Assyrian militarism, Jeremiah's Babylonian, Deutero-Isaiah's Persian, Paul's Roman, or a modern Christian's nonresistance legitimizes American militarism.

Finally, notice that, our way, Romans 13 reads as *anarchically* as all get out. It carefully declines to legitimize either Rome or resistance against Rome. It will give neither recognition nor honor to any political entity whatever—nation, party, ideology, or cause group. There is only one Lord of History—and that is God. And he shows no cognizance of our commonly-accepted distinction between the holy arkys he supposedly sponsors and the unholy ones he opposes (though this is not to deny that he acknowledges a degree of relative difference between the moral performance of one arky and another). Yet, after the model of the Israelite original, *every* arky starts out under the sinful illegitimacy of messianic pretension, claiming for itself recognition as world-savior and a true lord of history. Nevertheless, though the arkys all be under judgment (as all of us individuals are, too), God will *use* as "servant" whatever arky he chooses (when he chooses and how he chooses). He will also *punish* these servants the same way—even while *loving* each and every human individual involved the whole time. That's Christian Anarchy.

Love and War: Augustine And The Problem of Nuclear Weapons

by Bernard T. Adeney

Introduction

One of the major problems in the history of Christian ethics has been how to reconcile the rigorous requirements of Jesus' teaching on love with the morally ambiguous "necessities" of politics in a fallen world. Reinhold Niebuhr commented, for example, that the greatest problem for ethics is to bridge the gap between the ideal and the real. The purpose of this article is to redefine and explore this question.

The most extreme test of this problem is the test of war. Whatever may be held abstractly about Jesus' command to love your enemy, most Christians throughout history have also believed in national defense. Today many believe that national defense is impossible without nuclear weapons. The contrast between love of enemy and nuclear war could not be more extreme. This article will explore the nature of ethical dualism, first through Augustine's justification of Christian participation in war and then through the unique problems of the nuclear issue. Ethical dualism is the holding of two (or more) methods of moral evaluation for different sets of people or situations.

Augustine: Justifiable War in Tension

Augustine hated war. Not only was he the first Christian architect of a theory of justifiable war, he was also the first great anti-war writer. Augustine's view of war is especially startling when compared with classical thinkers. Like Plato and Cicero, Augustine saw war as a fact of life. However, unlike them, he never saw it as an honorable, let alone glorious activity. Nor was Augustine's just war theory simply a Christianization of Cicero's natural law thinking. Augustine's thought was born in the crucible of strongly conflicting elements in his mind. Augustine struggled to synthesize the rigorous demands of Christian love with a keen understanding of political realities and a pessimistic view of human nature.

We do not have space here for an extensive analysis of Augustine's hatred of war, or of his theory of justifiable war, but a brief survey should be sufficient. "God did not intend," Augustine lamented, "that his rational creature, who was made in his image, should have dominion over anything but the irrational creation—not man over man but man over beasts."[1] To Augustine war enslaved not only the loser but the winner. It is better to be a slave than to be captured by the emotions unleashed by war.[2]

Augustine saw the horror in all war, whether justifiable or not. "But they say, the wise man will wage just wars. As if he would not all the rather lament the necessity of just wars, if he remembers that he is a man."[3] The evil of war could not be over exaggerated, according to Augustine.

> Let everyone who thinks with pain on these great evils, so horrible, so ruthless acknowledge that this is misery. And if anyone either endures or thinks of them without mental pain, this is a more miserable plight still, for he thinks himself happy because he has lost human feeling.[4]

The words "glory" and "victory" are evil masks that hide the true character of warfare. Asked Augustine, "Why allege to me the mere names and words of 'glory' and 'victory?' Tear off the disguise of wild delusion, and look at the naked deeds; weigh them naked, judge them naked."[5] Augustine denied that any war could bring lasting peace. Even the noblest and best intentioned victory cannot keep peace for long. "Of this calamitous history we have no small proof, in the fact that no subsequent king has closed the gates of war."[6] The "man of war," said Augustine, is worse than a slave because he is ruled by lust:

> What prudence is there in wishing to glory in the greatness and extent of the empire, when you cannot point out that the happiness of men, who are always

Bernard T. Adeney is a TSF Bulletin Resource Scholar and Professor of Ethics at New College Berkeley.

rolling with dark fear and cruel lust in warlike slaughters and in blood, which, whether shed in civil or foreign war, is still human blood.[7]

The universal outrage that Augustine expressed toward war is a welcome addition to ancient moral literature which was certainly more familiar with the terms of honor and fatalism than compassion and love. Augustine's hatred of war is matched by his longing for peace. Peace for Augustine was not simply the absence of conflict, but the "perfectly ordered, harmonious enjoyment of God and one another in God."[8] This peace is the true end of humanity and will come when the human city is swallowed up by the city of God.

If it is supposed that God could not enjoin warfare because . . . Jesus said . . . 'Resist not evil' . . . the answer is that what is here required is not a bodily action but an inward disposition . . . Moses, in putting to death sinners, was not moved by cruelty but by love. Love does not preclude a benevolent severity nor that correction which compassion itself dictates.[12]

Augustine made this ethic of love almost beyond the pale of human wartime virtue by suggesting that a soldier or magistrate who is forced by duty to kill must do so with love in his heart. "No one indeed is fit to inflict punishment save the one who has first overcome hate in his heart. The love of

The universal outrage that Augustine expressed toward war is a welcome addition to ancient moral literature which was certainly more familiar with the terms of honor and fatalism than compassion and love.

In keeping with his love of peace, Augustine did not believe that the Christian individual should ever use violent force, even in self defense. The foundation of Augustine's whole theology and ethics is love. Augustine believed that the Sermon on the Mount should be literally followed by the believer. The individual citizen must not defend him or herself, even from robbery, rape or murder, not because it would not be just but because a person cannot do so without passion, self-assertion and a loss of love for their enemy.

As to killing others to defend one's own life, I do not approve of this, unless one happens to be a soldier or a public functionary acting not for himself but in defense of others or of the city in which he resides.[9]

How then could Augustine justify any warfare for the Christian? Augustine held two paradoxical views of the state. On the one hand, the state is ordained by God and as such is the instrument of his justice. As God's instrument of justice, Augustine conceded to the state a right to wield the sword which could never be right for the individual Christian:

They who have waged war in obedience to the divine command or in conformity with His laws have represented in their persons the public justice or the wisdom of government, and in this capacity have put to death wicked men; such men have by no means violated the command, 'Thou shalt not kill.'[10]

Augustine would not allow even the barest self-defense to the Christian as an individual, but as delegated by the state, justice could be accomplished by killing.

In tension with this view of the state, Augustine denied that any earthly state was founded on justice. The fundamental criteria of justice, according to Augustine, is worship of the only true God. Augustine rejected Cicero's requirement that a state must be just in order to be a true state. A state is simply a group of people who have a common agreement. "A robber band has the essential features of a state."[11]

Even if the state as ordained by God must wield the sword, it does not necessarily follow that Christians should do so. Does Augustine abrogate the love commandments for Christians in public office? This is the point at which Augustine proposed his solution to the contradiciton between love and political necessity. Love, argued Augustine, is not incompatible with killing because it is an attitude of the heart, not an action.

enemy admits no dispensation, but love does not exclude wars of mercy waged by the good."[13]

While there is a distinction in Augustine's thought between political responsibility and perfect love, these are by no means to be considered polarities. Love is to rule responsibly and must be incarnated in just political action. This is only possible through a radical emphasis on love as an inward disposition. Augustine's political ethics heavily rely on subjective intent. If a magistrate must cause the death of a person it should be done with love and sorrow. Hence, Augustine's "mournful magistrate." Those who go to war must cherish the spirit of a peacemaker. If they must kill they should let necessity and not their own hand do the killing.

Augustine knew that the tension between responsibility and the Gospel could never be fully resolved so he emphasized the difference between different callings. Different demands are placed by God on the ruler, the soldier, the citizen and the cleric or monk. Only the cleric or monk is bound by the "counsels of perfection." The highest or most perfect calling requires a nonviolent life. But not all Christians have that calling.[14] Thus Augustine made room for political necessity without making it normative.

The intellectual virtues of Augustine's resolution of the problem of dualism are apparent. Neither side of the dilemma is compromised. The radical absolute of love is preserved as the basic norm of every situation. Justice and love are not in conflict. Political realism is not sacrificed. Necessity does not compromise Christian discipleship. Augustine's solution allows for an individual to seek perfect union with God through monastic withdrawal from the ambiguous requirements of public life yet does not release any Christian from the ethics of Jesus. Even public officials must keep the love commandments internally.

But the problems with this solution are also serious. The interiorization of love promotes a spirit/flesh dichotomy and separates love from its concrete manifestation in the real world. The requirement that Christian soldiers must kill with love in their hearts for the enemy invites extreme hyprocrisy or guilt. The door is opened for subjective rationalization of any act as long as the requisite good motivation is there. Furthermore, Augustine ends up with two kinds of dualism: private versus public ethics and cleric versus lay ethics.

The agonizing approach of Augustine is still instructive for today's problems. This does not mean that Augustine solved the problem even for his own day. Augustine shared many

of the blindnesses of a high-born Roman citizen in the fifth century. But he grasped the tension between freedom and necessity, between justice and love and between Christian morality and practical politics. Augustine's solution of internalizing love was inadequate. But the tension he displayed illuminated the problem.

The Problem of Dualism in Ethics

The dilemma addressed by Augustine has been a perennial one for Christian ethics. Augustine's contrast between the city of God and the city of "man," Luther's two kingdoms, the Anabaptist contrast between Kingdom ethics and worldly ethics, Reinhold Niebuhr's dualism of individual and corporate ethics and Jacques Ellul's contrast between freedom and necessity are but a few examples of thinkers who have resorted to dualism in grappling with this problem. H. Richard Niebuhr's classic text, *Christ and Culture*, provides a typology of different approaches to a closely related problem.

Nuclear ethics brings the problem of dualism to an acute head. The simplest formulation of the political problem of nuclear weapons is that they are both intolerable and permanent.

Most writers tend to come down on one side of the duality, however they may define it. Thus Anabaptist ethics emphasize separation from political compromise and strict allegiance to Kingdom ethics. Reinhold Niebuhr, on the other hand, emphasized the impossibility of purity and the need to take moral risks for the sake of political justice. Luther held the two in tension but allowed too sharp a separation between personal and public responsibility. The result was to separate personal morality from political and social problems.

Nuclear Ethics and the Problem of Dualism

Nuclear ethics brings the problem of dualism to an acute head. The simplest formulation of the political problem of nuclear weapons is that they are both intolerable and permanent. They are intolerable morally because they make willingness to commit genocide and destroy most of the world a routine part of politics. The evils Augustine lamented are paltry compared to the necessary results of a nuclear war. Nuclear weapons are permanent for two reasons. First, unless industrial society is destroyed there will always be people who know how to make nuclear weapons. Even if total disarmament were achieved, nuclear weapons could be rapidly manufactured by an advanced industrial society in the event of war. Nuclear weapons will always be a threat. Second, despite the rhetoric of both Soviet and U.S. leaders, the political possibilities of complete disarmament are so slim as to be negligible. Apart from a fundamental change in the patterns of international political behavior that have persisted for all of recorded history, rational suspicion and self-protection will not disappear. Nuclear weapons are not hard to hide or break down into components. Even if disarmament were agreed upon, there would be no way to stop cheating.

Another way to state the problem is to say that they are immoral and politically necessary. They are immoral for obvious reasons. Nuclear weapons are a potent symbol of immmorality in international relations. Routine willingness to commit nuclear genocide is subversive of ethical commitment.

The political necessity of nuclear weapons is in one sense merely a matter of the polls. If enough people could be persuaded to change their mind and support disarmament then it would be possible. If it happened in Holland, why not here? There are many reasons why not. Holland's weapons are insignificant in relation to the perceived balance of power in international relations. Those of the United States are essential. Roger Shinn articulates a fear that cannot be simply denied. While he supports dramatic unilateral initiatives he rejects unilateral disarmament. He says:

> It would not enhance the peace of the world. The one situation more dangerous and more fraught with injustice than a balance of terror is a monopoly of terror. The unilateral renunciation of nuclear weapons may be a rational and ethically responsible act for some nations. It is not a political possibility for all nations.[15]

As it stands this is an empirical prediction, not necessarily a normative judgment. The Soviets might very well increase aggressive and oppressive activity all over the world if they were unimpeded by nuclear deterrence. The same might be true of the United States. But this is not certain for either the Soviet Union or the United States. There might be other kinds of deterrence made available to a nation with the political and moral courage to renounce nuclear weapons. Of course both sides will not disarm for many reasons besides fear. These include technological and bureaucratic momentum, the international influence and prestige of being a nuclear superpower, both internal and foreign economic interests, ideological commitment, etc.[16]

The immorality and political necessity of nuclear weapons cannot be reconciled within a single political/ethical strategy. Part of the problem has to do with the necessity for the use of power in political relations. Reinhold Niebuhr wrestled cogently with this issue. The need for justice in the relationship between groups requires that each group's power be limited by the power of others. Unimpeded power is dangerous. Kenneth Waltz argues that it is also impossible.[17] Nation states will do all they can to prevent their rivals from gaining an unqualified advantage over them. For Niebuhr this was an ethical issue. Unimpeded power would lead to great injustice in the world. No nation is virtuous enough to be trusted with an unopposed ability to work its will on the world. The inescapable conclusion of this line of reasoning is that if one nation has nuclear weapons, justice and/or necessity requires that at least one other nation also have them.

In conflict with this line of thought is the stark truth that the evils restrained by nuclear deterrence are far outweighed by the evils of nuclear war. Even the horrors of world-wide Stalinism pale in comparison to nuclear war. It has always been questionable whether the issues that wars are fought over outweigh the destructiveness of war. In the past it was at least plausible to argue that they did. It is no longer plausible. If the destructiveness of conventional warfare could be seen as preventing an even greater evil, the same could never be said for nuclear war. The evil it threatens cannot be surpassed.

Christian ethics cannot be simply applied to the state. Too often Christians ignore reality and, as William Temple put it, "bleat fatuously of love." The major gap Niebuhr pointed to between the ideals of love and the necessities of practical politics cannot be denied (though it may be narrower than he thought). As he said, to assert that if only people loved each

other all the complex problems of the political order would be solved, begs the most basic problem in human history.[18] Most people do not love each other.

A Christian individual's response to nuclear weapons is not necessarily a gauge of how he or she would formulate policy if put in the pressurized position of a government executive. Political policy makers must use strategic, teleological reasoning. Most decisions are the outcome of a complex, bureaucratic process through which competing interests are compromised. The realist writings of Reinhold Niebuhr, John Herz and others, convincingly suggest that politics involves tragic, moral risk. As Niebuhr commented:

> Political morality must always be morally ambiguous because it cannot merely reject but must also reflect, beguile, harness and use self-interest for the sake of a tolerable harmony of the whole.[19]

faith and implicitly allowing a different set of rules for their job or their politics. This is especially acute in the economic and political realms of national defense. Thousands of Christians, who believe they should love their enemies, are employed in the nuclear defense industry. At best they may adopt an Augustinian inwardness to their understanding of love. Few are likely to share his anguish over the contradictions involved in preparing for war in a spirit of peace. Yet the production and deployment of nuclear weapons threatens a form of war far more evil than the worst nightmares of Augustine. Nuclear missles are not neutral until fired. They incarnate a blasphemous threat to the future and purpose of the earth.

How then can a Christian participate in a political order that is premised on the necessity of these weapons?

No politician can simply construct what they consider the best policy. Choices must be made from real possibilities. Politicians must distinguish between the present, actual policy, the politically possible (as things stand), the realistic (given certain changes), the desirable (conceivable but unlikely), and the ideal (a utopian vision). To mistake the ideal for the possible not only consigns one to irrelavance, it may well strengthen the status quo. As Richard Falk said, "... genuine moral encounter requires that we choose only from among those genuine possibilities implicit within the living tissue of human affairs."[24] Moral action is always contextual, not abstract.

When Christians take office they will have to act according to the prudential perspectives, possibilities and responsibilities that adhere to their position. This will inevitably result in the tensions and paradox of a double calling.

Insofar as Christians take part in policy formation they will have to share in the tension, or even anguish of working through a political process in which ethical fervor and moral clarity are sapped. Politics is a method, to use Niebuhr's words, "of finding proximate solutions to insolvable problems."[20] What then becomes of the radical simplicity of the Sermon on the Mount? Are we left, as Paul Ramsey put it, "wandering over the wasteland of utility since the day we completely surrendered to technical political reason the choice of the way to the goals we seek?"[21]

Ways Out of the Impasse

Like John Howard Yoder, I am convinced that the teaching of Jesus strongly requires pacifism of the believer, but that, "in our present age it is impossible to do away with the need for violent action in the political or economic realm."[22] Yoder rejects the separation of personal from political ethics. Christian ethics are inescapably political but one cannot require the same standards of behavior from the state as are incumbent upon the Christian. He says:

> We need to distinguish between the ethics of discipleship which are laid upon every Christian ... and an ethics of justice within the limits of relative prudence and self-preservation, which is all one can ask of the larger society.[23]

Yoder suggests that the ideals of discipleship revealed in Jesus Christ are indirectly relevant to the state in that relative, middle axioms can be derived from them. These middle axioms call the state to alternative ways of acting that are politically conceivable. Yoder's methodology undercuts the idealism that expects the state to embody nonviolent morality. At the same time Yoder refuses to erode the radical politcal challenge Jesus gave to those who wish to follow him.

This approach may suffice for Christians who remain outside public office but leaves unresolved difficulties for those who hold governing positions in a pluralistic society. When Christians take office they will have to act according to the prudential perspectives, possibilities and responsibilities that adhere to their position. This will inevitably result in the tensions and paradox of a double calling. Christians in America have typically responded to this tension by privatizing their

Overcoming Ethical Dualism: Eight Directions

I would like to suggest eight avenues for overcoming ethical dualism in a nuclear age. These are not "solutions" to the problem posed in this article. Rather they are directions for bypassing the problem.

1. When a question cannot be answered, a good approach is to redefine the question! The realist-idealist split has produced many questions which assume one side of the dichotomy. Such questions include, "How may wars be fought justly? How can the balancing of power produce security? How can we live without war? How may we abolish nuclear weapons?"

Like the question, "How can I reconcile the real and ideal?," these problems have no answer. Nevertheless, they must be asked. But the primary moral political question in international relations today is this: How can we reduce the criminal burden of the possesion of nuclear weapons? This question defines the problem as a technical, corporate, political, moral, costly and ongoing problem. It takes the focus off the quest for hypothetical personal purity or safety and onto the immediate context which we all face.

2. Rather than starting with theological or strategic abstractions, we need to begin with praxis: with concrete activities of peacemaking and resistance. Such activities are solidly based in commitments to real people and (for Christians) to the values of the Kingdom of God. Peacemaking and resistance can and must take place at all levels of human political relations: in the family, the church, the community, the nation and the world. Political/ethical theory can grow piecemeal out of committed action. Since World War II there has not been a single successful attempt to formulate a convincing political morality that can link military strategy to modern technological reali-

ties. Perhaps such a master theory of political ethics is impossible. In any case it should not hinder us from action or the theoretical insights which spring from it.

3. The values of the Gospel of reconciliation should guide us to set clear limits to what we may do as Christians and what we may advocate as policy. Morality requires that we choose the imperfect real over the abstract ideal. This does not mean that political ethics is exclusively teleological. It is not possible to predict all the good and bad consequences of questionable political means. Nowhere is this more obvious than in nuclear weapons policy. Teleological ethics overvalue human control of history. People need clear moral and, if possible, legal limits to political behavior. While a Christian politician may not choose the ideal, there should be clear limits to what she may choose in the realm of the real.

vision of the future that indicates a clear direction for political struggle. Gustavo Gutierrez's idea of "utopia" is a helpful concept in this regard. "Utopia" is a synthesis of a theological vision of peace (shalom), and a social scientific construction of the political requirements for the creation of material peace in the real world. A community provides a context for the development of such a vision. A community can keep alive the idea of peace even when its immediate applicability is doubtful.

8. The final synthesis of a Christian's faith and politics does not happen at the level of ideas or principles, but is incarnated in the total response of a person to God. We respond in the context of our communities and of our analysis of our world. This response to God is not abstract but expresses who we are as people in the world. Christian faith is valid only as it

The values of the Gospel of reconciliation should guide us to set clear limits to what we may do as Christians and what we may advocate as policy. Morality requires that we choose the imperfect real over the abstract ideal.

A good starting place for such limits in Augustine's motivation of love. Whatever cannot be reconciled with love should be excluded. However, more concrete principles relevant to the context and consistent with love also need to be developed. These principles operate deontologically but are contextually formulated. They include limitations on what a policy maker could support as national policy in a fallen world (for example, no first strike in nuclear policy). They would also include limitations on what any Christian could personally do as a follower of Jesus Christ (for example, order a nuclear strike of any kind).

4. The combination of moral urgency and political complexity which surrounds nuclear policy indicates that there is room both for the politics of reform and the politics of protest. The need for sophisticated political realism in addressing national policy does not nullify the moral outrage which nuclear defense should inspire in all human beings ("if they remember that they are human"). The politics of protest operate by a different set of rules than the politics of reform, but they can be complementary, not contradictory.

5. Attitude is as important as ideas in our response to the nuclear crisis. A follower of "the way of the cross" should not be primarily concerned with personal survival. Rather we should be driven to seek peace with all human beings. Often peace activists project the attitude that our nation is evil while our opponents are innocent. Strong defense advocates argue exactly the reverse. All the evil in the political realm is projected "out there." Augustine's pessimistic realism about the tendency of all humans toward egoism should lend us all humility, while his conviction of the almost infinite value of every person should lend us hope. Of course the heart of any Christian approach to peacemaking is love.

6. A Christian ethic of peacemaking is a communal ethic. The individual lone ranger peacemaker is almost a contradiction in terms. We need a community of people in which to learn the skills of being a peaceful people. We also need a community to lend corporate power to our quest for political peace. Third, a community will provide the context for seeking peace within ourselves. Those who wish to spread peace need to develop the character of peacemakers.

7. While it is important to distinguish between the politically possible and the ideal, it is equally important to have a

is expressed in the context of a person's life and social situation. The challenge to love God, our neighbor and our enemy cannot be adequately articulated in abstract terms that are separate from the life and "story" of an individual or community. The task of the Church in relation to the bond is to be a community that expresses the truth it has received in the style of its life. The nature of Christian ethics is expressed in the being of the Church as it responds to God and to the concrete historical/political events of its day. Dietrich Bonhoeffer asked:

> Who stands fast? Only the man whose final standard is not his reason, his principles, his conscience, his freedom or his virtue, but who is ready to sacrifice all this when he is called to obedient and responsible allegiance to God—the responsible man who tries to make his whole life an answer to the question and call of God.[25]

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[1] Augustine, *The City of God*, Marcus Dods, Trans., Book XIX, Ch. 15, p. 521.
[2] *City*, Book XIX, Ch. 15, p. 521.
[3] *City*, Book XIX, Ch. 7, p. 515.
[4] *City*, Book XIX, Ch. 7, p. 515.
[5] *City*, Book III, Ch. 13, p. 174.
[6] *City*, Book XIX, Ch. 14, p. 176.
[7] *City*, Book XIX, Ch. 3, p. 190.
[8] *City*, Book XIX, Ch. 11, p. 519.
[9] *Epist.* 47 5. Quoted in Roland Bainton, *Christian Attitudes to War and Peace*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press), 1960, p. 96.
[10] *City*, Book I, Ch. 21, p. 142.
[11] *City*, Book XIX, Ch. 24, p. 528.
[12] *Contra Faustum*, XXII, pp. 76 & 79. Quoted in Bainton, pp. 95ff.
[13] *Sermo Dom* I, XX, pp. 63 & 70. Quoted in Bainton, p. 96.
[14] *Epist.* 99, CSEL XXIV, pp. 553f.
[15] Roger Shinn, "A Dilemma Seen from Several Sides," *Christianity & Crises* 41, No. 22 (Jan. 18, 1982), p. 375.
[16] Alan Geyer's book, *The Idea of Disarmament* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 1985), amply documents the myriad political factors that have dogged and defeated attempts at disarmament.
[17] Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Relations*, (Menlo Park, CA: Addison-Wesley, 1979).
[18] Reinhold Niebuhr, *Christianity and Power Politics*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940), p. 14.
[19] *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944), p. 73.
[20] *Children of Light*, p. 118.
[21] Paul Ramsey, *War and the Christian Conscience*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1961), p. 6.
[22] John Howard Yoder, *The Christian Witness to the State*, (Newton, Kansas: Faith and Life Press, 1964), p. 7.
[23] *Witness*, p. 23.
[24] Richard A. Falk, *Law Morality and War in the Contemporary World* (New York: Frederick Praeger, 1963), p. 6.
[25] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers From Prison*, Eberland Bethage, ed. (New York: MacMillan, 1972), p. 5.

Nuclear Ethics: A Selected, Annotated Bibliography

by Mark Nation

Compiling a useful bibliography is always a challenge, particularly in terms of selection. If that is generally true, it is especially true in treating two topics as complex as ethics and nuclear arms.

There are many facets to ethics, from the multifaceted dimensions of moral philosophy to the numerous recent creative discussions of the use of Scripture in formulating ethics. However, to limit the number of entries, I have eliminated virtually all resources not directly related to the nuclear issue. A few exceptions pertain to the classical Christian approaches to war and peace.

It is also the case that an understanding of nuclear ethics is contingent upon knowledge about the nuclear arms race, including issues ranging from capabilities of nuclear weapons to an understanding of the Soviet Union to knowledge of strategies for use and non-use of nuclear weapons. Again, with few exceptions, I have refrained from listing resources not directly connected to ethical discussions, realizing that some of the entries listed deal with issues relating to nuclear arms. There are a couple of exceptions. Though aware of its biases, I have included the Ground Zero book as a general, readable overview of the nuclear arms race. The other exception pertains to an issue that repeatedly cropped up, implicitly or explicitly, in discussions of nuclear ethics as *the* decisive issue. It is a matter related to nuclear doctrine. To oversimplify, is the engagement in nuclear war so awful to contemplate that our best talent and strategizing should go into the effort to prevent nuclear war? Or, rather, should we expend a considerable allotment of time and energy contemplating how we might fight and, perhaps, win a nuclear war? The articles by Gray and Payne, Howard, Keeney and Panofsky, and Wohlstetter were added to the bibliography to give examples of some of the best thinking on various sides of these issues.

Another question I confronted was whether to limit the entries to Christian writers. I decided not to for two reasons. First, many Christian writers, through employment of natural law or for other reasons, debate this kind of issue in terms that are not specifically theological or Christian. Second, even for others, the questions raised and issues discussed by many of the writers listed here are definitely relevant for Christians of every ilk—even if their final conclusions might be based on different beliefs and values.

Finally, every attempt has been made to be fair in selecting and annotating the entries. However, in order to maximize the usefulness of the bibliography, I have, when appropriate, rendered what I considered to be fair judgments.

Asterisks indicate the books or essays I would most recommend to someone who wants a brief course on nuclear ethics.

Aukerman, Dale. *Darkening Valley: A Biblical Perspective on Nuclear War.* Seabury Press, 1981, 229 pp., $8.95. Though not explicitly written about ethics, this book bristles with numerous thought-provoking insights that have relevance for ethical deliberation. *The Christian Century* has said about this book that it "is unlikely to be surpassed by anything written on nuclear war from a religious perspective."

Barrs, Jerram. *Who are the Peacemakers? The Christian Case for Nuclear Deterrence.* Crossway Books, 1983, 64 pp., $2.95. Introduced by the late, well-known Francis Schaeffer, this brief polemical book argues for a "peace through strength" position on the basis of Barrs' understanding of the demands of justice. Contains some rather weak and strange arguments.

*Bernbaum, John, ed. *Perspectives on Peacemaking: Biblical Options in the Nuclear Age.* Regal Books, 1984, 265 pp., $6.95. A collection of some interesting essays, mostly from the evangelical conference that was held in Pasadena in May 1983. Various perspectives are represented. Includes essays by people such as Senators William Armstrong and Mark Hatfield, Jim Wallis, Edmund W. Robb, and Richard J. Mouw.

Bonkovsky, Frederick O. *International Norms and National Policy.* Eerdmans, 1980, 220 pp., O.P.—available from UMI for $58.50). Bonkovsky challenges much just-war theorizing as unrealistic and impractical. He proposes some specific guidance for formulating realistic international "procedural" norms and means for more objectively evaluating conflicting values. The book raises some interesting questions.

Brown, Dale W., ed. *What About the Russians? A Christian Approach to U.S.-Soviet Conflict.* The Brethren Press, 1984, 159 pp., $6.95. An interesting collection of essays divided into three sections: 1) "Who Are the Russians?" 2) "Why Do We Fear the Russians?" 3) "Can Christians Trust Russians?"

Cesaretti, C. A. and Joseph T. Vitale, eds. *Rumors of War: A Moral and Theological Perspective on the Arms Race.* Seabury Press, 1982, 138 pp., $6.95. This is a a study guide for four sessions of study: "Peace," "Security," "Just War," and "Stewardship and Christian Responsibility." There are four appendices, the first two of which contain almost 100 pages of readings to supplement the lessons. There is little attempt to present a balanced perspective. And though present policies are not discussed, the readings would tend to be critical of them.

*Clouse, Robert G., ed. *War: Four Christian Views.* InterVarsity Press, 1981, 210 pp., $6.95. Nonresistance, pacifism, the just war, and the crusade or preventive war positions are defended as Christian positions by proponents of the respective positions. Also each author responds to the others' positions. Good format and discussions.

Curry, Dean C., ed. *Evangelicals and the Bishops' Pastoral Letter.* Eerdmans, 1984, 254 pp., $10.95. A nice collection of essays from various theological and political perspectives.

Davidson, David L. *Nuclear Weapons and the American Churches: Ethical Positions on Modern Warfare.* Westview Press, 1983, 208 pp, O.P. This book was written by a chaplain in the U.S. Army and "prepared under the auspices of the Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania." This is a good, objective survey of some current attitudes regarding the ethics of the nuclear

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Mark Nation holds an M.A. in Theology from The Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, and is currently director of the Champaign-Urbana Peace Initiative, an ecumenical peace and justice education organization.

arms race, including most major denominations and several Christian ethicists. Includes a chart of church positions on specific issues in response to a questionnaire prepared for this study.

Dougherty, James E. *The Bishops and Nuclear Weapons: The Catholic Pastoral Letter on War and Peace.* Archon Books, 1984, 255 pp., $22.50. Written by a political scientist, this is the most serious, substantive, critical response to the Bishops' letter I have seen. Dougherty especially takes issue with specific policy recommendations of the Bishops.

*Duke, David N. "Christians, Enemies and Nuclear Weapons," *The Christian Century,* Vol. 100, No. 32 (Nov. 2, 1983), 986-989. Explores the relevance in a nuclear age of Jesus' teaching regarding love for enemies. Stimulating and helpful.

Dwyer, Judith A. "Catholic Thought on Nuclear Weapons: A Review of the Literature," *Religious Studies Review,* Vol. 10, No. 2 (April 1984), 103-107. A very helpful, brief overview of current Catholic thought.

Falwell, Jerry. "Peace Through Strength—Preserving Our Freedom," *Fundamentalist Journal,* May 1983, 8-9. When I was writing an article on Jerry Falwell and the nuclear arms race in 1983, I wrote to him to ask for anything he had written on the subject. This article was what I received. The key to his argument is his statement: "Freedom is the basic moral issue of all issues."

Geyer, Alan. *The Idea of Disarmament: Rethinking the Unthinkable.* The Brethren Press, 1982, 256 pp., $11.95. As Geyer says, this is "more of a think-book than a fact-book." As such it offers some interesting critiques of deterrence and counterforce doctrines as well as possible scenarios for disarmament. I believe this was revised for a 1985 edition.

Glynn, Patrick. "Why an American Arms Build-Up is Morally Necessary," *Commentary,* Vol. 77, No. 2 (Feb. 1984), 17-28. A spirited argument against the M.A.D. (Mutually Assured Destruction) strategy as supported, e.g., by Spurgeon Keeny and Wolfgang Panofsky and most mutual, verifiable, nuclear weapons freeze proponents.

Goodwin, Geoffrey, ed. *Ethics and Nuclear Deterrence.* St. Martin Press, 1982, 199 pp., $22.50. A collection of articles representing various viewpoints from discussions sponsored by the British Council on Christian Approaches to Defense and Disarmament.

*Gray, Colin S. and Keith Payne. "Victory is Possible," *Foreign Policy,* No. 39 (Summer 1980), 14-27. Colin Gray is one of the most impressive, capable apologists for current administration nuclear policies. This influential article argues that we should develop nuclear strategy that is focused much more on fighting and winning a nuclear war than the M.A.D. logic allows for.

*Ground Zero. *Nuclear War: What's In It For You?* Pocket Books, 1982, 272 pp., $2.95. A readable, general introduction to the nuclear arms race.

Hardin, Russell, et al., eds. *Nuclear Deterrence: Ethics and Strategy.* University of Chicago Press, 1985, 395 pp., $10.95. This book represents some of the best thinking on the subject by people within the moral philosophy guild. All but two essays are from the April 1985 issue of the journal *Ethics.*

*Hauerwas, Stanley. *Against the Nations: War and Survival in a Liberal Society.* Winston Press, 1985, 208 pp., $16.95. This book contains three of Hauerwas' essays on war, two specifically on nuclear war. Hauerwas wants to press us to ask what it means to be specifically Christian in nuclear and other contexts. These three essays take on greater meaning in the context of the rest of the essays in this book and his *The Peaceable Kingdom.* However, if we are willing to weather Hauerwas' dense writing, we will emerge with new questions and, perhaps, a more Christian vantage point from which to view the issues involved.

Heyer, Robert, ed. *Nuclear Disarmament: Key Statements of Popes, Bishops, Councils and Churches.* Paulist Press, 1982, 278 pp., $7.95. A good collection of formal statements, including more than thirty pages of Protestant church statements.

Hoekema, David A. "Nuclear Issues Resources (Part I)," *The Christian Century,* Vol. 100, No. 26 (Sept. 14-21, 1984), 819-825. A good discussion of a number of books on the nuclear arms race, most of which are not listed here. The only limitation is that so much has been published in the last two years.

_____. "Nuclear Issues Resources (Part II)," *The Christian Century,* Vol. 100, No. 27 (Sept. 28, 1983), 850-854.

_____. "Protestant Statements on Nuclear Disarmament," *Religious Studies Review,* Vol. 10, No. 2 (April 1984), 97-102. A good overview of official statements.

*Hollenbach, David, S.J. *Nuclear Ethics: A Christian Moral Argument.* Paulist Press, 1983, 100 pp., $3.95. Though one might want to supplement it with other readings, this is a good, brief text on nuclear ethics. This fine study is well-written and thoughtful.

Howard, Michael E. "On Fighting a Nuclear War," *International Security,* Vol. 5, No. 4 (Spring 1981), 3-17. A response to Colin Gray et al. (see Gray and Payne above) by one of the foremost British historians of war.

Johnson, James Turner. *Can Modern War Be Just?* Yale University Press, 1984, 215 pp., $17.95. This book is comprised of eight essays by a former student of Paul Ramsey and one of the most prominent and prolific just-war theorists writing today. Johnson wants to take issue with those who answer "no" too quickly to the question posed by the title. Therefore he is somewhat critical of the Catholic Bishops' Letter (see Wohlstetter, Albert & Critics below) and would lean more toward endorsing policies of limited nuclear war, flexible response, etc. But he seems somewhat more cautious than, e.g., W. V. O'Brien.

*Johnson, James T. and David Smith, eds. *Love and Society: Essays in the Ethics of Paul Ramsey.* Scholars Press, 1974, 251 pp. Includes four fine essays on the just-war tradition. Johnson's essay gives a good overview of the jwt as well as a good, brief explication of Ramsey's understanding of the jwt. LeRoy Walters' essay is one of the few to discuss how the jwt has actually worked in practice.

*Keeny, Spurgeon M., Jr., and Wolfgang K. H. Panofsky. "MAD Versus NUTS: Can Doctrine or Weaponry Remedy the Mutual Hostage Relationship of the Superpowers?" *Foreign Affairs,* Vol. 60, No. 2 (Winter 1981/82), 287-304. A key article in discussions about Colin Gray's and Albert Wohlstetter's writings (see biblio. entries) as well as other proposals regarding nuclear strategies and, therefore, nuclear ethics. Keeny and Panofsky contend that given the properties of nuclear weapons and the reality of other components of conceivable nuclear war scenarios, it is dangerous to ignore the fact that the Superpowers are in a mutual hostage relationship. To formulate strategies of nuclear war fighting, etc., while ignoring these realities makes mutually assured destruction much more of a possibility. An important essay.

Lackey, Douglas P. *Moral Principles and Nuclear Weapons.* Rowman & Allanheld Pubs., 1984, 265 pp., $25.00. Whether or not one agrees with all of the specific recommendations, this book is quite instructive. Lackey, a philosophy professor, not only relates just-war categories to the nuclear

arms race but also illuminates the discussion by applying the moral categories of common good, human rights, and justice in a way that responds to a broader range of concerns. Has a good, fifteen-page bibliography.

Lawler, Philip F. *The Ultimate Weapon.* Regnery Gateway, 1984, 126 pp., $8.95. Lawler is the president of the American Catholic Conference, an independent organization founded to help Catholic lay people express their views on political and social issues that affect their church. Written as a study-guide for the pastoral letter, the book is quite critical of the letter, particularly regarding specific policy recommendations. The title makes a dual reference to prayer and nuclear weaponry.

Miller, Richard B. "Tradition and Modernity in the Nuclear Age," *The Journal of Religion,* Vol. 65, No. 2 (April 1985), 258-270. An interesting, illuminating discussion of Jerram Barrs' *Who Are the Peacemakers?,* David Hollenbach's *Nuclear Ethics,* Stanley Hauerwas' *Should War Be Eliminated?* (included in *Against the Nations*), and Edward LeRoy Long's *Peace Thinking in a Warring World.*

Murnion, Philip, ed. *Catholics and Nuclear War: A Commentary on the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Letter.* Crossroads, 1983, 346 pp., $10.95. The book is divided into sections corresponding to the Letter. Includes the text of the Letter. Writers include David Hollenbach, Peter Steinfels, Charles E. Curran, J. Bryan Hehir, James Finn, and Richard A. McCormick.

*National Conference of Catholic Bishops. *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response.* U.S. Catholic Conference, 1983, 103 pp., $1.50. The Bishops' Pastoral Letter on war and peace. A carefully wrought document. Very influential.

Novak, Michael. "Moral Clarity in the Nuclear Age," *National Review,* Vol. XXXV, No. 6 (April 1, 1983), 354-392. An influential essay by a conservative Catholic. Also available, slightly expanded, with other essays, in book form from Thomas Nelson.

O'Brien, William V. *The Conduct of Just and Limited War.* Praeger Pubs., 1981, 495 pp., $15.95. A Catholic political scientist, O'Brien is one of the foremost experts on the just-war tradition. This book discusses the history of the jwt, the justifiability of U.S. involvement in some major conflicts and the possibility of just and limited warfare today. On the nuclear issue O'Brien's positions would, for the most part, be consistent with current Administration policies. It seems to me that his conclusions largely depend on siding with Gray and Payne (see above) over against Keeny and Panofsky (see also above). O'Brien is a serious scholar. Even for those who disagree with him, by implication he raises some of the right questions.

*O'Brien, William V. "Just-War Doctrine in a Nuclear Context," *Theological Studies,* Vol. 44 (1983), 191-220. See entry on *The Conduct of Just and Limited War.*

*Potter, Ralph B. *War and Moral Discourse.* John Knox Press, 1969, 123 pp., $1.95. This often quoted little volume was written in the context of the Vietnam War. However, Chapter 2,"The Complexity of Policy Recommendations," and Chapter 3, "Uses and Abuses of Moral Discourse," would contribute greatly to many discussions of nuclear ethics and public policies.

Ramsey, Paul. *The Just War.* Univ. of America Press, 1983 (original ed. 1968), 554 pp., $15.75. One of the two basic collections of essays by the dean of just-war theorists of the past generation. Because of his continuing influence, it is important to be familiar with Ramsey's writings.

Ramsey, Paul. *War and the Christian Conscience: How Shall Modern War Be Conducted Justly?* Duke Univ. Press, 1961, 331 pp., O.P. See entry on *The Just War.*

Schaeffer, Francis, Vladimir Bukovsky and James Hitchcock. *Who is for Peace?* Thomas Nelson, 1983, 112 pp., $3.95. Arguments for a "peace through strength" kind of position by a deceased, influential evangelical, a Soviet dissident, and a conservative Catholic historian. Schaeffer's essay is weak in substance. All three essays leave much to be desired.

Schall, James V., ed. *Out of Justice Peace—Joint Pastoral Letter of the West German Bishops; Winning the Peace—Joint Pastoral Letter of the French Bishops.* Ignatius Press, 1984, 124 pp., $3.95. The approach and time (particularly in the French Bishops' Letter) is significantly different from the U.S. Bishops' Letter, also published in 1983. And one could assume that they would make what are generally considered to be more conservative practical suggestions regarding, e.g., deterrence, first-use, etc. However, they don't spell out specific recommendations as the U.S. Bishops did.

*Shannon, Thomas A., ed. *War or Peace? The Search for New Answers.* Orbis Books, 1980, 255 pp., $9.95. Some fine articles. The one by James Childress on "Just-War Criteria" is particularly helpful with the nuclear issue. The asterisk applies to Childress' article.

Shaw, William H. "Nuclear Deterrence and Deontology," *Ethics,* Vol. 94 (Jan. 1984), 248-260. Raises good questions regarding the ways in which people argue for and against deterrence.

Sider, Ronald J. and Richard K. Taylor. *Nuclear Holocaust & Christian Hope.* InterVarsity Press, 1982, 368 pp., $6.95. A carefully conceived, articulate book by two convinced Christian pacifists. They relate their position to Scripture and the just-war tradition. And they also discuss practical steps toward peace, including a lengthy discussion of non-military means of national defense.

Sterba, James. P., ed. *The Ethics of War and Nuclear Deterrence.* Wadsworth Pub. Co., 1985, 182 pp., $9.50. A collection of articles by several prominent philosophers et al., including George Mavrodes, W.V. O'Brien, Douglas Lackey, and George Kavka.

Voorst, L. Bruce. "The Churches and Nuclear Deterrence," *Foreign Affairs,* Vol. 61, No. 4 (Spring 1983), 827-852. A good survey of recent church positions.

Wallis, Jim, ed. *Peacemakers.* Harper & Row, 1983, approx. 170 pp., $5.95. A collection of brief autobiographical sketches of some interesting contemporary peacemakers.

Wallis, Jim, ed. *Waging Peace: A Handbook for the Struggle to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.* Harper & Row, 1982, 304 pp., $4.95. Intended as a study guide for churches, this is a good collection of essays of facts, analyses, ethical positions, and practical suggestions. There is no attempt to represent a full range of perspectives.

Walzer, Michael. *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument With Historical Illustrations.* Basic Books, Inc., 1977, 361 pp., $7.50. James Childress, himself a scholar of the just-war theory, said this is "one of the most important books on just-war theory in this century." It has certainly been an important and influential contribution to the literature.

Weigel, George. *Peace and Freedom: Christian Faith, Democracy and the Problem of War.* Institute on Religion and Democracy, 1983, 80 pp., $6.00. According to Weigel there are three major obstacales to peace in the world today. These are the threat of nuclear weapons, the threat of "the armed totalitarian power of the Soviet Union," and the threat of a "survivalist" ethic which is "so single-mindedly focused on the threat of nuclear weapons that it ignores or mini-

mizes the Soviet threat, while at the same time draining us of the vital moral energy necessary to work for both peace and freedom." If we remain conscious of these obstacles and pursue certain goals outlined in this book, Weigel believes we can move much closer to true international peace. Weigel also has a little booklet on the Bishops' Letter entitled *The Peace Bishops and the Arms Race.*

Wohlstetter, Albert. "Bishops, Statesmen, and Other Strategists on the Bombing of Innocents," *Commentary,* Vol. 75, No. 6 (June 1983), 15-35. Written by a mathematical logician, fomerly of RAND, the article challenges some basic components of the Bishops' Letter. This is the kind of essay that challenges one to know the facts and reason carefully. The Keeny and Panofsky article (above) as well as various *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* articles challenge some of Wohlstetter's claims.

*Yoder, John Howard. *The Christian Witness to the State.* Faith and Life Press, 1977, 3rd ed., 90 pp., $3.95. Gives a theological and ethical rationale for why Christians engage in politics in a partisan manner. Incidentally this book belies the notion that pacifists have no right to be, or rationale for being, involved in politics.

Yoder, John Howard. *Nevertheless: Varieties of Religious Pacifism.* 2nd ed., Herald Press, 1976, 143 pp., $2.50. This small book helps correct the stereotypes of pacifism that continue to exist in the minds of many. It also offers a powerful apologetic on behalf of pacifism.

*Yoder, John Howard. *The Politics of Jesus.* Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1972, 260 pp., $4.95. This very influential book argues for the relevance of the New Testament to social ethical thought.

Yoder, John Howard. *The Priestly Kingdom: Social Ethics As Gospel.* Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1984, 222 pp., $8.95. An important collection of essays that illustrate several dimensions of Yoder's understanding of Christian social ethics. James Childress says that this book ". . . should be read by all Christians interested in the meaning of their faith and its ethical implications."

*Yoder, John Howard. *When War is Unjust: Being Honest in Just-War Thinking.* Augsburg Pub. House, 1984, 95 pp., $5.95. This book raises a lot of good questions for Christians (and others) intent on taking the just-war tradition seriously. As Charles P. Lutz, a jwt proponent, says in the introduction, "[Yoder] asks us, for the sake of the world, to demonstrate the credibility of our ethic, to put it to the test, to be honest about where it leads us."

The Church: A Social Institution?

by Dennis P. Hollinger

Scrutinizing the church as a social institution has never been popular among evangelicals. Sociological inquiry, it is feared, will inevitably lead to a reductionist view of the church, systematically stripping away all supernatural explanation of the church's origins, forms, and message, until all that remains is another human institution. Evangelicals have chosen instead to affirm the church as a Body of Christ, a royal priesthood, a holy Temple, the *ecclesia*—a divine body that transcends socio-cultural explanations and owes its very existence to Christ, its founder, Savior, and Lord.

Certainly sociology has not always been kind to the church or to religion in general. To acknowledge that "the Christian Church is a natural community. . .," says James Gustafson, "appears to reduce a special creation of God's gracious work to the dismal and uninspiring realm of natural man with his physical, social, and psychological needs."[1] Durkheim, Marx, Freud, and a host of other modern behavioral scientists have joined the ranks of those opting for monolithic explanations of the church's existence based solely on social, economic, and psychological factors.

But one need not be a reductionist to utilize sociological categories. Indeed one need not assume a skeptical stance to view the church from a socio-cultural perspective. It is both possible and desirable to analyze the church using theological categories which affirm its unique origins, message, and purposes, in conjunction with sociological categories which reckon with the socio-cultural milieu out of which it emerged.

The sociological perspective is important for several reasons. First, it helps us distinguish those dimensions of the church which emanate from the culture and those which come from God. Too often throughout history well-meaning Christians have argued that particular forms, polities, ideas, and styles within the church were divine in origin. A century or so later when those aspects of ecclesiastical life had changed, one was almost left to conclude that God was fickle, since he had presumably ordained them. Sociological study can be a valuable tool in helping us discern how and why certain trends emerge within the church. To attribute all human forms and practices to divine initiation is akin to idolatry, even when those forms and practices are good and beneficial. God has indeed ordained certain things for the church, but in many areas there is also freedom in order that the church may adapt its God-given mandates to the needs of particular socio-cultural contexts. But to do this effectively one must distinguish that which is cultural from that which is supracultural.[2]

A further rationale for sociological inquiry is the insidious inclination to succumb to cultural Christianity. Cultural Christianity involves a syncretism of biblical ideals and practices with those cultural ideals and practices which are antithetical to Christian principles. The use of cultural motifs serves a vital function in contextualizing the gospel, as many missiologists have recently contended.[3] To do so requires careful socio-cultural analysis in order to identify modes of thought, organizational methods, and stylistic forms which can be adapted to church life. However, there are limits. When aspects of the socio-cultural context which conflict with the gospel are utilized, or when relative cultural motifs are baptized as absolute Christian principles, cultural religion results. Sociological analysis can be used to help illuminate the distinction between legitimate contextualization and illegitimate cultural captivity by clarifying relevant social processes, norms, and role expectations.

A final reason for sociological analysis of the church is to understand the ways in which the church helps shape its culture and related social insitutions. Many social scientists have studied religion primarily as a dependent variable in which religion is acted upon by society. Karl Marx, for example, saw religion and the church as mere reflections of the economic institution in that the owners of production utilized religious ideas to placate their workers. In such analysis religion has no dynamic of its own to impact upon society.

Dennis P. Hollinger is Associate Professor of Church and Society at Alliance Theological Seminary.

Other sociologists, while acknowledging religion as a dependent variable, would argue for its concurrent role as an independent variable, dynamically acting upon the society and other social institutions. One of the classic works setting forth this thesis is Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. In it Weber observes that the modern capitalistic ethos, not capitalism per se, rose to prominence in Protestant countries where Calvinism prevailed. From this observation he argued that "the principle explanation. . .must be sought in the permanent intrinsic character of their religious beliefs, and not only in their temporary external historico-political situation."[4] Weber's primary contention was that religion generates a powerful, though often unintended, socio-cultural impact of its own—a fact that can be sociologically documented.

Scrutinizing the church as a social institution has never been popular among evangelicals. Sociological inquiry, it is feared, will inevitably lead to a reductionist view of the church.

Having noted the importance of sociological study for the church, let us move on to selected manifestations of the church as a social institution. Three ecclesiastical dimensions will be examined to show the interaction of divine elements with socio-cultural elements—theology, polity and structure, and style of expression. My objective is to demonstrate how the church functions as a social institution, though at the same time acknowledging it is more than just that. In the following discussion I am using "church" to mean concrete embodiments of the Body of Christ, both local and world-wide. At this point some might be prone to make a sharp distinction between the visible church, which exists in a cultural milieu, and the invisible church, which transcends cultural frames of reference. The problem with such dichotomizing is that the invisible church is always visibly manifest within the world. It cannot remain invisible and acultural. Therefore, appealing to the invisible church as a pure ideal untainted by cultural and social elements is simply a platonic myth. The Church of Jesus Christ, composed of all true believers and followers of their Lord, is always manifest as a human community in concrete historical situations. It is those concrete embodiments which we now turn.

The Church's Theology

To suggest that the church's theology reflects its nature as a social institution may be initially unsettling for some. Many evangelicals have tended to argue that theology is absolute, unchanging, transcendent, and beyond cultural influence. Charles Hodge, for example, seemingly viewed theology as beyond historical and socio-cultural mediation in his comparison of the discipline to the natural sciences:

> The Bible is to the theologian what nature is to the man of science. It is his storehouse of facts; and his method of ascertaining what the Bible teaches, is the same as that which the natural philosopher adapts to ascertain what nature teaches.[5]

For Hodge the theological enterprise is a collection of facts revealed in Scripture and a systematization of those facts according to their internal consistency, thereby ascertaining "God's System."[6]

In similar fashion Augustus Strong contended that "the aim of theology is the ascertainment of the facts respecting God and the relations between God and the universe, and the exhibition of these facts in their rational unity, as connected parts of a formulated and organic system of truth." For Strong there appears to be little human or cultural dimension to theology for even the "arrangement of facts is not optional, but is determined by the nature of the material with which is deals. A true theology thinks over again God's thoughts and brings them into God's order."[7]

In such perceptions theology is wrested from its cultural context in that the Bible and our perceptions and systematizing of it are at no point filtered through a socio-altered grid. As David Wells so aptly put it, for many evangelicals "theology is seen to yield a kind of universal transcendent knowledge that encompasses all cultures but is localized in none in particular."[8]

In contrast to this static understanding of theology, there is an alternative evangelical view which is faithful to God's infallible rule of faith, Scripture, while acknowledging a legitimate social and cultural impact upon theological reflection. In this perspective theology may be defined as the human attempt to systematize and apply what revelation teaches about given themes. Such a task is no mere human enterprise, for the primary content and test of all theology is rooted in authoritative objective revelation. This endeavor is further aided by guidance of the Holy Spirit. However, the human theologian cannot avoid expressing these divine truths in categories which reflect in part the social setting.

Theology in its essence is language about God and the realities of the Christian faith. Language is a tool of culture and as such employs culturally agreed-upon symbols to express particular realities. Language will always reflect its socio-cultural setting, for no set of linguistic symbols can exist in a vacuum. God did not choose to reveal His written Word in a divine language but rather in the common language of a social group. This understanding need not relativize the Word of God, for "men spoke from God [in their own language, style, and thought categories] as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21). What must be acknowledged, however, is that the divine reality is not synonymous with the words used in Scripture, but rather the biblical words, as cultural symbols, point to the divine reality. To do theology requires a commitment to God's Word (written and incarnate) as the primary content and test of all theology, but the God-breathed words of the original text are also tools of a culture.

There are two socio-cultural processes through which we must pass to construct a theology. The first is interpretation. The interpreter is aided by Spirit-filled illumination, but this in no way insures interpretive infallibility. One need only examine the history of exegesis to realize that varying interpretations of Scripture have existed from the early church on. Why is this so? One explanatory factor, and there are many, is the socio-cultural context of the interpreter. This context affects what is seen and not seen in Scripture, how meaning is transferred across ages and cultures to a new context with a new language, and how Scripture is specifically applied to a given issue in the church or the world that may be quite different from analogous issues addressed in the biblical text. Such interpretive variation need not result in hermeneutical chaos. There is always the objective Word to which we go again and again, and there is the ever-deepening insight from extra-biblical sources of the original setting. Historical theol-

ogy is also a tool which informs our biblical interpretation. True, applications to new contexts may vary, but that does not nullify the possibility of an ultimate criterion against which we judge our theology. Yet, the interpreter is never totally free from his/her social setting, and this limitation must always humbly be acknowledged.

The second socio-cultural process through which we must pass in doing theology is a systematization of the interpreted Word. Theology involves organizing into human categories of thought what we understand Scripture to say. Some may not feel the urgency to move beyond biblical theology—that is, clarifying what John or Paul or Peter say about particular themes in their own language. But if we believe that Scripture is unified and that the parts are not ultimately inconsistent, then we must press on with the task of systematizing revealed knowledge about God, Christ, salvation, the church, ethics, etc. This may require language categories beyond those available in the biblical language for two reasons. First, the biblical writers themselves don't always use the same categories to describe particular divine realities; and at other times the same linguistic categories may be used but with varying shades of meaning.[9] In order to reconcile these differences, the theologian may search for categories which harmonize the varieties in biblical language. Second, the systematization must be integrated with the particular issues and questions arising from within or without the church. To do so requires language that is relevant to those concerns.

The whole of historical theology illustrates the fact that theology reflects its social setting. This is exemplified in both the issues that are raised and the ways they are handled. Specific theological issues addressed by the church in a given place and time reflect to some degree what is happening in the surrounding culture. As the socio-historical situation exerts pressure on the church to grapple with these issues, it responds by hammering out particular tenets in more systematic form. Until that time the church may only have general teachings on the subject which emerges during the course of Bible study. But a full-blown systematic doctrinal statement normally develops in response to cultural impingement.

For example, when the early church worked out the theology of Christ's relationship to God, it did so in terms which reflected the philosophical questions of its socio-historical setting. The debate centered over whether Christ was *homoousion* (of the same essence or substance as the Father), *homoiousion* (of a similar essence or substance) or *heteroousion* (of a different essence or substance). Nowhere in Scripture is the issue of *ousia* or essence discussed, at least in those terms. However, finding itself in the midst of a culture that asked questions of essence and substance, the church was forced to formulate a theology of Christ's essence, and chose to do so in the thought categories of contemporary philosophy. The church's strategy was to begin with the Word, but once that Word was interpreted (in a socio-cultural framework), the interpretations were then systematized into the language and thought patterns of its culture.

A further illustration of how the socio-cultural context influences theology is evidenced in the rise of eschatological concerns in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Throughout the first eighteen centuries of the church there were certainly teachings on the "last things." However, a more full-orbed eschatology has emerged in the last two centuries. Why? Primarily, I believe, because Western culture has been raising questions about history which have in turn caused the church to ask, "Where is history going?" Nineteenth-century notions of evolution, dialectic, and optimism were reflected in a popular post-millennial eschatology that saw history's progress culminating in the return of Christ. This does not imply a reductionism in which the cultural milieu was the sole source of post-millennialism, for the Puritans two centuries earlier had already begun to construct such an eschatology.[10] But as Stanley Gundry has noted:

> Time and again there seems to be a connection between eschatology and the church's perception of itself in its historical situation. Eschatologies have been a reflection of the current mood or *Zeitgeist* or response to historical conditions. In other words, in many cases eschatologies appear to have been sociologically conditioned.[11]

When the horrors of urban industrialism, war, and international conflict began to play havoc with nineteenth-century optimism, the post-millennial bubble burst and a form of premillennialism began to flourish. There is no question that the doomsday prophecies of dispensational premillennialism was a reading not only of the Bible but also of the times, fueled by the rude awakening of socio-cultural experience.

Is one left to conclude that theology merely blows with the winds of its times? That it is forever doomed to cultural relativism, having little or no transcendent message? Not at all. Because there is an objective Word we are not lost in a maze of cultural relativities. There is ultimate truth and final authority against which all human thought can and must be judged. But our theology must not be confused with eternal truth. Theology is, rather, the systematic reflection and human categorization of that divine truth, as recorded in Scripture, and in dialogue with contextually relevant questions. As John Jefferson Davis puts it:

> The calls for the contextualization of the gospel (in actuality, a recontextualization) are simply based on the recognition of the need to communicate the faith in a context-specific fashion, and to make a critical assessment of the ways in which the church's or theologian's own social situation may be distorting the understanding of the message.[12]

All of this means that theology can never be done once and for all. It represents the on-going attempt of the church in a culturally-specific locale to address the biblical issues in a way that is understandable to that culture. This approach to theology will mean that to some extent the issues addressed and the packaging of those issues will differ from place to place and in different periods of history. For example, in the West, systematic theologies often begin sections on God with the classical arguments for the existence of God. In Africa where few doubt the supernatural realm and where Aristotelian philosophy has little significance, such arguments are almost nonsensical. Conversely, an area of theology with great

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significance to the African mind, but one never highly developed in the West, is that of power encounter—the encounter of God with the spirit world and demons. Therefore, it seems reasonable that the theologies of the secularist West will address the existence of God in language relevant to its skeptical minds, while African theologies will emphasize more the relationship of God's power to the animated world.

The problem with believing that theology is absolute, unchanging, and given once-for-all is well illustrated by R.H.S. Boyd's *India and the Latin Captivity of the Church.* Boyd analyzes the Westminster Confession through Indian eyes and shows the confusion that arises when context is not considered. The section on the Trinity includes these words, "In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance. . . .The Son is eternally begotten of the Father." Boyd notes:

> The word 'person' cannot be translated directly from English into say, Gujarati, for in common parlance 'person' means 'individual,' and that is precisely what it does not mean in this context. 'Substance' is also a difficult word, implying something solid and material. . .then the word 'begotten.' . . . Any translation into Gujarati would imply a sexual relationship, and would cause misunderstanding to a Hindu and scandal to a Muslim.[13]

selves ill at ease among their partly Americanized kindred and feel compelled to organize new denominations which will be truer to the Old World customs."[14] Thus, denominationalism is born of social sources as well as conquests for theological purity. Niebuhr may overstate his case, but careful, honest scrutiny of church history leads to the conclusion that some church wars heralded in the name of theology are in actuality confrontations of culture.

The theological enterprise, then, is one of the dimensions in which the church reflects that it is a social institution. Theology, as the on-going attempt to systematize and apply revealed truth as interpreted by a particular people, reflects socio-cultural knowledge and needs. Such an agenda is inherently fraught with syncretistic temptations. But the great solace of the Christian church is that God has clearly spoken in the incarnate Word and the written Word, both of which serve as the ultimate content and test of the church's thought in every age and in every culture. It is the possession of this revealed truth that makes the church different from all other social institutions.

The Church's Policy and Structure

No human organization can exist without structure and polity. A church may be highly anti-institutional and informal,

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When the Westminster Confession was composed in 1646 the words were carefully chosen in light of that social situation—namely a context in which the church felt the need to distinguish its doctrine and church government from that of Roman Catholicism. But to impose that same type of theological language on another culture may be a travesty.

Evangelicals, who strongly affirm the authority of Scripture, must be quick to point out that not every socio-cultural expression of theology is acceptable. There are heterodox theologies which, though they may be culturally relevant, are not biblically faithful. Each rendition of theology must find its ultimate origins in the Word and must be continually tested by that Word. Though the issues, language, categorization, and specific applications of a theology will be reflective of a socio-cultural milieu, the meaning must be analogous to the meaning of Scripture's own language, categories, and applications.

While the church must always guard against theologies that do not reflect revealed truth, it must also take care not to judge a theology as heresy simply because it employs different language and categories of thought. Many church splits and denominational schisms have been championed under the guise of wrong versus right theology. But as H. Richard Niebuhr has documented in *The Social Sources of Denominationalism,* the multiplicity of Christian groups has emerged not so much over theological differences as underlying social differences. Niebuhr attempts to show that economic status, nationalism, sectionalism, ethnic differences, and race have all been contributing factors leading to schism and new denominations. As an example, Niebuhr notes that language change (from native to English) was the covert cause of divisiveness in the Dutch Reformed, German Lutheran, and German Reformed Churches, even though the issues were touted as theological in nature. The inclination of some immigrants toward conformity to new cultural customs caused others to "find themselves ill at ease among their partly Americanized kindred and feel compelled to organize new denominations which will be truer to the Old World customs."[14] Thus, denominationalism is born of social sources as well as conquests for theological purity. Niebuhr may overstate his case, but careful, honest scrutiny of church history leads to the conclusion that some church wars heralded in the name of theology are in actuality confrontations of culture.

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No human organization can exist without structure and polity. A church may be highly anti-institutional and informal, but it will not maintain itself without some structure, regulation, and exercise of power. In this sense the church is a social institution like any other social grouping. It may plead its uniqueness, and well it should, but like all human organizations its political structure corresponds in identifiable ways to its socio-cultural matrix. The political structure of the church may be defined as "the patterns of relationships and action through which policy is determined and social power exercised."[15]

Throughout Western church history three main types of church polity have existed—episcopal, presbyterian, and congregational. The pivotal issue in distinguishing these three types is their locus of power or authority. In the past, adherents of each type have declared their polity to be the biblical or God-given one.[16] Close scrutiny of Scripture, however, reveals that while there may be elements of each type in the Bible, no clear-cut form of church government is set forth. As Gordon Fee notes in his analysis of church order in The Pastoral Epistles,

> One must ruefully admit that we are left with far more questions about church order than answers. (Surely this whole perspective should have been questioned long ago simply on the existential grounds that such diverse groups as Roman Catholics, Plymouth Brethren and Presbyterians all use the PE [Pastoral Epistles] to support their ecclesiastical structures.[17]

Moreover, analysis of church history reveals that each type came to prominence in a particular socio-historical context. More specifically, each polity type bears striking resemblance to a construction of civil government and emerged in the context of that type of state rule. Therefore, the explanation for church structures is far more sociological in nature than theological.

In episcopalian polity the primary power and authority re-

sides with the bishops (the *episkopoi*), who are regarded in some traditions as successors in the line of apostolic authority. This is an hierarchical approach in which power moves from the top down by means of graduation or rank among church officials. Episcopalian polity has found variable expression within Anglican, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and to some degree Methodist churches. While its adherents have appealed to a New Testament order of apostles, bishops, pastors and deacons to support this approach, it is sociologically significant that episcopalian polity corresponds to a monarchical form of statehood. It is likely that the episcopacy development during the late Roman Empire reflected in part the familiar hierarchical patterns of civil government. When episcopalian polity gained new momentum during the sixteenth century English Reformation, it was clearly embedded in a strong political monarchy deemed to be legitimized and ordained by God.

Rather than defending one polity as more biblical in its origins than another, it may be more honest to acknowledge the socio-cultural roots of each type. In turn, the appropriate use of a given structure is probably best determined by the cultural context. In a tribal society where elders make community decisions, church structure should then be roughly analogous to existing community and political power, an adequate polity will likely include some features of congregationalism.

Utilizing cultural motifs does not preclude a search for biblical guidelines relative to church government. New Testament leadership qualifications and the revolutionary servanthood model for those leaders are among the divine principles that should permeate all church polities. The use of power and authority in the Christian community must differ radically from the power ploys of society, for as Jesus put it, "The greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves" (Luke 22:26). But it is quite conceivable that Jesus' approach to power and authority can be applied to all three polity types.

Evangelicals must be quick to point out that not every socio-cultural expression of theology is acceptable. There are heterodox theologies which, though they may be culturally relevant, are not biblically faithful.

Presbyterian polity is a representative form of government with power residing in both representative hierarchies and local congregations. Finding expression in the Reformed tradition, presbyterian structure incorporates concepts of representation, delegation, and systems of checks and balances. Normally a session or consistory is elected by the congregation to govern the major affairs of the local church. A presbytery, composed of all pastors and one ruling elder from each congregation in a local area, functions to both legitimize and limit the powers of any local congregation. This ecclesiastical structure is roughly equivalent to a republic or parliamentary form of civil government. Although adherents may wish to believe that presbyterianism is the biblical pattern, it is significant that the polity emerged in those areas where ideas of political representation were gaining popularity. For example, in Geneva and throughout Switzerland dimensions of representation and parliamentarianism were emerging just as the Swiss Reformation began. The Reformed church adopted these ideas and gave them further impetus in society, so that Presbyterian polity then helped extend notions of Republicanism in some Western countries.

In congregational polity authority and power rests with the members of a local congregation. The only designated authority other than the congregation is Christ Himself. As Eric Jay puts it:

> Authority resides in the congregation itself which receives it immediately from Christ and may exercise it immediately . . . . The ministers, however, possess their power through the congregation, and cannot, therefore, be said to exercise their power "immediately." As the congregation has power to call, test, and ordain its officers, so it has power to depose them if they prove unworthy.[18]

These self-governing churches usually own their own property, often write their own by-laws and constitutions, and associate with the larger church (such as a denomination) in terms of a loose fellowship. Although congregationalists often argue that local church autonomy is the New Testament way, it is important to note that these churches emerged in the context of political democracy and bear the hallmarks of all democratic, voluntary institutions.

Sociological factors not only account for the emergence of given polity types, but generate continual change and adaptation within those types. This is clearly seen in the North American context. Due to a national ethos accentuating democratization and individuality, episcopal structures have been modified in the direction of more diffuse power and thus greater congregational participation in decision making. Because of increased bureaucratization and specialization within the culture, congregationalism has experienced greater hierarchical and structural solidification. Paul Harrison in *Authority and Power in the Free Church Tradition* examines the effects of implementing specialized tasks within congregational church settings. In studying the American Baptist Convention, Harrison notes that pure congregationalism is often compromised for the sake of efficiency. When a decision is pressing and authorized directives from the congregation or delegation are not available, an individual or small group of leaders is forced to assume authority and make the decision.[19] In this way bureaucracy begins to emerge and appropriate some of the power that constitutionally resides with the congregation or delegated bodies. This ecclesiastical process is most evident within cultures that eulogize efficiency and specialization.

Socio-cultural influences upon church structure can be good, bad or neutral from a normative perspective. To make a value judgment about society's impact requires knowledge of both Scripture and sociological processes. Ministers and church leaders need some sociological understanding in order to assimilate acceptable patterns and structures and to reject those patterns and structures which are incompatible with the nature of the church.

The church must corporately demonstrate that it is more than just another social institution. Its structural patterns and uses of power should reveal its call as a new society in the midst of an old and fallen one. But the church cannot escape bearing the marks of its social context, some of which will be manifest in its ecclesiastical polity and structure. One of the enduring challenges facing the church is to fill those familiar social patterns and structures with new meaning and Christ-

like behavior.

Style of Expression

Worship, fellowship, evangelism, instruction, and service are all God-ordained purposes of the church. Precisely how these tasks are to be accomplished, however, is not divinely mandated. Every church develops its own style which in part reflects the culture and personalities of its people.

Paradoxically, the style of expression adopted to carry out these basic ecclesiastical tasks functions simultaneously to unify and divide people. Particular styles of worship or evangelism serve as vehicles to engender a sense of kinship among people. Parishioners grow familiar with the words, demeanor, and spirit of these activities and therefore feel akin to others who identify with them as well. But modes of expression can also be divisive in that some Christians inevitably feel alienated from certain language, hymns, liturgies, and forms. Such persons may not be rejecting the church's message but rather the cultural expression selected to convey that message.

Because there is an objective Word we are not lost in a maze of cultural relativities. There is ultimate truth and final authority against which all human thought can and must be judged. But our theology must not be confused with eternal truth.

It is vitally important to recognize the socio-cultural forces which help shape styles of expression within the church. This in no way minimizes the God-centered orientation of each expression but rather acknowledges that God uses diverse cultural forms. Two specific expressions will serve to illustrate this point—conversion experience and worship.

Conversion involves a turning from one oath to another. Theologically it represents the human turning from sin to righteousness, from self to Christ, from idolatry to the living God, or from an old way of life to Christ's new way of life. Conversion portrays the human side of the salvation process, whereas terms like justification and redemption portray more the divine side. By referring to the human side of salvation I do not mean to minimize God's work but rather to emphasize that throughout Scripture the word conversion focuses on the changes within the individual involved in the salvific process. The profile of the conversion experience varies from person to person, depending on his/her psychological makeup and cultural background.

In *The Varieties of Religious Experience* William James notes two kinds of conversion experience, volitional and self-surrender. In volitional conversion "the regenerative change is usually gradual, and consists in the building up, piece by piece, of a new set of moral and spiritual habits."[20] In this type there is no specific known time of conversion. By contrast self-surrender conversion is an instantaneous experience marked by a dramatic change from the old to the new.

Biblical descriptions do not conform to one exclusive style of conversion. The divine elements of forgiveness, justification, and regeneration are universal but the sequential profile of human turning is particularistic, depending on individual and cultural factors. Western revivalistic traditions have often accentuated a "sawdust trail" or highly emotional, instantaneous conversion. But in reality many committed Christians have no such analogous experience, nor can they point to a time of conversion. Missiologists have noted that in some cultures a whole tribe or village may undergo corporate conversion. From our individualistic vantage point this may seem problematic, but for a people with strong corporate and community world views it is the only imaginable route. In such settings individuals would rarely "turn" alone, but rather in the context of family and community to which they are organically connected.

Human conversion experiences should never be forced into a monolithic mold, for God works with each person in light of their own socio-cultural context and psychological disposition. As missiologist Hans Kasdorf puts it, "God wants to touch and change persons within their own cultural and sociological milieu. Conversion thus becomes the critical point at which the supracultural God meets with culture-bound humanity."[21]

Worship is a second evidence that styles of expression are largely dependent on culture and personality types. The goal of worship is universal, but the precise means by which the worshipper is led to meaningful praise and adoration should reflect familiar socio-cultural patterns of expression.

Styles of worship can be analyzed along a continuum from highly structured/formal to unstructured/informal.[22] It is possible, of course, to be informal and highly structured but generally speaking the preceding categories represent the prevailing polar types. There has been a tendency for those in pietistic traditions to accentuate the unstructured/informal pole, for it is regarded as symbolic of real, "heart-felt" faith in which the Spirit of God moves freely and spontaneously. Highly structured/formal services are judged to be spiritually dead. On the other hand Christians from more liturgical traditions have viewed their style as conducive to true worship that avoids the "superficial emotionalism" of pietism.

Rather than rendering theological judgments on divergent styles of expression, it is better to view each type as reflective of its socio-cultural context. For example, there seems to be a relationship between what one does during the week and how one worships God on Sunday. Generally speaking, many blue collars who experience regimentation, sameness, and clockwork during the week crave a more spontaneous and emotional worship experience. They seek release from regimentation and predictable order. Conversely, white collar workers who must cope with irregular schedules and unpredictable changes of events during the week tend to take refuge in predictable ecclesiastical form, order and structure at the end of their week. Moreover, blue collar culture finds folk-type music (broadly defined) more akin to its aesthetic tastes, while an educated white collar culture is more at home with the classics. These culturally linked worship style differences are well illustrated in Liston Pope's classical work, *Millhands and Preachers*—a study of churches and economics in the mill town of Gastonia, North Carolina. In contrasting blue collar mill churches with the white collar uptown churches Pope states:

> Religious services in a mill church are, correspondingly, more intense in mood than those found elsewhere. Lack of social security is compensated for by fervor of congregational response. . . .Music is more concrete and rhythmic; it conjures up pictures rather than describes attitudes or ideas, and it appeals to the hands and feet more than to the head. The entire service in mill churches has an enthusiasm lacking in the more restrained worship of the "respectable people" uptown.[23]

Certainly there are potential forms and styles inconducive to the worship of God. Not every available means is compatible with our understanding of the nature of God and worship. But the human activity of worship is not accomplished through supracultural means. Worship styles which approximate patterns found in the socio-cultural milieu are most effective in ushering worshippers into the presence of God. As in all styles of Spiritual expression, worship will and must use appropriate, available forms relevant to the social setting.

Conclusion

The church is the Body of Christ, a holy nation, and a royal priesthood. It is indeed God's new society in the midst of an old and fallen one. The church of Christ must unabashedly verbalize that claim and give concrete evidence to such in its pilgrimage within the world. But the church can never be acultural or asocial. It always exists within a society and intentionally or otherwise reflects cultural motifs in its theology, polity and styles of expression.

The aim of the church is not to purge itself of all identifying features of its culture. Rather it is to wisely encorporate those cultural themes and patterns which give flesh and blood to God's transcendent message. It is to prudently reject those cultural aspects that are incongruent with the faith and distort the essence of God's message and work.

The church is a social institution. Sociologists can analyze its descriptive features in much the same manner as any other social grouping such as family, state, or community. It is incumbent upon the church to demonstrate that in its earthly manifestation it is more than a social institution—that it is indeed the Body of Jesus Christ.

[1] James Gustafson, *Treasure in Earthen Vessels: The Church as a Human Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 14.
[2] For an analysis of these concepts see G. Linwood Barney, "The Supracultural and the Cultural," in *The Gospel and Frontier Peoples*, edited by R. Pierce Beaver (South Pasadena: William Carey, 1973), pp. 48-55.
[3] For a good survey of the possibilities and limitations of contextualization see John Stott and Robert Coote, eds., *Down to Earth: Studies in Christianity and Culture* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1980).
[4] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Scribners, 1958), p. 40.
[5] Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 3 Vols. (New York: Scribners, 1899), 1:10.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 13.
[7] Augustus H. Strong, *Systematic Theology* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1907), p. 2.
[8] David F. Wells, "An Evangelical Theology: The Painful Transition from *Theoria* to *Praxis*" in George Marsden (ed.), *Evangelicalism and Modern America* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1984), p. 85.
[9] Note, for example, the difference between James' treatment of the term "justification" and Paul's. The two are not contradictory, but because language is symbol two writers may mean different things by the same word.
[10] See Peter Toon (ed.), *Puritan Eschatology* (London: James Clarkes, 1970).
[11] Stanley Gundry, "Hermeneutics or *Zeitgeist* as the Determining Factor in the History of Eschatologies," *Journal of Evangelical Theological Society* (May, 1977), p. 50.
[12] John Jefferson Davis, *The Necessity of Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1978), p. 172.
[13] R.H.S. Boyd, *India and the Latin Captivity of the Church* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974), p. 36.
[14] H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (New York: Meridian, 1929), pp. 213-214.
[15] Gustafson, p. 31.
[16] A good example is the Puritan "Cambridge Platform" of 1648 which claimed, "The parties of Church-Government are all of them exactly described in the Word of God. . .and therefore to continue one and the same, unto the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." Williston Walker, *The Creeds and Platforms of Congregationalism* (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1960), p. 203.
[17] Gordon Fee, "Reflections on Church Order in the Pastoral Epistles." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* (June, 1985), p. 142.
[18] Eric C. Jay, *The Church: Its Changing Image Through Twenty Centuries* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1977), p. 214.
[19] Paul M. Harrison, *Authority and Power in the Free Church Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), pp. 98 ff.
[20] William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Mentor, 1958), p. 169. It should be noted that James' typology is drawn from E.O. Starbuck's *The Psychology of Religion.*
[21] Hans Kasdorf, *Christian Conversion in Context* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1980), p. 29.
[22] A different but related analysis is set forth by Andrew Greeley with his notions of Apollonian and Dionysian orientations in religious ritual. The Apollonian orientation stresses logical understanding and reason in worship, while the Dionysian is emotively orientated. See Greeley's *The Denominational Society* (Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman, 1972).
[23] Liston Pope, *Millhands and Preachers* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942), p. 86.

Normativity, Relevance and Relativism

by Harvie M. Conn

Can one believe in the Bible as the only infallible rule of faith and practice and, at the same time, affirm its culturally-oriented particularity? Must the evangelical tremble in fear every time he hears scholars ask, "How does our understanding of the cultural setting of the Corinthian church affect the way we understand Paul's appeal to women to be silent in the church?" Will our current sensitivity to the New Testament as a word addressed to our century relativize our parallel commitment to it as a word addressed also to the first century?

These are the questions addressed in this article. We do not intend to lay out particular hermeneutical rules to help us in this inquiry. We will touch on them but only as they aid us in our larger research. Nor will we cover the whole sweep of scholarship. Our consideration will be on discussions within the evangelical community.

Many of our case studies will come from those texts central to a study of the place of women in culture. Much current evangelical thinking on the Bible's particularity has revolved around these texts. It is not, however, the issue of the Bible's approach to women that we seek to resolve. Our attention is directed to the larger question of the Bible and its culturally-related character. We examine these texts (and others) only to the degree they relate to this larger agenda.

Harvie M. Conn is Professor of Missions at Westminster Seminary and a TSF Bulletin Resource Scholar.

The Evangelical Agenda of the Past

Evangelicals, in a sense, have wrestled with the problems associated with cultural relativity in earlier decades. Linked more with terms like relevance and applicability, the questions seemed easier then. Is foot washing a continuing ceremony? Must women wear hats or veils in church? Are there times in the official ministry of the church when a woman can teach adult males? What about the use of tobacco and the drinking of alcoholic beverages in moderation?

Then, as now, answers have not always been the same. Evangelicals, in seeking to uphold the infallible authority of Scripture, sought a variety of ways to account for the diversity of opinion. Some noted that mistakes can occur in applying a scriptural injunction to conditions other than those to which it was truly applicable. Cultural distance between dusty roads and concrete sidewalks translates foot washing into humble Christian service for others. The passage of time transforms the hat from a symbol of modesty to one of fashion.

It was also noted that "there are injustices which are simultaneously appropriate to certain undertakings and circumstances and not to others."[1] The same Jesus who told his disciples at the Last Supper to buy a sword (Luke 22:36) a few hours later warned the same group, "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matt. 26:32). Biblical texts, it was argued, cannot be applied as a universal plaster for any

conceivable condition. Their use depends upon their specific applicability.

Often resorted to in such debates was the concept of *adiaphora* (literally, "things indifferent"). Here, under the rubric of Christian liberty, were included those agenda items thought to be non-fundamentals of the faith. Generally ethical and not doctrinal issues, they became centers of discussion about which charity toward differences was to be exercised. The popular mind regarded them as peripheral to the centrality of the gospel, disputed areas of the Christian life over which unanimous agreement could not be reached in the community. Dominated by a North American fundamentalist mentality, the disputed areas included such issues as dancing, theatre attendance, the use of tobacco and alcoholic beverages.

In many respects, these responses carried a large measure of truth, and still do. But the development of biblical studies has corrected and complicated the situation.

Contemporary Discussion

Earlier scholarship carried on these discussions in the name of "hermeneutics," the discipline that taught us skills in exegesis, in determining the meaning of the original author. "Application," an afterthought of this, was a homiletical art focusing on the relatively simple extension of exegesis to contemporary faith and life. No guidelines, however, were available to leap the gulf between exegesis and application. No discipline existed to bridge the gap between the two worlds of then and now, there and here.

The awareness of that gap came to the attention of evangelical theology outside its camp, through the work of the early Karl Barth, Rudolf Bultmann and those who followed them. These scholars, though disagreeing in many areas, had joined in emphasizing the kerygmatic nature of the New Testament, the importance of the interpreting subject and his or her pre-understanding in the act or process of communication. Making use of neo-orthodox dependence on existentialism, they saw the New Testament as more than some "objectively perceived" word from God. It did not convey timeless, eternal information unrelated to situations and hearers. The objectivism of liberal (or fundamentalist) scholarship was repudiated; it could not do justice to the biblical text.

Evangelical scholarship could not listen to these men. Their questioning of the authenticity of the New Testament message, their resorting to existentialism to provide a relevant word from Paul or Jesus, were trails down which the evangelical properly did not go. But as a side effect, their hermeneutical call for attention to how to speak the word of the Lord in the twentieth century was lost.

Only in the last decades of biblical research has the significance of the hermeneutical issue been recognized by the evangelical. Combined with a new sensitivity to what has been called "reader-response" and audience criticism, hermeneutics increasingly has come to be seen "as the operative engagement or interaction between the horizon of the reader. The problem of hermeneutics was the problem of two horizons."[2]

The two horizons were those of the biblical text and those of the twentieth century reader. And the hermeneutical question became not simply, "What did the Scripture mean to those to whom it was first given?," but rather, "What does the Scripture mean to me?" The earlier question of relevance has now become an essential part of the quest for biblical meaning. We are called to "grasp first of all what Scripture *meant* as communication from its human writers speaking on God's behalf to their own envisaged readers, and from that what it *means* for us."[3] The question, "What do these texts mean *to us*?," has given the old question of relevance a new importance. With it we now search for the nature of biblical "meaning" itself.[4]

In formulating the issue this way, the evangelical has not capitulated to the Barthian formula that Scripture becomes the Word of God to its readers and hearers. The biblical horizon remains the norm of the twentieth century setting. It is translation we undertake, not transformation. Whether we begin our hermeneutical adventure with problems raised by our world or with a struggle to understand the biblical author's intended meaning, we cannot finish the search without resorting to the final judge of our struggle, the Scriptures themselves. Whether we examine the text or our context, we are always aware that the text is examining us.

In this process, the heart of the hermeneutical task takes on a significance it did not have forty years ago. That heart does not lie simply in the effort to find the biblical "principles" that emerge out of the historical meaning of each passage. The Bible does not passively lie there while we search it for theories that we later fit realistically into our setting. The Word is a divine instrument of action. And our hermeneutical task is to see how it applies to each of us in the cultural context and social setting we occupy in God's redemptive history. We are involved in looking for the place where the horizons of the text and the interpreter intersect or engage.

Drawn into this search for fusion, then, has come a new sensitivity to human cultures and their role in the process of understanding. Both horizons are embedded in different cultures, sometimes comparable, sometimes not. How is meaning found when what is common sense in one culture is not common sense in another? The exhortation of Paul to obey one's master in everything (Col. 3:22) is addressed to a world of silent, involuntary slaves. But what does it mean in a culture where employers are to some extent partners in work with their employees? "If we say that the biblical command means today that we should give appropriate respect and loyalty to employers rather than unconditional obedience, are we watering it down, or are we rather expressing the nub of the matter in terms appropriate to modern working conditions?"[5]

A linguist asks a group made up of Africans and missionaries to tell him the main point of the story of Joseph in the Old Testament. The Europeans speak of Joseph as a man who remained faithful to God no matter what happened to him. The Africans, on the other hand, point to Joseph as a man who, no matter how far he travelled, never forgot his family. Differing cultural backgrounds prompted each of the two answers. Which is legitimate understanding? Are both?

In American hippie culture of the 1960s, long hair on boys had become the symbol of a new era, for some a sign of rebellion against the status quo. "For Christians to wear that symbol, especially in light of I Corinthians 11:14, 'Does not nature itself teach you that for a man to wear long hair is degrading to him' (RSV), seemed like an open defiance of God Himself. Yet most of those who quoted that text against youth culture allowed for Christian women to cut their hair short (despite verse 15), did not insist on women's heads being covered in worship, and never considered that 'nature' came about by a very *un*natural means—a haircut."[6] Have our cultural, social meanings been read back into the author's intended meanings?

A New Agenda of Problems

From this discussion has emerged a new set of questions or, at least, an old set with new emphases. What are some of them?

1. Given the historical/cultural nature of divine revelation,

how can we better understand the process? And how do we relate this process to the inerrancy of the written revelation?

Up to the recent past, evangelicals have been able to keep separate the questions in inerrancy and hermeneutics. The affirmation of biblical veracity was seen as the foundation for understanding the record, a given presupposition isolated enough from exegetical study to stand on its own as a touchstone for truth. The touchstone still stands. But its isolation is questioned. The issue of inerrancy has become for many "essentially the question of *how* the evangelical is going to *do* theology while holding to biblical authority."[7]

This closer link between norm and the interpretation of norm has come as scholarship has paid more attention to the occasional character of Scripture. This is more obvious in dealing with the letters of Paul, for example. It is less obvious, but also equally true, of historical narratives like the Books of Chronicles or Luke-Acts. They are not first of all systematic, theological treatises, compendia collections of Paul's theology or Luke's. The theology they present has been called by some "task theology," theology oriented to pastoral issues, born out of the struggles of the church as it seeks to understand its task in God's history and man's world.

malaise.

Post-Bultmannian scholarship has, however, reinforced the warning against a purist self-projection of the interpreter's consciousness on the text. The interpreter brings his or her own built-in limitations to the process of understanding. Meanings are provided by pre-judgments or pre-understanding and become part of the hermeneutical search.[9] These warnings have also been underlined by a growing sensitivity on the part of the evangelical toward cultural anthropology and its awareness of the place of cultural settings in creating meaning and significance.[10]

So, "if the social context we move in tends to be politically conservative, it is surprising how, when we read the Bible, it seems to support separation of church and state, decentralized government, a 'no-work-no-food' concept, strong military, separation of the races, etc. On the other hand, others find it easy to see how concerned the Bible is with social problems, activism, poverty programs, integration of the races, demilitarism, and the general criticism of middle-America, especially when they live within a context of political leftism or liberalism."[11]

In short, we are all biased already in our thinking and

Previously formulated evangelical norms in this search for guidelines and hermeneutical clues can lead astray. Much of it was formulated in earlier discussions and still reflects the background of that agenda.

To understand their theological intention, then, the reader or hearer must understand the original intent of the text. The cultural particularity of the biblical message must be acknowledged in our search for its message for all people pf all cultures. Whether we speak of the "culture bound" character of Scripture or of its "culture relatedness," we are recognizing that "the eternal message of God's salvation was incarnated in a specific, cultural language of an ancient, historical people."[8]

But given this reality, can we never find permanent, culturally universal, normative teaching in Scripture? If cultural factors constantly interact to shape the message of Scripture, does not the authority of the text die the death of a thousand qualifications?

2. Given the cultural, social and world-view dispositions of the interpreter, how can we ever penetrate either to a true understanding of the text or of its significance in the here and now? How do we keep our private meanings from constantly intruding into the text as the final word?

In the past evangelicals have shared with liberal scholarship a deep appreciation for the merits and necessity of historico-grammatical exegesis in the exposition of Scripture. Often characterizing it as "objective" research, the evangelical has properly defined the rules for this research in terms of grammatical interpretation, formal analysis and sensitivity to the redemptive history that surrounds and defines the text.

Yet there have also been warnings against the ease with which the goal of "objectivity" can be reached. The work of Cornelius Van Til in the area of apologetics has called attention repeatedly to the myth of "objectivity." The translator engaged in eavesdropping on the Scripture in the world comes with what Van Til has called presuppositions that effect the process of listening. Van Til's warning has not been well heeded in the evangelical community. The popularity of a view of human reason as an hermeneutical instrument relatively untouched by sin or culture has helped to create an evangelical

knowing, bringing assumptions structured by our cultural preceptions, even by the language symbols we use to interpret reality. "We are, that is, 'interested' before we begin to read a text and remain active as we read it. We belong, to a great extent through language, to the theological, social, and psychological traditions that have moulded us as subjects and without whose mediation we could understand nothing."[12] D.A. Carson puts it bluntly: "No human being living in time and speaking any language can ever be entirely culture-free about anything."[13]

In sum, the idea that the interpreter is a neutral observer of biblical data is a myth. How then do we avoid hermeneutical discoveries based largely on what we have assumed? If what we hear from the text, and how we act upon what we have heard, is so heavily influenced by the baggage we carry with us in the process, how do we avoid the relativism of selective listening and selective obedience?

3. Given the hermeneutical gap separating the biblical world from ours, what interpretive clues will help us cross legitimately from what is culturally specific in our world? What are the limitations of "application?" How do we measure the comparable contexts of at least two cultural horizons?

How, for example, do we judge the wisdom of President Ronald Reagan's 1985 usage of Luke 14:31-32 in his support of administrative proposals for a continued military buildup? Reagan listens to Jesus asking, "What king, going to encounter another king in war, will sit down first and take counsel whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes with twenty thousand?" And then the President crosses the hermeneutical gap by commenting, "I don't think the Lord that blessed this country as no other country has ever been blessed intends for us to some day negotiate because of our weakness."[14] Did Reagan stumble in the gap?

In the past evangelicals have dealt with such insecurities by appealing to a "plain meaning" in Scripture, a meaning that is clear and unambiguous. Cultural factors may "clarify"

that plain meaning, but they may not challenge it. A recent statement warns, "If an understanding of some biblical cultural context or some contemporary cultural form is used to contravene the plain meaning of the text, Scripture itself is no longer the authority.[15]

Increasingly, however, this appeal to "plain meaning" is being questioned by scholars within the evangelical community. It is said to be oriented basically to only one of the two horizons under discussion, that of the text itself. And it therefore assumes that our interpretation can fairly safely correspond with that of the authors of Scripture. But it makes it very easy for those interpreters or communicators unaware of the pervasive influence of their own culture on their own interpretations to slip unconsciously into the assumption that our interpretational reflexes will give us the meaning that the original author intended.

For example, when Jesus refers to Herod as a fox (Luke 13:32), our contemporary cultural reflex can interpret the plain meaning to be sly. But in the biblical world, the reference may be intended to signify treachery (cf. v. 31). When a well-off, white North American pastor or scholar reads, "Blessed are you who are poor" (Luke 6:20), hermeneutical reflexes tend to interpret the poor as the pious, the humble, those who do not seek their own wealth and life in earthly things. An American black believer, reflecting on years of racism and oppression, will identify more quickly with what are perceived to be the political and economic implications of the term. But, against the background of the culture of the Old Testament, the category may take on significance different from both readings.[16]

When Paul speaks of the husband as the "head" of the wife (Eph. 5:23), our hermeneutical reflexes think of a "boss" or "general manager" in a corporation. The dominant image becomes authority as lawful power to act, to control or use. And while something resembling this idea is argued as its exclusive sense in the New Testament[17], the term is also said to be used as that which nourishes the rest of the body, the fountain of life which feeds the body (Eph. 4:15-16, Col. 2:19). Which meaning is appropriate in Ephesians 5:23 cannot be determined by the cultural connotations we give it now, but by its usage in the passage. The plain meaning is not so plain.

A call for the plain meaning of Scripture assumes too easily a larger measure of cultural agreement between our two horizons than is sometimes there. And where the Scriptures use cultural, verbal symbols that are familiar to us (foxes, the poor, head), the danger of hermeneutical error becomes even larger. We may assume a number of cultural agreements on meaning which are not intended in the text. It is exegesis of the text and of our own culturally intended meanings that will provide a way out, not the plain meaning of only one partner in the understanding process.[18] With these assertions, we return to our earlier observation concerning evangelical hermeneutics: mistakes can occur in applying a scriptural injunction to conditions other than those to which it was truly applicable.

Given this obligation for a bicultural approach to hermeneutics (complicated by the presence of a third cultural set of perceptions when we begin communicating to others), does not the biblical message to our world lose its timelessness? Does not the normativity of Scripture disappear in placing undue emphasis on the meaning the text has for the people who read it? Are cultural universals dislocated in our study of the culturally specific?

The three questions we have cited (and there are more) raise legitimate questions about relativism. And they cannot be ignored. "What constitutes a valid interpretation if we loosen up the link between text and meaning? How is the Scripture our authority if its meaning for us is different from what the text actually says? What is to prevent this kind of two-sided hermeneutics from becoming a cloak for Scripture twisting and subversion? Have we not landed ourselves in the liberal camp by a circuitous route? Is it not fatal to give up total continuity between what the text says and what it means for us? Is not the door wide open to private revelations in interpretative guise?"[19]

Living in the Hermeneutical Spiral

Following the lead of Hans-Georg Gadamer, scholars associated with what has been called "the New Hermeneutic" have described this process of understanding as a hermeneutical circle. But the model has its problems. Evangelicals have feared that to bind text and exegete into a circle is to create a relationship of mutuality where "what is true for me" becomes the criterion of "what is true."[20] Instead, it has become more popular among evangelicals to speak of a hermeneutical spiral.

Behind the idea of the Spiral is the idea of Progress in understanding; it is closer to the biblical image of sanctification, of growth in grace. Within the spiral, two complementary processes are taking place. As our cultural setting is matched with the text and the text is matched with the cultural setting, the text progressively reshapes the questions we bring to it and, in turn, our questions force us to look at the text in a fresh way. As J.I. Packer puts it, "Within the circle of presuppositionally conditioned interpretation it is always possible for dialogue and critical questioning to develop between what in the text does not easily or naturally fit in with our presupposition and those presuppositions themselves, and for both our interpretation and our presuppositions to be modified as a result."[21]

The interpreter or communicator comes to the text with an awareness of concerns stemming from his or her cultural background or personal situation. "These concerns will influence the questions which are put to the Scriptures. What is received back, however, will not be answers only, but more questions. As we address Scripture, Scripture addresses us. We find that our culturally conditioned presuppositions are being challenged and our questions corrected. In fact, we are compelled to reformulate our previous questions and to ask fresh ones. . .In the process of interaction our knowledge of God and our response to his will are continuously being deepened. The more we come to know him, the greater our responsibility becomes to obey him in our situation, and the more we respond obediently, the more he makes himself known."[22] The process is a kind of upward spiral. And in the spiral the Bible always remains central and normative.

How does one avoid overstepping boundary limitations within the spiral? Are there guidelines that will help us?

False Leads

Previously formulated evangelical norms in this search for guidelines and hermeneutical clues can, we believe, lead astray. Much of it was formulated in earlier discussions and still reflects the background of that agenda. The battles fought in these verbal symbols were significant and still are. But, in the contemporary search, they can sometimes mislead.

One problematic reference is the term "principles," usually linked with adjectives like "eternal," "abiding," "timeless" or "normative." Often the term is associated properly with a desire to defend the integrity and canonicity of the biblical record. It continues to find use in responding to those practitioners of the "New Hermeneutic" who move toward subjectivity in their tendency to relegate the quest for the original author's meaning to a secondary place in the spiral. Behind

the term lies a commitment to the ultimate authority of Scripture and to the certainty of hermeneutical answers in seeking understanding. None of these concerns can be laid aside.

At the same time, the term can also carry meanings into the debate that do not aid in the discussion. If associated with the concept of the plain meaning of Scripture and an appeal to the clarity and sufficiency of Scripture, it can minimize the complexity in the Bible. Too often the word can be used to convey the implication (intended or not) that minimal modification of these "principles" will help us move with relative safety from our world to the biblical world and back again.

Linked to this usage is often a sharp distinction made between what are regarded as normative commands in Scripture and culturally conditioned injunctions. The interpreter's task is then seen as determining in which category a particular imperative or admonition belongs. The assumption is that the normative command yields a cultural universal, whereas the culturally conditioned injunctions are limited in their movement from then to now.

Again, there is much value in this distinction. Behind it is most assuredly the desire to maintain the authority of the Word in the face of some sort of cultural relativizing of the commands of Scripture. And flowing out of it can come related guidelines of much use for hermeneutics. At the same time, this distinction can easily encourage polarization. It appears to assume that historical and cultural particularity are essentially limitations, making all knowledge tentative and conditioned. Finding cultural universals then demands a search for those commands of Scripture with no, or as few as possible, cultural qualifications.

But all reading is necessarily culture-dependent, both in the text and in its translation by the reader. Even our human commonality as image of God (Gen. 1:27-28) does not eliminate that dependency. There is a "pre-understanding" written into the Bible as a partner in the hermeneutical dialogue that must be recognized. The Scriptures were not written only for our culture or for all cultures, but also for the ancient culture. And they assume, even in what to us are perceivable universals, a number of cultural givens which surround and amplify the text itself. Even such cultural universals as the Ten Commandments come in a wrapper of cultural conditioning. The prohibition of idolatry assumes a cultural world of polytheistic orientation. The forbidding of taking the name of the Lord in vain is structured in an animistic world where it was felt that word-magic, the manipulation of the world and the gods through some divine name, could be used for blessing or curse.[23]

And there is a further complication to the distinction between cultural universals and culturally conditioned injunctions. It is provided by the second partner in the hermeneutical dialogue, our own cultural understanding. Assuming we accurately assess the Bible's universals, how do we transpose them into our cultural settings with their own cultural ideals? What actions display kindness or self-control (Galatians 5:22-23) in a given setting? Comments a missionary, "An executive in an industrial country is being patient if he waits for someone ten minutes. A Bahinemo of Papua New Guinea would think nothing of waiting two hours. In one village of southern Mindanao, my daughter and I were given gifts equal to a month's wages, as a demonstration of their hospitality. In the U.S. the most lavish hospitality to a stranger seldom adds us to a day's wages."[24]

Perhaps, however, the largest problem with the distinction is that it can possibly lead to a rift between the reader and the text as that reader searches for cultural universals to which he or she feels committed to obey and culturally conditioned injunctions that one believes, in the nature of the case, are less normative. The distinction can have the effect of creating a "canon within the canon." And some evangelical discussions already hint at some danger in this precise area. Plans are made for distinguishing between the "central core" of the biblical message and what is dependent upon or peripheral to it, between what is "inherently moral" and what is not. The motivations behind the distinctions, as we have noted already, are laudable ones. No evangelical wants to deliberately twist the Scripture into any conceivable cultural wax nose. But there may be other distinctions to be made that will safeguard the gospel in a more useful way. If "all the Scriptures" could be utilized by Jesus to explain his ministry (Luke 24:27), surely we, as "witnesses of these things" cannot be restricted in doing any less. Cultural conditioning, maximal or minimal, does not stand in the way of the scribes of Christ seeking to bring forth things new and old from the treasury of their illumined understanding.

The Spirit does not play the role of some "God out of a box," a deus ex machina, undertaking some mechanical, hermeneutic homework assignment. The Holy Spirit is the God who addresses us, not an intermediary between God and us.

Some Clues from the Godward Side of Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics, on the one hand, is a human vocation to rightly handle the message of truth (II Tim. 2:15). In our struggles with Isaiah 53 and Revelation 20, it is still proper to ask, "How can I understand unless someone guides me?" (Acts 8:31).

At the same time, our object of study is the Word of God and the goal of the process is sanctification (II Tim. 3:16-17). And, in this sense, hermeneutics also has a Godward side, a divine participation in the spiral that we cannot forget. The Lord, in the Scriptures, has accomodated Himself to the limits and needs of the human condition. As Father, he baby-talks to his creation in the Bible (Heb. 1:1-2), describing himself in human languages and human images. As Teacher, he fits his infinity to our small measure, bridging the great hermeneutical gap between himself and the creation by descending to meet the limitations of human nature. He is tutor, not tyrant, fitting the instruction where the pupil is. As physician, he stoops to heal the diseased creature. We do not wander through the hermeneutical spiral alone. God has accomodated even his ways of revelation to our condition.[25] And in that Godward accomodation in Scripture, there are guidelines to aid in our manward search for meaning and significance.

1. The most obvious is our recourse to Scripture for hermeneutical stability. Wherever we begin in the spiral, the only proper control for our judgments remains the original intent of the biblical text. "In the Protestant tradition since the Reformation, a central concern of biblical hermeneutics has been that the interpreter allows the text of Scripture to control and mold his or her own judgments and does not subordinate the text to the interpretive tradition to which the interpreter belongs."[26] The parameters of meaning, the outer limits beyond which our search for contemporary significance cannot go, are always defined by the biblical text.

This is easily said but often not as easily done. "Although everyone employs exegesis at times, and although quite often such exegesis is well done, it nontheless tends to be *only* when there is an obvious problem between the biblical texts and modern culture."[27] Witness the massive volume of biblical studies in the last decade centering on women and women's roles in home, church and society. These can be directly traced to the stimulation provided by the issues revolving around women's liberation in the world's cultures. The rise of the Gay Movement has played a similar role in our intense study of those texts dealing with homosexuality.

Hopefully we have reaffirmed one conviction on the part of the reader: Scripture stands, its veracity untainted by either the cultures in which it comes to us or the cultures to which it goes. God's revelation can make use of our cultures but always stands in judgment over them.

None of this is meant to say that learning to think exegetically is the only task in hermeneutics. But it is a basic task. A powerful safeguard against relativism and a barrier to inappropriate "application" remains the priority of exegesis in looking for meaning and significance.

Suppose, for example, in our congregation in Chicago there existed an absolute prohibition against women speaking or preaching in public worship. How would we judge its hermeneutical propriety? One key textual control would be the words of Paul, "Women should remain silent in the churches" (I Cor. 14:34). And our question would be, What did that text mean to the original readers at Corinth? Is it a prohibition "precise, absolute and all-inclusive?" Are its grounds universal, turning "on the difference in sex, and particularly on the relative places given to the sexes in creation and in the fundamental history of the race (the fall)?"[28]

The solution to the dilemma must come from a close examination of the text. What does Paul mean by "speaking" (v. 34)? Is its meaning "simple and natural," an obvious contrast to the silence or not speaking mentioned in the same verse? What of the probable parallel to "speaking" in verse 35, Paul's admonition to the wives "to ask their own husbands at home?" Does this indicate that Paul is not dealing with just any speaking of the women at all but rather with the kind of speaking that can be silenced by the women asking their husbands at home? Is the easiest way to understand the talking, in the light of verse 35, as that of "asking questions," not to preaching, teaching or prophesying?

How are we to understand words like, "they are not allowed to speak but they must be in submission as the Law says?" Is this an appeal to a general law apart from Paul's personal command? Perhaps to the Old Testament, as the term, "law," frequently does? Or to Gen. 3:16? Is not Paul, with this kind of language, stressing the universality of the prohibition?

Exegesis must wrestle with these difficult issues. Is the submission of the women, for example, submission to the husbands or to the law? If the latter, could "the law" be a reference to the order of worship, the women being thus exorted to avoid whatever unseemingly behavior had been disturbing the order of worship at Corinth? Or could it be that verses 34 and 35 are not in fact expressing Paul's own opinion but are quoting perhaps directly from a previous letter to the apostle, the views of one group within the church? The reference to "the law" then could be a reference to "some type of legalistic bondage newly raised by the Jewish community." And verse 36 is Paul's strong repudiation of these views. Or, again, are these verses a commentary on verse 29, "Let two or three prophets speak and let the others weigh what is said?" Women were then, in this view, taking part in judgment of the prophets, in the culturally shameful act of participation in public debate.

None of these alternatives, some more plausible than others, is meant to deny what has been called "the universality of the prohibition." Nor would our choices render the universal culturally relative. Most assuredly the choice would define the nature of the universal prohibition. Is Paul prohibiting all speaking by women in public worship? Or is he perhaps prohibiting the boisterous flaunting of a woman's new-found freedom in Christ and in his worship? Is he prohibiting women from passing judgment on the prophets and leaving themselves and the church open to misunderstanding from "those who are outside?" Or is it simply a judgment against culturally perceived immodest behavior?

Whatever we answer, only one of these alternatives could be used in support of a Chicago church's decision to bar women from teaching in public worship. But whatever our choice, the universalism of the prohibition is not lost in the text's cultural setting. A better understanding of the situation addressed makes more likely the possibility of a better understanding of the "universal" imbedded in the text.

2. Another Godward side to hermeneutics aids in our search for what has been called universals. We speak of the dynamic process of the self-revelation of God recorded in Scripture. There is a history of redemption that sweeps us in unity from the first promise of the gospel in the garden to its fulfillment in the new Jerusalem. God leads history to its redemptive consummation in cultural epochs determined by God's saving acts. And revelation follows that epochal structure, amplifying the unitary message of salvation as redemptive history progresses.

In this history of special revelation, cultural particulars are recognized through their links with God's redemptive epochs. But their significance is kept in place when the interpreter, a participant in the history of redemption, grasps the organic relation of these successive eras. They become part of the God-centered design.

Time and place, then and there, are points in the whole line or continuum of God's progressing work throughout the ages. They do not cloud God's self-disclosure. They are the setting which God gives it and out of which He shapes it. The promise of covenant faithfulness comes to childless Abraham in terms of numberless star children; to an enslaved race in Egypt it takes the form of divine deliverance from oppression (Ex. 3:12). To a David anxious to build a house for God it comes with the return assurance that God will build a house for David (II Sam. 7:11-14). At a meal, cultural eating habits become kingdom designations of the new covenant in the broken body and shed blood of Christ (Luke 22:19-20). God not only gives his transcultural word in culture; he uses the cultural moment and historical time to deliver that word to culture-bound people.

Culture does not simply provide the Lord with sermon illustrations and examples for spiritualizing fodder. It becomes

the providentially controlled matrix out of which his revelation comes to us. Part of the task of the discipline called biblical theology becomes the searching of that cultural particularity for those "universals" that link Rahab's act of faith to ours.

This redemptive history also fuses the horizon of the biblical text to ours. To quote Geerhardus Vos, "we ourselves live just as much in the New Testament as did Peter and Paul and John."[29] We share a common hermeneutical task, those of us "on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come" (I. Cor. 10:11). We are part of the eschatological history of redemption.

Viewed in this light, the traditional sermonic distinctions between explication and application become highly suspect. Scripture presents no truth divorced from reality, no theory, information or doctrine which must be bent towards and applied to genuine life by the effort of preacher or teacher. Every hermeneutical struggle with the word in our cultural setting is, by the nature of redemptive history, "a link in the chain of God's acts" in history; the sermon "extends 'the lines of God's redemptive history to contemporary man.'"[30]

How does one determine what is culturally restricted to the biblical time period and not also to ours? In view of the progressive nature of Scripture, one looks at subsequent revelation and the light it throws on earlier texts. The goal of the development is never the correction of previous errors, for God does not lie. The goal in the consummation of all things, the restoration of creation to what it was intended to be.

Again, the biblical materials on women supply a useful sample. In keeping with the divine accomodation to the word, the Lord allows polygamy, even laying down rules for its regulation (Deut. 21:15-17). He permits divorce because of the hardness of our cultural hearts (Matt. 19:8), in spite of his divine creation intent for lasting monogamy (Gen. 2:24-25, Mark 10:4-9). Even in the New Testament, the pattern continues. Culturally perceived improprieties prompt Paul to warn against married women appearing in worship service with hair uncovered (I Cor. 11:4-7) or "speaking in church" (I Cor. 14:34-35). Our liberty in Christ must not be curtailed, but always it must be exercised with a view to possible cultural misunderstandings by "outsiders" (I Cor. 11:5, 13:14).

And yet, this accomodation is always accompanied by a divine eschatological polemic against the culture, pointing to Christ as the transformer, the re-possessor, of our social settings. Even within the old order, there is an "intrusion ethic," an intrusion into the present of the final order to be brought by Christ. Divorce, though permitted in the old order, is thus re-examined by Christ in the new day of the kingdom of God (Matt. 5:32, 19:9). In the new age of the Spirit, daughters as well as sons, servants both male and female, will be filled by the Spirit and be participants in the prophethood of all believers (Acts 2:16-18). Over against those forms of Judaistic chauvinism of the first century that prohibited women from being legal witnesses in law courts or studying the law of God, women will testify before men of the resurrection of Christ (Luke 24:1-10). They will be exhorted by Paul to study the covenant word, to "learn in silence" (I Tim. 2:11). Mary will be commended for staying out of the kitchen (a culturally defined role responsibility) and "listening to what he said" (Luke 10:38-42). It is not simply the context that "limits the recipient or application." It is the place of that context in the history of unfolding special revelation.

3. The Holy Spirit is an active participant in the hermeneutical spiral. He brings into being the first horizon of the text (II Peter 1:20-21). He opens our understanding (John 14:16-17, 26) and, through what has been called illumination in the past, "causes the letter of the Bible to become charged with life and to become the living voice of God to us."[31] The closed canon is opened to our world through the ministry of that Spirit.

All this means an activity of the Spirit in connection with both horizons. How can we bring the text over the hermeneutical gap of the centuries and watch it address our situation? Here too the Spirit leads us into all the truth and takes things of Christ and declares them to us (John 16:13-15).

The Word of the Spirit sets up parameters within which the people of God are to move. We ought to love our neighbor. We ought to do justice. We ought to help the poor. The Spirit of the Word gives guidance in our search for when and how. How can we love our neighbor in Russia or Honduras? How is justice done on our block when homeowners join in denying access to a black family to purchase a house? What does our commitment to the poor mean in a society where black salaries are sometimes 20% of whites in comparable jobs? The same Spirit who communicates the meaning of the text communicates also its significance for our setting.

This is not intended to make the Spirit into some kind of magical answering service floating somewhere between God and humanity in the spiral. The Spirit does not play the role of some "God out of a box," a *deus ex machina*, undertaking some mechanical, hermeneutic homework assignment. The Holy Spirit is the God who addresses us, not an intermediary between God and us.

And when He does address us, it is through the human perception of those whom he speaks. "When the biblical writers or Christian theologians speak of the testimony of the Spirit, this is not to invoke some additional *means* of communicating the word of God, but is to claim that a message which is communicated in human language to human understanding addresses man *as* the word of God."[32]

Here is another reason why we can trust the reliability of our perceptions of God's culture-related truth. The Holy Spirit's blessing makes the Bible a mirror in which the common people look and can cry, "We are pilgrims like Abraham; We are in bondage in Egypt and Jesus liberates us also." Without benefit of theologian or erudite language, Spirit-filled people can say, "God speaks my language."

Here is also why we sometimes see in a clouded and misguided way. The Spirit does not bypass our cultural and experiential conditioning, our finiteness and sinfulness. The Spirit works through all these conditioning factors, enabling us to see adequately. But all these things may hinder us from the message of the Spirit more adequately.

Some Clues from the Manward Side of Hermeneutics

Looking at the hermeneutical spiral from the human side is not as awesome and frightening when we remember the process begins with, is participated in and consummated by the Lord. Cultural particularities, in spite of their complexities, are not barriers to a sovereign God but merely part of His providential design. His word, set loose in his creation, does not return empty (Isa. 55:11).

At the same time, our participation in hermeneutics is real also. And, as we have noted, that is not a neutral participation without presuppositions theological, cultural or psychological. We cannot escape the influence of our preunderstandings in looking for meaning and significance. How then does my specific socio-cultural and psychological background aid or distort my reading of Scripture? That is a basic question.[33] Limitations of space allow us only a few suggestions.

1. Before a proper "fusing" of the two or three horizons can take place, there must also take place a "distancing." That is, "we must become aware of the differences between the culture and thought-background out of which the words of

the text come and that of our own thought and speech. Only so can we be saved from the particular naivete that H.J. Cadbury pinpointed when he wrote *The Peril of Modernizing Jesus."*[34] We can and must bring our preunderstandings to a level of self-consciousness. In the light of day we then evaluate their appropriateness in relation to the cultural setting and to the text. Borrowing language from some liberation theologians, we must cultivate a "hermeneutics of suspicion."

Strange though it may seem, over-familiarity with the Bible can sometimes inhibit that process. "By a very young age most people with a Christian upbringing know the parable of the prodigal son so well that it loses all force for them. They *know* right from the beginning that the father will welcome the wayward son back home and that the father typifies God. The father's forgiving love is taken for granted, and so the original force of the parable gets lost. But the first hearers, who had never heard the story before, probably expected that the son would suffer some kind of chastisement from his father—just as the son himself expected. They would listen with bated breath to see just what would happen when he came near his home again. They were in for a surprise when Jesus reached the climax of his story, a surprise that we may fail to experience, with the result that the story loses its intended emotional impact."[35]

The same process of familiarity breeding misunderstanding takes place as we study the parable of the Pharisee and the publican (Luke 18:9-14). Our familiarity with the text gives its surprise ending the wrong meaning and reduces its shock value for us. We know that Pharisees are hypocrites, understood by us in terms of insincerity. We have already identified them as stereotyped villains. In the same way, the Publican is not the greedy robber familiar to its first listeners; he has become the humble hero. The parable then, shaped by our cultural understanding, becomes "a reassuring moral tale which condemns the kind of Pharasaism that everyone already wishes to avoid."[36]

But to the first hearers, the Pharisee was an example of godliness and piety, themes underlined by Jesus with no irony or tongue in cheek intended. The shock then was over Jesus' affirmation of the justification of the wrong person, the ungodly. The double-take ending has been lost in the changed attitudes between now and then over Pharasaism.

These parable studies are more than samples of misunderstanding; they are also demonstrations of the technique of "distancing" we are commending at this point. The cultural, social expectations of the hearer are suddenly jolted by the surprising meaning of the speaker. And a reassessment of meaning is demanded. Using technical language, the horizon of the communicator (speaker) and the horizon of the receptor (hearer) suddenly intersect in a way that demands the receptor look again. The receptor must reevaluate what before seemed clear, familiar and firm. Like humor, the punch line works with our assumptions by questioning them.

There are many ways in which that may take place. Sometimes it will be a Bible verse, long nestled securely amid our preunderstanding, suddenly erupting into our consciousness to shake past assumptions. For Martin Luther it was a word from the past first addressed to the Romans, "The just shall live by faith." The encounter with Romans totally rearranged Luther's hermeneutics.

Or again it may be a set of circumstances in which the providence of God places you. The situation may be new enough to make you look again at the Scriptures and new light breaks forth. My own Bible studies held with beggar boys in Seoul, Korea began to open my eyes to seeing the biblical category of the poor in a new light. And out of that experience my understanding of the Bible and my ministry were changed.

Or again: cultural value changes on a larger, social scale may create an atmosphere, planned by God's design, that shakes our equilibrium long enough and hard enough to "distance" us from our long held assumptions. The counter-cultural movement in the United States in the 1960s touched the ministry of a traditional church in California. And out of the influx of hippies and their conversion into "Jesus people" came a new understanding of body life in the church, an understanding that has since affected the hermeneutics of the wider church. In the same way, missionaries have testified to the new meaning they have found in Scripture, and its significance for life, that has come from immersion into a culture foreign to them. Old cultural ways of perception have been jolted by the block-buster of culture shock. And out of the shock has come a rearranged hermeneutics.

The popularity of a view of human reason as an hermeneutical instrument relatively untouched by sin or culture has helped to create an evangelical malaise.

Extra-biblical disciplines have also initiated the irritation process that leads to "distancing." The behavioral sciences—psychology, cultural anthropology, linguistics, sociology, communications—are more and more shaking the cloistered world of the theologian and the church member. And out of this engagement, this intersection, new re-examinations are taking place in the hermeneutical spiral,[37]

For some evangelicals today, this interaction is viewed with special concern. Negative pictures of these disciplines fear the relativism they may bring. And sometimes this is related to what is called the "independent authority" of Scripture.

One of the dangers in this kind of response is that it can split apart the word of God in the Bible (special revelation) from the word of God in creation (general revelation). Is not creation also a continual source of God's truth (Ps. 19:1, Rom. 1:20)? Cannot wise men, touched by the Spirit, also unlock divine truth through disciplined study of the creation? The hermeneutical task, after all, does not allow us to isolate the world we live in from the world of the Bible.

2. Most of our discussion has concentrated on the distortions that our presuppositions bring to understanding. We also need to recognize that there are times when those same assumptions may aid us in the task.

In our turning to God, we are increasingly drawn by the Holy Spirit into a new cultural world. Our way of perceiving the cosmos, our worldview, begins to undergo reshaping. We are given a spiritual predisposition to understand the things of the Spirit (I Cor. 2:14). He makes over our values and perspectives. We become, in this process called conversion, increasingly familiar with the structure of biblical narrative. What seemed like nonsense before now becomes the only sense we can make of things. We see more and more the world as God wants us to see it, from creation to fall to redemption to consummation.[38]

In short, we find ourselves more and more operating in a context increasingly comparable to the design of God. Our predispositions to understand what God says and does be-

come more closely proximate to His vision of reality. God has not changed but we have. Two horizons are fusing in our "heart" level, the control box that touches also our pursuit for meaning and significance.

Now, a sentence like "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23) matches our new predispositions. We no longer tie it solely to our next door neighbor's children but to ourselves. Axeheads that float, fish that swallow men, city walls that collapse with the blowing of trumpets are no longer answered with a scientific smerk and wink. One man's death and resurrection for others was foolishness; now it becomes the wisdom of God (I Cor. 1:23-24). The biblical context remains the same. But ours has been changed by faith.

On still another level our presuppositions can aid us. This occurs when there are comparable contexts in the two horizons. "Whenever we share comparable particulars (i.e., similar specific life situations) with the first-century setting, God's Word to us is the same as His Word to them."[39]

If the culture of the first horizon is at any given point very similar to ours, our interpretational reflexes are going to serve us fairly well. At this point the element of truth in the idea of "plain meaning" becomes visible. No matter then how we understand the image of the husband as the head of the wife, the call for a husband to love his wife as his own body, to love her to the point of self-sacrifice on her behalf (Eph. 5:28-29), conveys meaning fairly easy to transpose to twentieth century Philadelphia or Buenos Aires. We may struggle with Peter's judgments against "braiding of hair, decoration of gold and wearing of robes" (I Peter 3:3). Is he condemning ostentation and extravegance? Or does it cover eye makeup and hair coloring also? But his description of the "unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit" (3:4) is much easier to grasp.

Such cultural universals as the Ten Commandments also intersect with our interpretational horizons fairly easily. "Creation mandates," so called because they were given by God before the fall, by their very nature may be extrapolated into our world with a minimum of struggle. The call to marry, to cultivate the earth and rule over it, to work, defines the duties of Adam and Eve and of Harvie and Dorothy Conn. And it defines them without a heavy measure of complications.

> Similarly, if a Scriptural statement relates to experiences that are common to all mankind our culturally-conditioned interpretational reflexes can be of considerable help. When the Scriptures say "go," "come," "trust," "be patient," and the like, they are dealing with experiences that are common to all human beings and therefore readily interpretable. Likewise with respect to illness and death, childbirth and rearing, obtaining and preparing food, and the like.[40]

Again, though, we must be wary. Identifying comparable contexts requires careful judgment of both the biblical setting and our own. And we may go astray in either or both of these areas.

3. It will help and not simply hinder us to acknowledge that there are levels of cultural particularity in both horizons and therefore levels of particularity in interpretation. Much of the biblical material, for example, is presented in cultural forms that are very specific to cultural practices quite different from ours. In fact, because of their specificity to the cultural agreements of the first readers, these materials communicated with maximum impact. But they have minimum impact on us.

Generally evangelical writers today see cultural bound perceptions as a handicap. They spin off guidelines for hermeneutics that discard the peripheral for the core, or divide the theological from the moral, in their search for the usable. More general rules can also be brought into play. The priority of didactic passages over the record of historical events, of more systematic passages with those less so, are used.

With modifications, many of these standard arguments can be very useful. We do not speak against them *per se*. But they are often negative in their attitude toward culture's specificity. What we are concerned to underline here is the value, not simply the danger, of cultural particularity. Cultural perceptions are not to be obliterated in our search for the significance of the Bible for us. They aided the first-century reader in better grasping the significance of revelation for them. And they do for us also.

Paul's sensitivity to cultural perceptions in his day was acute. In I Cor. 11:14 he writes, "Does not even nature *(phusis)* itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is dishonor to him?" And, in speaking of women without some sort of hair covering in worship, he calls it "shameful" (11:6), not "proper" (11"13). The same word, "shameful," appears in his evaluation of "women speaking in the church" (I Cor. 14:35) or his sensitivity to "even mentioning what the disobedient do in secret" (Eph. 5:12).

What does Paul have in mind in these passages? Is he concerned over violation of some kind of Stoic "natural order?" We think not. He seems most naturally to be referring to the general order of human cultural values that designate a practice as seemly and becoming, unseemly and unbecoming. And he is arguing for the inappropriateness of a Christian's practice in the light of cultural mores.

His goal in this is not the obliteration of cultural perceptions as a hindrance to hermeneutics. Nor is he promoting the rule of cultural perceptions over hermeneutics. It is an understanding of cultural particularities as an aid to the application of the law in our day. There is what Herman Ridderbos calls a relativizing element in such appeals to custom,[41] a positive concern for the judgment of people that we must seek, not to expunge or ignore, but to listen to and find.

This cultural relativism is not the kind that allows a person to do anything that conforms to his or her own culture, anything that party pleases, as it were. Paul's ultimate motivation here and elsewhere is his concern that the church not give unnecessary offense to the world. He remains apprehensive in so many of the texts we have cited that the church will be perceived by the world's cultures as licentious in its consciousness of our new freedom in Christ. We are to have a good reputation with outsiders.

As an exhibition of our calling to love "those who are without" (I Cor. 5:12-13, Col. 4:5, I Thess. 4:12), we are obliged "to respect that which is right in the sight of all men" (Rom. 12:17). Paul's focus here is on the need for maintaining a deportment that approves itself to all people[42] (cf. II Cor. 8:21). The cultural norms of behavior governing Christian conduct are norms that even unbelievers recognize as worthy of approval. When Christians violate these cultural proprieties, they bring reproach upon the name of Christ and upon their own profession. This does not mean that the unbelieving world prescribes cultural norms of conduct for the Christian in, for example, his or her attitude to women. But it certainly means that the Christian in determining the will of God for here and now must have regard to what can be vindicated as honorable in the forum of men's and women's judgment. Again, Paul is nodding to the insights of human culture as a proper partner in the hermeneutical process. Stamped on those things honorable and just is the effect of the work of the law written on the hearts of all people (Rom. 2:15).

Cultural perceptions are not only problems of hermeneutics; they are also aids. And again, as always, it is the task of

exegesis of the Scripture to make the final determination.

Conclusions

Obviously this article leaves many questions unanswered. We have left out a study of the nature of language as it touches the question of culture and relativism. We have done very little to define specifically the levels of cultural particularity. And still waiting is the massive question of what might be called extrapolation. That is, what legitimate procedures allow us such an extended application of the text as to cover nineteenth century slavery practices or twentieth century biomedical ethics? What are the ground rules for "a developmental hermeneutics?"

But hopefully we have reaffirmed one conviction on the part of the reader: Scripture stands, its veracity untainted by either the cultures in which it comes to us or the cultures to which it goes. God's revelation can make use of our cultures but always stands in judgment over them. The hermeneutical spiral should not leave us dizzy in confusion but always moving ahead. The Bible still shines "forth as a great, many-faceted jewel, sparkling with an internal divine fire and giving clear and adequate light to every pilgrim upon his pathway to the Celestial City."[43]

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[1] Paul Woolley, "The Relevance of Scripture," *The Infallible Word*, N.B. Stonehouse and Paul Woolley, eds. (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian Guardian Publ. Corp., 1946), p. 204.
[2] Roger Lundin, Anthony C. Thiselton and Clarence Walhout, *The Responsibility of Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Comp., 1985), p. 95.
[3] James I. Packer, "Infallible Scripture and the Role of Hermeneutics," *Scripture and Truth*, D.A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge, eds. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publ. House, 1983), p. 337.
[4] For an overview of evangelical participation in these discussions, consult: J. Julius Scott, Jr., "Some Problems in Hermeneutics for Contemporary Evangelicals," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 22, no. 1 (1979): 66-67. Cf. also: Grant R. Osborne, "Preaching the Gospels: Methodology and Contextualization," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 27, no. 1 (1984): 27-42; Gordon D. Fee, "Hermeneutics and Common Sense: An Exploratory Essay on the Hermeneutics of the Epistles," *Inerrancy and Common Sense*, Roger R. Nicole and J. Ramsey Michaels, eds. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980), pp. 161-186.
[5] I. Howard Marshall, *Biblical Inspiration* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Comp., 1983), p. 105.
[6] Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible For All It's Worth* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publ. House, 1981), p. 59.
[7] Robert K. Johnston, *Evangelicals at an Impasse* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1979), p. 2.
[8] Alan Johnson, "History and Culture in New Testament Interpretation," *Interpreting the Word of God*, Samuel Schultz and Morris Inch, eds. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1976), p. 131.
[9] A careful survey of the development of the idea of "pre-understanding" will be found in Anthony C. Thiselton, *The Two Horizons* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Comp., 1980), pp. 103-114, 133-139, 303-310.
[10] The volume that has created this awareness, more than any other, is Charles Kraft, *Christianity in Culture* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1979).
[11] Johnson, "History and Culture in New Testament Interpretation," p. 133.
[12] Lundin, Thiselton and Walhout, *The Responsibility of Hermeneutics*, p. 27.
[13] D.A. Carson, ed., *Biblical Interpretation and the Church: The Problem of Contextualization* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1984), p. 19.
[14] Quoted in: "Reading the Bible Ecumenically," *One World* 8 no. 4 (March-April, 1985): 11.
[15] J. Robertson McQuilkin, "Problems of Normativeness in Scripture: Cultural Versus Permanent," *Hermeneutics, Inerrancy and the Bible*, Earl D. Radmacher and Robert D. Preuss, eds. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publ. House, 1984), p. 222.
[16] A helpful approach to this text will be found in: Herman Ridderbos, *The Coming of the Kingdom* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publ. Comp., 1962), p. 188. For another, and more debatable, perspective on these same perceptions, using the discipline of cultural anthropology, consult: Bruce J. Malina, "Interpreting the Bible with Anthropology: The Case of the Poor and the Rich," *Listening* 21, no. 2 (1986): 148-159.
[17] A lengthy essay by Wayne Grudem examines this question of the meaning of "head" in Greek literature and argues that the connotation of "source, origin" is nowhere clearly attested. See: "Does *kephale* ('head') Mean 'Source' or 'Authority over' in Greek Literature? A survey of 2,336 Examples," *The Role Relationship of Men and Women* by George W. Knight III (Chicago: Moody Press, 1985), pp. 49-80.
[18] A rich discussion of "plain meaning and interpretational reflexes" will be found in Kraft, *Christianity in Culture*, pp. 131-134.
[19] Clark Pinnock, *The Scripture Principle* (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1984), p. 215.
[20] For evangelical criticisms of the circle model, consult: Anthony C. Thiselton, "The New Hermeneutic," *New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Principles and Methods*, I. Howard Marshall, ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Comp., 1977), pp. 323-329.
[21] Packer, "Infallible Scripture and the Role of Hermeneutics," p. 348.
[22] John R.W. Stott and Robert Coote, eds., *Down to Earth: Studies in Christianity and Culture* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Comp., 1980), p. 317.
[23] Geerhardus Vos, *Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Comp., 1948), pp. 154-155.
[24] Quoted in Kraft, *Christianity in Culture*, pp. 248-249.
[25] Ford Lewis Battles, "God Was Accomodating Himself to Human Capacity," *Interpretation* 31 (1977): 34-36; Clinton M. Ashley, "John Calvin's Utilization of the Principle of Accomodation and Its Continuing Significance for an Understanding of Biblical Language" (Unpublished Th.D. dissertation, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1972), pp. 91-121.
[26] Lundin, Thiselton and Walhout, *The Responsibility of Hermeneutics*, p. 80.
[27] Fee and Stuart, *How to Read the Bible For All It's Worth*, p. 21.
[28] B.B. Warfield, "Paul on Women Speaking in Church," *The Outlook (March, 1981)*: 23-24.
[29] Vos, *Biblical Theology*, p. 326.
[30] Sidney Greidanus, *Sola Scriptura: Problems and Principles in Preaching Historical Texts* (Toronto: Wedge Publ. Foundation, 1970), pp. 91-93, 232.
[31] Pinnock, *The Scripture Principle*, p. 163.
[32] Thiselton, *The Two Horizons*, p. 90.
[33] This is only one question out of several asked by Alan Johnson in his extremely helpful essay, "A Response to Problems of Normativeness in Scripture: Cultural Versus Permanent," *Hermeneutics, Inerrancy and the Bible*, Earl D. Radmacher and Robert D. Preuss, ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publ. House, 1984), pp. 257-282.
[34] Packer, "Infallible Scripture and the Role of Hermeneutics," pp. 339-340.
[35] Marshall, *Biblical Inspiration*, p. 99.
[36] Thiselton, *The Two Horizons*, p. 15.
[37] For samples of this interaction, consult: Charles Kraft, "Can Anthropological Insight Assist Evangelical Theology?," *Christian Scholar's Review* 7 (1977): 165-202; Harvie M. Conn, *Eternal Word and Changing Worlds: Theology, Anthropology, and Missions in Trialogue* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publ. House, 1984), pp. 330-338.
[38] For a full treatment of this four-fold structure of biblical narrative, consult: Henry Vander Goot, *Interpreting the Bible in Theology and the Church* (New York and Toronto: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2984), pp. 67-78.
[39] Fee and Stuart, *How to Read the Bible For All It's Worth*, p. 60.
[40] Charles Kraft, "Interpreting in Cultural Context," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 21 (1978): 362.
[41] Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Comp., 1975), p. 463.
[42] John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans: The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Comp., 1959, 1965), 2: 138.
[43] Woolley, "The Relevancy of Scripture," p. 207.

BOOK REVIEWS

Power Evangelism
by John Wimber with Kevin Springer (Harper and Row, 1986, 201 pp., $13.95). Reviewed by David Werther, graduate student in philosophy, the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

For years the lack of sophistication in the presentation of Pentecostal/Charismatic theology has been lamented. Many expected former Fuller Seminary professor John Wimber to provide the church with a carefully developed theological statement on the question of signs and wonders. Unfortunately *Power Evangelism* touches on many topics, but fails to give any of those topics adequate treatment.

Wimber devotes a chapter to each of the following topics: the kingdom of God, power encounters-clashes of God's kingdom and satan's kingdom, power evangelism-evangelism enhanced by demonstrations of God's power, worldviews, and miracles in the early church. Chapters also inlcude illustrations from Wimber's experiences in the ministry. Herein lies one of the central flaws of this book. One could not do justice to G.E. Ladd's view of the kingdom in fourteen pages or treat the topic of worldview in twenty-five pages, even if personal illustrations were left out. Wimber's efforts to treat his topic comprehensively have resulted in a series of significant theses presented in outline form.

Wimber does present some theses worthy of further development. As the title suggests the author's concern is with the church growth and the way in which church growth is related to demonstrations of God's power. Third world countries are experiencing church growth at a dramatic rate whereas Western countries are lagging behind. The crucial element in third world evangelism is the free operation of God's Spirit. Western Christians are berated for quenching the Spirit.

Wimber may very well be correct in charging Western Christians with quenching the Spirit and maintaining that the growth of the church in the West will be retarded until there is an openness to dynamic works of the Spirit. But again one wishes that Wimber clearly developed his theses. For example, in addressing the question of "the baptism of the Holy Spirit," a crucial question with regard to openness to the Spirit's activity, Wimber limits his comments to less than three pages and notes:

> I have discovered that the argument concerning the baptism of the Spirit usually comes down to a question of labels (p. 145).

Even when addressing topics that seem to be paramount importance for his theory of church growth, Wimber is content to leave the discussion at a superficial level.

If one wants to find clear careful presentations of the kingdom of God and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the authors to turn to are still G.E. Ladd and James D.G. Dunn. *Power Evangelism* may be useful to theological neophytes, but it will be inadequate for the work of seminarians and pastors. Those who wish to fill in the outline presented in *Power Evangelism* have a lot of homework to do.

God and Science: The Death and Rebirth of Theism
by Charles P. Henderson, Jr. (John Knox Press, 1986, 186 pp., $10.95). Reviewed by Richard H. Bube, Department of Materials Science and Engineering, Stanford University (CA).

Charles P. Henderson, Jr., pastor of Central Presbyterian in New York and Assistant Dean of the Chapel at Princeton University, deals in this book with some of the major arguments advanced against belief in God, is generally effective in turning them inside out, and considers possible new evidence for theism. Although he spends considerable space on indicating why classical "proofs" for the existence of God do not fulfil that role, the author still insists throughout the book on speaking of a "new proof for the existence of God," and to attempt to formulate such a new "proof," rather than simply recognizing that to speak of such "proofs" is to misuse language. He concludes the entire book by saying that:

> When it is shown that faith is internally consistent, coherent, and responsive to new insights which arise at the forward frontier of knowledge, then one has in fact established a new proof for God.

But this is to use language in a misleading way. When we speak about establishing "proofs," when what we have really done is to supply further evidence, or, as the author states a few lines further, "to state the case for God in the strongest possible terms," we misrepresent our own arguments and lead others to misunderstand us as well.

The book starts with a chapter dealing with the thought of Einstein (unfortunately entitled, "New Proof for the Existence of God"), and then completes its first half with analyses of the thought of Freud, Darwin and Marx. In the next two chapters, the author turns to two prominent modern contributors to theological thought: Teilhard de Chardin and Paul Tillich. There follows a chapter on Fritjof Capra's and Gary Zukav's attempt to interpret modern science in terms of Eastern religion, and finally a chapter of the author's own conclusions.

Henderson's purpose in this undertaking is wholly commendable, namely to resolve the stance of conflict between science and religion. Many of his conclusions are closely related to those of informed evangelical Christians, but sometimes he arrives at them in a roundabout and ambiguous way, attributing weak positions to Christian writers and thinkers, which those committed to integrating authentic science and authentic theology have not held for some time. The reader often gets the feeling that the author is completely out of touch with informed evangelical
hese issues.
he surprising assertions of the
two references to Bonhoeffer as
surrendered completely to scientific atheism; the claim that Paul Tillich was the first major theologian to see the threatening implications of seeing God as a finite being alongside other finite beings; the claim that "erotic love . . . plays a central role in the religious life itself," and that "all forms of sexual expression are merely repressed spirituality;" the mistaken, or at least too broad, indictment of traditional (by which what is meant?) theology by saying that, "The high and all-powerful God of traditional theology can influence the world only by intervening in its natural processes and contradicting its natural laws;" the implications that Colossians 1:15-17 does not intend to declare "the supremacy of Jesus" are often nonsensical and paradoxical in relation to our commonsense view of the world . . . . The parables clearly transcend all conventional distinctions between good and bad, beautiful and ugly, birth and death;" and the conclusion that "a nuclear war which rendered this planet uninhabitable would be a precise refutation of the Judeo-Christian faith." We should no doubt grant to the author the possibility that in some of these cases, of which I have quoted a few here, he is speaking dramatically for emphasis or in exaggeration, rather than anticipating a careful interpretation of each statement.

The book has value for those who would like to see a different perspective on the thought of Freud, Darwin and Marx, as seen through the eyes of a Christian theologian. If it can lead a wide spectrum of Christians to a more healthy integration of authentic science and theology, it will make a useful contribution. Christians already committed to such an integration may be puzzled, however, at why the author regards his major conclusions to be new.

Unleashing The Church: Getting People Out of the Fortress and Into Ministry
by Frank R. Tillapaugh (Regal, 1982, 224 pp., $5.95). Reviewed by Samuel W. Henderson, Minister of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), currently serving two congregations in Selma, AL.

Tillapaugh's thesis is that the U.S. evangelical church is crippled by a "fortress mentality" which tends to assume that the life and ministry of the church consists of whatever programs take place within the four walls of the church building. He believes that excessive preoccupation with institutional maintenance and an almost exclusive focus on the middle class have made this part of the church "ministry-poor." He cites the extraordinary growth of parachurch organizations as evidence that the laity are concerned for needs they see around them, but often unable to find outlets for their concern through the programs of their churches. His plea is to get the bored and frustrated laity out of the church "housekeeping" committees and into the front lines of creative person-to-person ministry.

As a model, Tillapaugh offers the Bear Valley Baptist Church of Denver, Colorado. The book is a collection of pastoral insights arising from this congregation's all-out effort to take seriously the priesthood of believers, structuring itself around the priestly ministries of its members. This led Bear Valley church to a decentralized "entrepreneurial*"approach to ministry. Individuals and small groups in the congregation are encouraged to identify church and community needs and to discover creative ways to fill them. This approach has fostered a very high degree of grassroots initiative and enthusiasm among members. This is evidenced by rapid numerical growth, an extremely diverse congregational life, and an almost bewildering variety of ministries at the local, denominational, and international levels.

One may or may not agree with Tillapaugh's critique of the institutional church. Fortunately, he devotes most of his effort to telling the story of one congregation's renewal in worship and ministry. This is not a book about church growth, or social action, or evangelism, or leadership development per se, though it touches on all these areas in a substantive way. It is the story of one congregation's pilgrimage of discovery into what it means to be the church. As such it offers a wealth of encouragement and practical wisdom to congregations of most any size and ecclesiastical persuasion.

* reviewer's term, not author's

The Uses of the Old Testament in the New
by Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. (Moody Press, 1985, 270 pp., $12.95). Reviewed by Elmer A. Martens, Professor of Old Testament, Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary.

This book is about interpreting the Bible. Increasingly it is held, even by evangelicals, that the way in which the New Testament used and interpreted the Old Testament is too culture-bound to provide a present-day model of interpretation. Kaiser disagrees. His book aims to show that when the New Testament quoted the Old Testament, it did so in line with the intended meaning of the Old Testament writer, and that the NT writers played fair with the Scripture they quoted. It would follow, then, that moderns can use the same methods.

Walter Kaiser, Dean and professor of Old Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, is a prolific writer. Several chapters are reprints or adaptations of previously published articles. A few such as "Understanding Old Testament Types as 'Types of Us,'" are new. In 11 chapters Kaiser offers selected examples within a five-fold classification of the NT uses of the OT: apologetic (Ps. 16/Acts 2:29-33; Hosea 11:1, Jer. 31:15/Matt. 2:15, 18); prophetic (Malachi 4:4-5/Matt. 11:10; Joel 2:28-32/Acts 2); typological (I Cor. 10:1-2; Ps. 40:6-8); theological (Heb. 3:1-4; Amos 9:9-15); and practical (Deut. 25:4/I Cor. 9:8-10; Lev. 19/James).

Kaiser knows the current scholars in the field, but also quotes from 19th century writers, especially Willis Beecher, whom he often follows. The list of authors cited extends over four pages; the bibliography is 20 pages in

length. A welcome feature is the frequent reference to insights and citations offered by Kaiser's students. While grammatical niceties of Hebrew and Greek are sprinkled throughout, the book aspires to a popular, rather than technical style.

Kaiser leaves few comfortable. He disallows the pesher method as an explanation for NT usage of the OT. Those who champion the idea of *sensus plenior*, namely that a text can have a fuller meaning beyond the consciousness of the original author, are rebuked, in part, with the arguments of Bruce Vawter. Dispensationalists who resort to double fulfilments (the two mountain-peak theory) will hear their claim criticized. In its place Kaiser puts "generic fulfilment," by which he means that prophecy deals with the entire plan even though segments of it may be selected for emphasis. For that matter, Kaiser also takes on covenant theology and all others who try to make sense of the Old Testament by the "spiritualizing" method.

He contends that a text has a single meaning—a meaning defined by authorial intent. Prophets, for example did not "write better than they knew;" they knew the meaning of what they wrote.

Kaiser's method certainly strengthens the continuity between the testaments: one of the best chapters compares the meaning of Amos 9:9-11 with Acts 15. Kaiser concludes that the OT clearly saw the Gentiles to be part of God's people—one people, not two. Other conclusions, correct in my opinion: the law, excluding ceremonial and cultic aspects, has validity for today's believer; the "days of the Lord" are repeatable.

Kaiser's book is an appropriate check to those who are all too ready to write off New Testament uses of the OT as non-normative for today. By following C.H. Dodd's "principle of context," Kaiser brings great rigor to exegesis. He has marshalled impressive evidence. He has chosen difficult texts to illumine his proposition that there is a single meaning discernible in any text and that the NT writers did not impose alien meanings on the texts they quoted. The discussion of actual texts rather than only interpretation theory is commendable. His position is clearly articulated and promoted: "We urge Christ's church to adopt the single meaning of the text and a generic meaning for prophecies . . . ."

Can one perhaps claim too much for NT usage? Would it really take away from the force of the quotations if some of the NT writers had utilized the OT charismatically, much as a preacher uses Scripture? The most problematic chapter is the one that deals with Messianic predictions. Despite an extended argument about a single meaning in Ps. 16 (cf. Ps. 40), which entails David having a "clear prevision of Christ's resurrection" one is left wondering if the text is not over-interpreted. More attention to the meaning of "fulfilment" especially in the sense of "correspondence" would allow both the original meaning and a later application.

While Kaiser forces one to exegete more carefully, do we really want to draw the lines so tight? But before we decide we must get back to the text. That is good. Here, then, is a most helpful and provocative book.

Losing Ground
by Charles Murray (Basic Books, 1984, 323 pp., $23.95). Reviewed by John P. Tiemstra, Professor of Economics, Calvin College.

This very influential book argues that the welfare, educational, criminal justice, and civil rights policies adopted by the federal government in the middle 1960's have worsened the plight of the poor. Murray argues for a social policy that would provide free education from kindergarten through graduate school at the institution of your choice, and would return responsibility for aid to the working-aged poor to state and local governments and private agencies. Many reviews of this book have already appeared. Most economists are willing to accept Murray's assumptions about the goals and motivations of poor people but find his research to be technically inadequate. I will leave aside the technical questions, and instead take up the underlying assumptions of the book.

For the first two-thirds of the work, Murray very consistently assumes that the motivations of poor people are no different from those of middle-class people, and that therefore the differences in their behavior are caused by their circumstances. This is not very flattering to the poor, however, since Murray assumes (along with most economists) that *everybody* is lazy and selfish. I believe that a Christian must object. The aspirations of the poor are indeed the same as everybody else's, but surely these include good work, independence, security, a comfortable family life, and a better chance for the children. In many cases poor people are forced to sacrifice these longer term goals for the sake of short-term survival, but that is often the fault of poorly designed government programs.

Later in the book, the author shifts ground on this issue. He admits "status rewards" to the list of motivating factors. He claims that the poor no longer derive status from working, since the working poor are not independent, but receive benefits (like food stamps and housing assistance) from the federal government. It is not clear that the working poor ever were independent, however, and Murray does not offer an argument about why being dependent on federal entitlement programs offers less status than dependence on family help, private charity, or local government relief. It would seem that the federal programs offer more dignity to the poor than begging for handouts from relatives or standing in line at soup kitchens. The poor work for the same reason the rest of us do: for status, for money, for a sense of purpose and belonging, and for the sake of advancement in the future. The federal programs often discourage work, but that is because they offer *too little* assistance to the working poor, not too much. The sad fact is that many jobs in our economy do not offer any likelihood of advancement. There will always be people who can not support themselves, some of them people who work, and it is not sufficient for us to say to them, "Be warm and fed."

Murray finally completes the contradiction by claiming a distinction between deserving and undeserving poor people. The deserving poor are those who work, or at least are willing to work. Of course, this distinction is meaningless if poor and nonpoor alike work only for financial and status rewards. For Murray, only the "deserving" ones are morally entitled to welfare. But if we in fact give them assistance, we destroy the status rewards for working. And then, if we don't give them assistance, but give assistance to those who apparently can't work, we destroy the financial rewards for working.

Given the box that he has worked himself into, it is probably not surprising that Murray wants to abandon the whole federal welfare structure. In making this proposal, he ignores the history he presents in his early chapters. The federal programs were put in place because the traditional private and local approach to the poverty problem did not work, mostly because insufficient resources were devoted to it. Murray points out many irrationalities in current programs, but does not give any reason to think that inadequately funded but locally run programs would be any better. In fact, his whole argument is that any program will work equally bad. So why change?

Losing Ground is full of such contradictions. Sometimes one suspects that the author started with his conclusions and worked backward, because the argument is so tortured. Ultimately, we must reject the premises of the book. The poor deserve help because they are made in the image of God, and if we allow them to remain destitute we dishonor God's image. People generally prefer to work because they are made in the image of God, the maker of all things; and we must provide jobs and a decent income to all who are capable of working. Those who merely want a free ride on the back of society are such a small number that they are not worth worrying about.

Charles Murray has given us a critique of the welfare system that is based on a faulty view of human nature and motivation, and so it is ultimately unpersuasive. The reforms he suggests would only return us to the totally unsatisfactory situation that prevailed in this country before the legislation of the 1960s. In view of the Christian duty to insure the right of the poor to an adequate living, Murray's proposals are irresponsible.

Protestant Missionaries in the Philippines, 1898-1916: An Inquiry Into the American Colonial Mentality
by Kenton J. Clymer (University of Illinois Press, 1986, 267 pp.). Reviewed by Paul Heidebrecht, Ph.D. graduate in History of Education, University of Illinois.

A growing number of scholars in recent years have begun exploring Philippine-American history, and given current developments in the Philippines, there is also an expanding audience of interested readers. Not

only are the Philippines the scene of several military initiatives by the United States during the past century, but they also represent one of the earliest objects of U.S. imperialism. The colonization of the Philippines marks a critical stage in the emergence of the United States as a world power. Accompanying this takeover of the islands was a major Protestant missionary effort, unusual only because it was spearheaded by Americans almost exclusively.

University of Texas historian Kenton Clymer has provided an intimate glimpse into the motivations and personal experiences of the first contingent of missionaries who entered the Philippines on the heels of the U.S. occupying forces in 1898. Every Protestant denomination sent its own workers, and while in total these individuals were an insufficient missionary force, they nevertheless represented a powerful Protestant stake in a land that had been subjected to four centuries of Spanish Catholicism. Clymer has culled through the personal records of all the missionaries who served in the Philippines between 1898 and 1916, the year in which the U.S. Congress determined to give the Filipinos their independence (that year also marked a transition of first-generation missionaries to a younger force). The resulting portrait, while necessarily narrow in focus, brings to life the tensions that these missionaries felt spreading both the Good News and the "good life" of American civilization.

Clymer's work offers some important insights. The missionary endeavor in the Philippines is often cited as an example of remarkable comity among Protestant denominations. The Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Disciples and the Alliance divided up the territory, and according to most accounts, avoided competing with each other. Clymer acknowledges the general spirit of unity among the missionaries but demonstrates from their own journals and letters that bitter disputes and frequent ad hominem attacks upon rivals characterized the first two decades. Some Protestant missions, like the Episcopal and the Seventh-Day Adventist, never joined the Evangelical Union and operated independently (the Episcopalians were the only communion that did not proselytize among Catholic Filipinos).

Clymer traces the attitudes of the Protestant pioneers toward the Filipinos and uncovers an undeniable strain of racism. Inbred with the Anglo-Saxon propensity to note racial differences and create hierarchies among cultural groups, the missionaries indulged in unfavorable generalizations about Filipino society. There were exceptions, of course, but many of them returned to the United States disillusioned because of the apparant failure to raise the standards of Filipino life. Immorality, gambling and drinking among Filipinos distressed the missionaries particularly.

The response to cultural deficiencies in Filipino culture by the Protestants paralleled the Progressive agenda in the U.S. Inferior people became the beneficiaries of social uplift efforts of high-minded reformers. Athletics was introduced into Protestant schools to build self-discipline and eliminate the "mañana habit." Industrial education was another favorite antidote to the problem of indolence.

Not only were the Protestant missionaries patronizing toward the Filipinos, but they were positively opposed to the nationalist spirit that led to violent skirmishes with American troops. Viewing themselves as knowledgeable observers, many of the missionaries lobbied U.S. congressmen and cabinet officials to "go slow" in granting independence to the islands. The Episcopalian bishop, Charles Brent, was a close friend of Theodore Roosevelt and urged the President to keep the Philippines under American control. But the Protestants were disappointed by Woodrow Wilson whose administration encouraged the movement toward Filipinization.

The missionaries also resisted nationalistic urges within the Protestant churches. Their low opinion of Filipino abilities and morality made them unwilling to share leadership with the rising generation of Filipino believers. Missions executives in the United States tended to be far more accomodating than their representatives in the field.

The distinct impression that Clymer's account leaves is of dedicated but conservative Protestants who were unable to keep pace with the Filipino drive for independence and the more crass materialistic goals that justified the American presence in the Philippines. Many sacrificed their health, if not their lives, in a genuine desire to win souls (they accounted for almost 100,000 converts during this early period) but they were always plagued by an ambivalent relationship to the society which they had invaded.

Yet, as Clymer argues, the Protestant missionaries made an impact. Perhaps more than any other Americans, they carried the values and priorities of the pan-Protestant American culture to the Philippines and helped keep this nation within the American orbit. Ironically, Filipino Protestants may have learned too well; many were strong supporters of the Marcos regime during the last decade.

A Tale of Two Churches: Can Protestants and Catholics Get Together?
by George Carey (InterVarsity, 1985, 172 pp., $5.95). Reviewed by Bob Moran, CSP, Catholic Chaplain, McGill University, Montreal, Canada.

George Carey, the principal of Trinity Theological College in England, has given us a book which is both challenging and gracious: challenging in its willingness to ask the hard questions, and gracious in its positive and well-informed assessments of contemporary Catholicism.

Using throughout a poetic image of the confluence of waters to describe rapprochement between Protestants and Catholics, he begins with "The Renewing Stream," a concise account of the major reforms in Catholicism coming from the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). In the second chapter, "Troubled Waters," he reviews the Reformation period, focusing on four central areas of disagreement. First, who saves—Jesus, Mary, or the Saints? Second, how is one saved? This is the faith-works polarity. Third is the tension between those who upheld the Bible as the source of revelation and those who held that Tradition was an equal source of revelation. The fourth issue is access to salvation, the function of the Church in providing grace.

Carey expands each of these issues in Chapter Three. His discussion and footnotes reveal the breadth and depth of his reading; he includes helpful material coming from recent interfaith theological discussions. In the fourth chapter, "The Common Reservoir," he highlights major areas of agreement: our belief in God, reliance on Scripture as God's inspired Word, the importance of the Church, the centrality of faith, and the value of Holy Communion.

In Chapters Five and Six, "The Reservoir of Rome," and "Protestant Wellsprings of Faith," he depicts the positive aspects of each tradition. He is irenic yet frank in confronting points of contention. In Chapter Seven, "All at Sea," he offers fresh definitions of the four criteria for the true Church, one, holy, catholic and apostolic. He concludes the book by giving some estimate about the chances for unity, as well as some advice for achieving it.

Viewing this book with Roman Catholic eyes, I find much to recommend, yet I need to haggle somewhat. In Chapter Two, "Troubled Waters," in discussing the means of salvation (p. 31), he makes a passing reference to indulgences, leaving the impression that they were forgiveness for sin. Late medieval clerical hucksters may have taken this view, but the official teaching was different. Indulgences were supposed to lessen what was called the "temporal punishment" due to sin. In concept, the indulgence was not intended to provide pardon for sin.

In the third chapter, "Currents of Faith," he refers to the troubling Marian doctrines, Immaculate Conception and the Assumption. Carey finds in Pope Pius XII's (1943) encyclical *Mystici Corporis* exegetically incorrect assertions about Mary. Carey's reaction touches a deeper issue, the way Catholics and Protestants have done and perhaps still do exegesis. Avery Dulles' perceptive book *Models of Revelation* leads me to think that the Catholic and Protestant traditions have at times converged, at other times diverged in the way they used the sacred texts. Dulles has good suggestions for easing the painful divergence.

Chapter Four, "Common Reservoir," is well done, yet I was startled to see on p. 71 a critique of the idea of the infallibility of the Church which was based on the sinfulness of the members. Catholic approaches to the notion of the Church's infallibility argue that while many individuals did and do sin, we cannot doubt Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit's guidance. We view the Holy Spirit's work as that of preventing the Body of Christ from corrupting or losing key truths needed for salvation by men and women of every age. We do not argue that the Holy Spirit has

directly inspired or prevented error in every particular formulation of teaching, sermon or theological tract.

In Chapter Six, "Protestant Wellsprings of Faith," Carey provides on p. 114 a brief description of the Mass. I am uneasy with his phrase, "the benefits of salvation are made directly through the Mass, which is considered to be an extension of the cross." The latter half of the phrase, "extension of the cross," is true provided one adds the phrase, "and resurrection." The first part of the phrase leaves the unfortunate impression that we believe the Mass to be the only source of the benefits of salvation. Even before the Second Vatican Council we believed that faith, prayer, and the other sacraments brought us into contact with the benefits of salvation. We also believed then and now that God's giving of grace is not confined to or restricted by the sacramental framework.

In the closing chapter, "Harbor in Sight," I find much that is good, but I am puzzled by his assertion that the path to unity is barred on both sides by minority groups in well-established and well-entrenched positions. It would have helped me to learn which minority groups he means. I find it hard to imagine that a minority of Southern Baptists prevents them from union with Catholics, or that a minority of Catholics prevents us from deeper fellowship with them.

Carey, while pointing to the common ground between us, has put his finger on old issues which are unresolved: Marian doctrines, infallibility of the Church, etc. He suggests that the notion that there is a hierarchy of truths—some, let us say, more peripheral than others—might be a bridge toward unity. I like this suggestion even though there are perhaps difficult truth claims involved.

Finally, beyond the old issues, it must be said that new obstacles to unity arise. If prominent Protestant church figures give public notice of their inability to believe in the Resurrection, more than a minority of Catholics might find this an obstacle. Catholic reluctance to ordain women has become a new obstacle to unity with certain Protestant denominations who see here a matter of biblical truth and justice.

Having haggled, I am nonetheless happy for this good work which I recommend to the general reading public. Seminarians or theological students would find it a good beginning on some topics, and can find a fuller motherlode in the footnotes.

Creationism on Trial: Evolution and God at Little Rock
by Langdon Gilkey (Winston Press, 234 pp., $12.95). Reviewed by Richard H. Bube, Department of Materials Science and Engineering, Stanford University (CA).

Langdon Gilkey, author of the classic *Maker of Heaven and Earth* and Professor of Theology at the University of Chicago Divinity School, served as a "theological witness" for the American Civil Liberties Union at the "creationist" trial in Little Rock, Arkansas, December 7-9, 1981. In this marvelous book Gilkey gives us, in about two-thirds of the text, his personal experiences related to the trial, and then reflects for the remainder on the significance of the issues. It is a book that anyone even remotely concerned about the interaction between "scientific religion" and "religious science" should read carefully.

In the first three chapters Gilkey gives us his experiences as he prepares for the trial and is deposed by the opposition lawyers. Believing that the enactment of the proposed law posed a major threat to religion, the teaching of science, and academic freedom, Gilkey was ready to serve as a witness. He shares with the reader his reactions to the material representing the background of the trial and his conclusion that "creation science represents a quite contemporary, even (alas) 'up-to-date' synthesis of both modern science and contemporary religion, a synthesis to which each one had substantially contributed" (p. 40). He also sees another synthesis that goes beyond the trial and threatens our future:

> Our present political life illustrates another unfortunate but also very modern form of union: that of contemporary right-wing economic and imperialist politics on the one hand, combined with old-time fundamentalist religion on the other hand, both seemingly intent on forming a "Christian, capitalist America." As fundamentalism has joined with science to form creation science, so the politics of the Moral Majority is dominated by a union of fundamentalism with modern conservative social theory-and regrettably, neither one seems about to go away (p. 41).

The dramatic experience of the deposition is laid out in fascinating detail, in which a witness faces the opposition lawyer's questions before the trial with the knowledge that any small error or misjudgment may become the basis for a major assault during the actual trial.

The next three chapters cover the details of the trial itself, up to the moment when Gilkey had to leave to return to Chicago. His own testimony is given us in detail, and it is a model of clear statement and delineation both in respect to the nature of science and to the relationship between science and religion. Anyone who has faced public interview can empathize with the problems in stating clearly and fairly under stress to avoid misunderstanding; in fact, anyone facing public questioning about these issues could hardly do better than review Gilkey's testimony. Especially telling in the trial itself are those moments when advocates of "creation science" are charged with heresy because they seek to talk about creation without talking about God as Creator, and when they are charged with following in the footsteps of Stalinist Russia where ideology attempted to rule scientific activities.

Part II of the book is entitled, "Analysis and Reflection: The Implications of Creation Science for Modern Society and Modern Religion." It consists of two chapters, the first of which analyzes the interactions between "Science and Religion in an Advanced Scientific Culture," and the second of which deals with the religious significance of creation. I would like to share many of the cogent arguments set forth. I will, however, content myself with sharing a couple of remarks to indicate the nature of the approach:

> Creation science embodies a common error of our cultural life, that all relevant truth is of the same sort: factual, empirical truth, truth referent to secondary causes—in a word, scientific truth" (p. 171).
> Despite this almost universal agreement among religious leaders, *the wider public*, both those who attend church and those who do not, remains apparantly quite unaware that there is no longer any such conflict between science and religion. . . . The century-old rapprochment between science and theology is the best-kept secret in our cultural life (p. 187).

> In a "Time of Troubles" such as we are entering, the religious dimension tends to expand and, unfortunately, to grow in fanaticism, intolerance, and violence; science and technology tend accordingly to concentrate more and more on developing greater means of destructive and repressive power. This combination represents, as we can all agree, a most dependable recipe for self-destruction (p. 206).

Gilkey gives us no one-sided attack on fundamentalism in the name of science; rather he provides us with a careful analysis of both science and religion and the problems one encounters when one forgets the religious dimension of all human endeavor.

The book concludes with 25 pages of Notes, and two Appendices giving the text

of Arkansas Act 590, and the Judgment by the Federal Court at the conclusion of the trial.

Beyond its immediate relevance, the book can be strongly recommended as a clear presentation of the proper and improper uses of scientific and religious approaches to life and its problems.

God So Loved the Third World: The Biblical Vocabulary of Oppression
by Thomas D. Hanks (Orbis Books, 1983, 152 pp., $8.95). Reviewed by William C. Williams, Professor of Old Testament, Southern California College.

This book, written in much the spirit of R.J. Sider's *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*, sets before it as its task the formulation of a biblical theology of oppression (pp. 3-4). It begins with an analysis of the most common Hebrew word roots that convey in some way the notion of oppression. A case in point is the first root, *'ashaq*. Hanks points to Ecclesiastes 4:1, where the tears of the oppressed and the power of their oppressors make it clear that the root *'ashaq*, in this passage at least, clearly means "to oppress." Since there is no serious dispute about this meaning for the root, so far, so good.

In a similar manner, Hanks analyzes nineteen other Hebrew "roots" found in the Old Testament (*yanah, nagas, lahats, ratsats, daka', 'anah, tsar-tsarar, tsarar-tsar-tsarah, tsug, dhq, zw', hamots, kff, matsor, 'awwatah, 'otser-'etser, qshh, tolal,* and *tok*).* In each of them he finds an articulation of oppression in some manner or another.

Having satisfied himself that he has adequately demonstrated that there is a wide variety of biblical material and terms in the Old Testament expressing the concept of oppression, Hanks now pauses to reaffirm his belief in the truthfulness (=inerrancy) of Scripture. Then he turns to an examination of oppression in the New Testament. The first word he takes up is *thlipsis* (which he curiously transliterates *thlipsis*). He takes sharp issue with the lexicons for omitting "oppression" from the list of meanings for this word. Instead, he says, "they are content to use softer, more ambiguous terms such as 'affliction', 'tribulation,' 'difficulty,' 'suffering,' and the like" (p. 47).

Hanks does not follow his treatment of *thlipsis* by a systematic treatment of other words meaning oppression in keeping with his model of Old Testament treatment. Instead, he turns to Luke-Acts, appealing to passages such as Acts 10:38: "[You know] how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, how he went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed (*katadunasteúo*) by the devil, for God was with him."

The third movement in Hanks' treatment is an analysis of the Reformation in terms of liberation theology. He concludes that the Reformation failed to curb the abuses of justice in the church. The church, with few exceptions, had sided *with* the power structure, rather than against it. And the Reformation did not change this.

Hanks, like Sider before him, says some things that need to be heard by evangelicals, even though they are not pleasant and though they will make the hearer uncomfortable. Surely in this world of misery and suffering, Christians should be the first to be touched by the need of others, but all too often they are the last. One has the feeling that the author is struggling to break free from the middle-class perspective that he attributes to evangelicalism, while at the same time avoiding the Marxist presuppositions that underlie the more radical of the liberation theologians.

One could easily quibble with Hanks over minutiae. One could note that a number of the words adduced as "roots" are not roots at all, but words. One could also note that he confines his research to the lexicons and ignores the scholarly journals entirely. But it would be a mistake to dismiss him so cheaply. The issues he raises are real ones, and the discomfort they occasion is not to be so casually shrugged off. They must be tasted, even savored, to be appreciated.

On the other hand, one has the feeling that in reading Hanks, one is reading, not a biblical theology, but a tract, and that the author is an evangelist determined to persuade, rather than a scholar in search of the truth. I cringe when twenty Hebrew roots are leveled to mean "oppression." I do not agree that the definitions "suffering" or "affliction" are always "softer" or "more ambiguous" than "oppression." I find that there is a great deal of what seems to me to be over-simplification of a highly complex issue: why are people poor? The author's answer, "oppression," with hardly any qualification, seems to be *an* answer, but I remain unconvinced that the issue is that simple. And while I feel oppression needs to be addressed by the church, I believe it does not constitute an entity in and of itself. Instead it becomes a part of a larger deficiency: a lack of a well thought out theology of economics (such as C.J.H. Wright attempts to present in *An Eye for an Eye* [IVP, 1983]), governance (fertile areas for such an examination would be the recent studies on the Kingdom of God in the OT [e.g., J. Gray's *The Biblical Doctrine of the Reign of God*, T & T Clark, 1979]), and power.

* The transliterations are Hanks' own.

The Parish Help Book: A Guide to Social Ministry in the Parish
by Herbert F. Weber (Ave Maria, 1983, 112 pp., $3.95). Reviewed by Samuel Henderson, Minister of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), currently serving two congregations in Selma, AL.

But can it happen in *this* parish? Author Herbert Weber encourages us to believe it can, developing broad guidelines for helping parishes to develop social concern and to act on it. His extensive parish experience shows itself in much shared pastoral wisdom on the kinds of change processes to be nurtured in individuals and congregations if viable social ministries are to be initiated and sustained.

The book is not addressed only to "dyed-in-the-wool" social activists, but to all Christians. Weber begins with examples of glaring social needs and gently challenges church members to see themselves as part of the solution, asking, "If not us, then who?" The book provides suggestions on getting started, using resources, and sustaining ministries over the long haul. Suggestions are weighted toward personal and institutional charity, but Weber does introduce the need for structural justice concerns in addition to charity.

The volume contains some very helpful reflections on the nature of ministry. Examples are chapters on establishing connections with persons in pain, the need to know one's self as well as community needs, and the relational dimensions of the helping process. The author avoids the long lists of ministry possibilities and resources that fill many such books. His aim is to help develop a mindset and a dynamic at the parish level that will lead to creative local surveys of needs and resources. This is a most worthy goal, but as a basic handbook, this work would have been strengthened by a few more concrete suggestions, models, and resource lists. The balance of the book might also have been improved somewhat by more extensive treatment of the needs and possibilities for making structures and institutions more just.

The *Parish Help Book* is nonetheless a well-rounded, practical, and encouraging guide to social ministry. It is broad enough to prove helpful to individuals or groups at varying levels of social concern and ministry experience.

Living Faith
by Jacques Ellul (Harper & Row, 1983, 287 pp., $9.95). Reviewed by David W. Gill, Associate Professor of Christian Ethics, New College Berkeley.

Having just re-read *Fear and Trembling* by Soren Kierkegaard, I am again struck, on this re-reading of *Living Faith* by Jacques Ellul, by the powerful similarities between the two authors. In both style and content, Ellul is the closest thing I know to a 20th century Kierkegaard. Neither SK nor Ellul can be understood out of context; they both write passionate, contextually-engaged theological reflections, not abstract doctrinal manuals.

For SK, the context was the deadening influence of a philosophical system (Hegelianism). For Ellul it is the crushing influence of the politicized, technological society. Aside from this difference of historical context, and some differences in terminology, I can find no difference in basic perspective between SK and JE on the meaning of faith. It is no surprise that Ellul explicitly avows his appreciation of SK in this volume: SK has "given us the best, the most genuine, the most radical account of the existential reality of faith" (p. 106).

The original title of Ellul's book (in French) translates as "Faith at the Cost of Doubt." Ellul's tactic throughout this study is to set up a vivid contrast between "belief" and "faith." This is paralleled by his discussion

of "religion" and "revelation." "Belief" and "religion" are human phenomena, expressing the human quest to reach up to (or construct) a god. They are useful, even necessary, components of human experience—though not for those reasons to be considered good in a Christian sense. They are corporate phenomena, uniting adherents and providing answers to basic human questions and needs. Whether in the form of traditional religion or modern "secular" religions (e.g., Marxism), these phenomena are booming today. The problem is that they serve as substitutes for the true relation to God, rather than as the avenues they usually claim to be.

By contrast, "faith" is the individual response to God's Word, to revelation, to God's questions for me. Faith "isolates" me, separates me out of the crowd and locates me in living relation to a living, speaking God. Faith brings about holiness (otherness). While religious beliefs are often reassuring, true faith is always accompanied by elements of doubt and uncertainty (SK calls it "dread," and "fear and trembling").

But the living God to whom faith relates me turns out to be the loving God. His challenge to me must therefore be expressed in my daily life in terms of concrete acts of love to my neighbor. Faith, for Ellul, must be an unconditional, gratuitous relationship to God, i.e., it is not exercised "for the sake of" one result or another. Nevertheless, a good bit of Ellul's argument is intended to show the desparate need in our contemporary world for people whose lives are guided by the transcendent God. If Christians will live out this kind of faith, this "cosmic lever" may just open up some new possibilities for a world closed and locked into a deadly downward cycle.

Ellul's study has three parts: an opening, rambling dialogue on the status of belief (and to a lesser extent faith) in the modern world; a middle section more expository and analytical in form; and a closing chronicle of the horrors of a world without (enough) authentic faith.

Ellul does not conceal his angry rejection of the theological and ethical positions of many of his contemporary French thinkers. Nor is it difficult in these sections to find many personal laments and a few "I told you so's." One should note as well, however, Ellul's bouquets to several writers and his confession that above all he is attacking himself for failing to live the consistent life of faithful response to God's revelation.

As always, I find that Ellul's thought is brilliant, insightful, and vastly more stimulating and helpful than most contemporary Christian writers. I think that in basic outline his dialectical thought and his sense of the paradox inherent in all of truth and life are on target both biblically and existentially. But I think his arguments are unnecessarily extreme and are thus, for many readers, unacceptable. Three examples: revelation and Scripture, the individual and the crowd, and faith and belief.

"We should never think of the Bible as any sort of talisman or oracle constantly at our disposal that we need only open and read to be in relation to the Word of God and God himself" (p. 191). "The Bible . . .is never automatically and in itself the Word of God, but is always capable of becoming that Word . . .in a way denied to all other writings" (p. 128). Nothing is clearer *in practice* than that Ellul is profoundly submissive to the text of Scripture from cover to cover. But his fears of a "paper pope" and of separating Scripture from its Author do *not* require the dichotomy espoused by his theory. A letter from me does not cease to be my word when you are bored with me, out of daily relation to me, etc. Still less need this be the case with God who has *chosen* to put his word in writing. There are better ways of stressing the essential transition from written Word of God to obedient reception of God's command.

So too, Ellul is brilliant in describing the individual standing in faith before God—and the poverty of the crowd. But it is too extreme to suggest that authentic faith always isolates (and only love reunites). It is common faith (true faith) that draws the community of faith together (sometimes without much love in evidence to begin with!). What is missing is an adequate view of the church, the body of Christ, for which there is "one faith" (Eph. 4:5)—not just "one love"—creating community.

Finally, it is too strong to oppose faith and belief (allowing Ellul's definitions) as intransigently as Ellul does. The point, it seems to me, is that our articulation of Christian beliefs must always be rigorously subordinated to what Ellul calls faith. Not eliminated or opposed—subordinated and corrected!

Having made these critical observations, I must stress again, in conclusion, that on the whole Ellul's discussion is brilliant, timely, and essential. It is on target and breathes the spirit of Holy Scripture. It is a powerful antidote to many flaws in our thinking. It is not a *sufficient* statement; in my view, however, it is clearly *necessary*.

BOOK COMMENTS

To Be A Revolutionary
by Padre J. Guadalupe Carney (Harper & Row Publishers, 1985, 473 pp.).

Padre J. Guadalupe Carney has written an autobiographical account of his "metamorphosis" resulting from his experiences and involvement in the peasant agrarian struggles of Central America. *To Be A Revolutionary* is a chronicle of his experience written for the Latin America Campesino (translated from Spanish). While not graduate reading level, it does offer a thorough introduction to Campesino struggles from their prespective, clearly outlining their relationship to the Roman Catholic church and the state.

Padre Guadalupe or Father Jim Carney was born in Chicago, IL in 1924. His story begins with recollection of his childhood and teen years, focusing on his decision to enter the priesthood as a Jesuit Missionary.

He shares his theological-socio-economic transformation, which he calls his metamorphosis, by reliving scene-by-scene the events,

situations and the theological-psychological struggles that led to his joining a revolutionary force in Honduras as a chaplain and his eventual death, the circumstances of which to this day are unknown.

To Be A Revolutionary offers excellent insights into the struggles many Christian individuals in Central America must go through. Carney gives excellent observations on peasant life, Latin American popular religion and culture. His information on Honduran agrarian reform and local political struggle are outstanding, as they provide an excellent political history.

—Rev. Luis Cortes, Jr.

Coming Home, A Handbook for Exploring the Sanctuary Within
by Betsy Caprio and Thomas M. Hedberg (Paulist Press, 1986, 279 pp.).

For the pragmatist, the busy student or pastor, the "concerned with the practical person," yet for one aware of the deep, deep inner desire to "come home" this book is an invitation, a *roadmap*, that entices us away from a formless wandering to discover our roots, our own authentic being, a promised land, familiar and mysterious.

Deeply founded in the psychoanalytic insights of C.G. Jung, this volume is a fantastic melange of aphorisms, fables, Scriptures, stories, nineteenth century illustrations and drawings, philosophical quotations, dreams, all probings of the "inner world of the soul," dialogues between consciousness and the unconscious, without giving the content of the unconscious *too much* (the authors' emphasis), focusing on the "both-and" rather than the "either-or" of mysticism, psychoanalytic cultivation of the inner world, practical evangelism and seeking justice-peace-practical-applications of the concerned Christian.

Many fascinating insights are here, such as the prayer, "Thank you, Lord, for sending that rotten person into my life this morning-I'd really like to punch him in the nose, but I know there's a reason he's here right now . . . and that you are helping me learn one more thing about myself. Please keep me from breaking his neck-and, as I said before, thanks a lot . . . I think . . . Amen (and please don't do it again)" (p. 112).

Or again, "the teachings of all the world religions tell us that, yes, we can live that life of intimacy with the Divine Lover in this lifetime" (p. 191). Or the story of the 51 year old who dreamed of a cross made of circles, on a 45 degree angle, "it was as if Jesus had said to me, 'Lay down your cross. Let go. It's time to rest.' "

Just for pleasure and humor, read this book. And suddenly your Self-centered (in the Jungian sense, the Self is the core of our being that we call the dwelling place of God) Self will say, in a wondering voice, "my detective has found the (or another) Holy solution to my mystery."

Finally, as one who drives through Ute Pass (Colorado) in the high mountains every day going to work, this spoke to me, "people travel to wonder at the mountains, the sea, the stars, and pass by themselves without wonderment" (p. 64).

These authors are Roman Catholic religious, and strongly Jungian oriented, and this volume reflects the best from Jung and the Catholic faith, and is extremely useful, particularly for the activist evangelist, in the inward search "for home" in God.

—John M. Vayhinger

The Spirit of the Earth
by John Hart (Paulist Press, 1984, 165 pp., $8.95).

John Hart, associate professor of religious studies at the College of Great Falls, Montana has set forth a reflection on the relationship of land ethics and Christian theology in his work, *The Spirit of the Earth.*

After establishing the case of poor prior stewardship of American land resources, he attempts to develop "ideas with the hope that people who are unaware of problems of land ownership and use might become educated about them and inspired to work in their own contexts to resolve them, and that people who are aware of them might find . . . a theoretical base for their ongoing labors to promote an equitable distribution of and care for the land and its resources." His theoretical base is an attempted blend of American Indian and Judeo-Christian ways of seeing the land.

Though his Catholic theological bias is somewhat limiting, *The Spirit of the Earth* provides a helpful starting place for a theology of land use. As well Hart makes no attempt to mask his sided socio/political sources which lead him to some of his "obvious" conclusions.

The summation of the ten "Principles of Land Stewardship" from the *Catholic Bishops' Statement on Land Use* and the twenty steps for land reform are helpful inclusions which make this book a helpful reference for relevant study and discussion in ecological ethics.

—Steve Moore

The Rise of Moralism: The Proclamation of the Gospel from Hooker to Baxter
by C. FitzSimons Allison (Morehouse Barlow, 1984, 250 pp., $8.95).

C.F. Allison, the Episcopal Bishop of South Carolina, first published this work in 1966. Now it has been reprinted by Morehouse Barlow in an attractively priced paperback. The book's thesis is that the theology of English Episcopalianism underwent a thoroughgoing humanization over the course of the seventeenth century. Allison argues that Anglican divines early in that century (for example, Richard Hooker, John Donne, and Lancelot Andrewes) had succeeded in establishing a view of salvation which balanced "doctrine and ethics, Christian dogma and morals, justification and sanctification." This view, moreover, was distinct from both the Catholic soteriology of the Council of Trent and Reformed predestinarianism on the continent. Later in the century, however, Anglical theologians (especially Jeremy Taylor and Richard Baxter) moved away from this balance to a much more self-confident view of human capabilities. The result was a moralism which stressed natural capacity and which pointed toward eighteenth-century deism and twentieth-century secularism.

Allison may have overestimated the difficulties of seventeenth-century Calvinism. He could also have tied theological developments more closely to other intellectual and social changes. Yet this is still a very good book which clearly presents a message which is as sobering for the late twentieth century as for the late seventeenth century. That message tells how easily Christian theology with a proper place for human activity slides toward humanitarianism lightly veneered with Christian language. With this book Allison performs the same worthwhile service for Anglican theology that Joseph Haroutunian offered for American in his telling book, *From Piety to Moralism: The Passing of the New England Theology* (1932).

—Mark A. Noll

We Confess The Church
by Hermann Sasse (Concordia, 1986, 136 pp., $11.95).

This is a work of undoubted expertise. "Hermann Sasse (1895-1976) [the book's jacket tells us] is widely recognized as one of the 20th century's foremost confessional Lutheran scholars."

At the same time, the work's lack of scope makes it as much as useless for ecumenical dialogue. The title quite properly could read: *We (Lutherans) Confess (a highly Lutheran view of) the Church.* Throughout, the primary authority to which Sasse has recourse is not scripture, is not the history of Christian thought as such, is not even the theology of Martin Luther. His prime authority is found in the classic confessions of Lutheranism.

For those who stand with him in this premise, the book would probably be very helpful. For any who would feel a need to question or test the premise, there is hardly left room to do so. Sasse's approach does not invite dialogue.

—Vernard Eller

Moses, A Psychodynamic Study
by Dorothy F. Zeligs (Human Sciences Press, 1986, 460 pp.).

Dorothy Zeligs, a practicing psychoanalyst in New York with a doctorate from Columbia University, has written often in the arena of the Bible and psychoanalysis. In this study of Moses, she uses analytic methodology to reveal "a genuine human being as well as a giant of the Pentateuch," a law giver with whom much of the ethical base of both Judaism and Christianity rests. Especially the religious student preparing for *leadership* of the people of God, will identify with Moses' struggle through his weaknesses and strengths.

With great respect for both Freud and Biblical Higher Criticism, Zeligs is not paralyzed by either but assumes "an underlying unity in the Biblical Theme that goes beyond theoretic diversity of the sources," (p. 16) with a cohesiveness of purpose and meaning that had long been central in Judeo-Christian belief, especially among evangelicals. This man of the Pentateuchal story is described as *The Hero* (i.e. Rank's mythic hero) and she uses *empathy* as base for the story itself.

This volume is a relief after our youthful simplistic reading of the Scriptures and what the so-called Higher Critics taught us in theological school. Many of the critical problems of the text with their baffling features in the modern world, our author resolves through analytic explanation, i.e., identification, transference, sexuality in relation to incestuous objects, rivalry between fathers and sons, the return of the repressed, etc. Yet, making sense for who we believe in the trustworthiness and authority of the Bible, and deepening our faith in the accuracy of the Scriptures.

A key paragraph summarizes this fascinating book, "what becomes clear is the lifetime quest for greater intimacy with the Deity and the conflicting fear of such closeness, with its dangers of the loss of self-identity. There is a struggle, with the wish for fusion, for being one with God, and the anxieties inherent in such a situation" (p. 21). The same struggle is here that the psychotherapists finds in treating students studying for ministry and Christian service, the identical anxiety and depression, whose healing comes through personal Christian faith.

Dr. Zeligs has kept up with current historical and archeological discoveries and finds "a distinctive feature of Hebrew biblical life that its leaders and heroes were psychologically understandable beings," (p. 409) a factor known to those of us training in both psychology and theology.

This volume is a valuable purchase for any seminary student with an interest in the integration of historical Christian faith and its psychological applications to human behavior.

–John M. Vayhinger

Trouble Enough: Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon
by Ernest H. Taves (Prometheus Books, 1984, 210 pp., $19.95).

Popularly written yet scholarly, this account is divided into two parts. The first (three-fourths of the book) is a history of Joseph Smith and early Mormonism up to 1844 when Smith was assassinated and the faithful laid plans to leave Nauvoo, Illinois beginning in 1846. Part two explains stylometry and applies it to parts of the *Book of Mormon* and the *Book of Abraham*, concluding that there is "no evidence of multiple authorship" (260), thus indicating that Smith may have written the whole corpus.

The burden of *Trouble Enough* is "to set forth the truth" (xi) while being both sympathetic to Mormonism yet faithful to the demands of historical evidence. Taves, with a Mormon background but not a Mormon, succeeds admirably in a field where the historian is confronted at every point with "pervasive conflict and discrepancy between Mormon and non-Mormon data" (15). Following Smith from birth in 1805 in Sharon, Vermont through all of his peregrinations westward, Taves presents a well-documented account of carefully-sifted evidence. His conclusions are suggestive rather than dogmatic. For example, on the question of whether or not the golden plates from which the *Book of Mormon* was allegedly transcribed ever existed Taves says, "the phenomenon of the Emperor's Clothes comes to mind" (48). More footnotes and fewer parentheses would help, but *Trouble Enough* is a fair, readable account which calls the Mormon church to deal with its questionable history with something other than "platitude, half-truth, omission, and denial" (262).

–Mark Bishop Newell

Religion Southern Style: Southern Baptists and Society in Historical Perspective
by Norman A. Yance (Assoc. of Baptist Professors of Religion, 1978, 66 pp., $3.95).

Norman Yance's study is inappropriately titled. Southern religion, individualistic, culturally captive, traditional and conservative, is the explanation, not the subject, of this study. A reworked version of Yance's doctoral dissertation, the book traces the devel-

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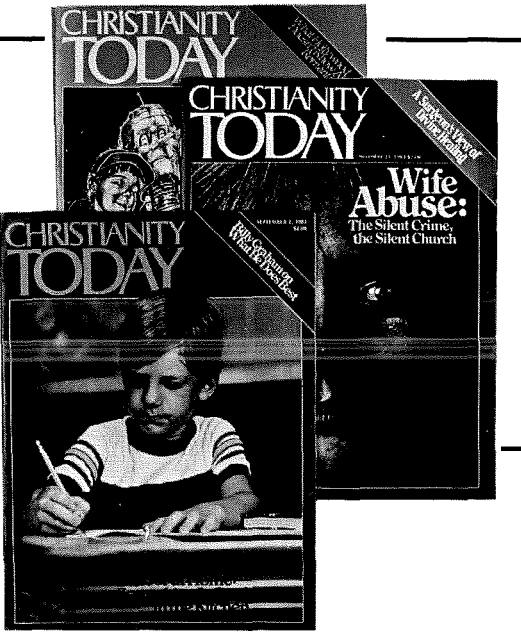

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opment of the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The Commission, Yance tells us, has had a rocky history among Southern Baptists. From 1845 to 1908 concern for social issues was virtually non-existent. In the latter year the Commission's antecedent, the Committee on Temperance, was organized as temperance was the social issue that mattered most to Southern Baptists. Since 1942 the list of social concerns had grown. Yance's explanation for the course of development is that the Convention's attitudes have followed those of the South. As the region has become less isolated from the movements and issues of American society, Southern Baptists, the quintessential expression of Southern Protestantism, followed in train.

The monograph provides basic information about an important agency of the largest Protestant denomination in the United States. It is useful, but not particularly instructive because it leaves major questions unexplored. Why, for example, did Southern Methodists and Presbyterians, whom Yance compares with Southern Baptists, make much stronger statements on social issues, even though they too were part of Southern culture? Yance's narrowly focused study does not offer answers to these kinds of questions.

–Merle D. Strege

Letters to the Editor

TSF Bulletin welcomes letters to the editor. We especially enjoy those that carry on creative dialogue with material we've published. Send your letters to the Editor, TSF Bulletin, P.O. Box 7895, Madison, WI 53707-7895.

William Ellery Channing: Selected Writings
edited by David Robinson (Paulist Press, 1985, 310 pp., $12.95).

There is small wonder that the editors of the *Sources of American Spirituality* should include the writings of William Ellery Channing in their new multi-volume series. Pastor to Boston's Federal Street Church (1803-1842) and literary essayist, Channing played an integral role in New England ecclesiastical affairs by founding Unitarianism and inspiring those who would eventually rally under the banner of Transcendentalism.

What is surprising about this collection of Channing's work is the distinctiveness of his spirituality when compared to the pieties of his contemporaries. Channing shared with the Protestants of his time a firm reliance on Scottish Realism in his historical and ethical arguments for Christianity. But he had no sympathy for evangelical piety and its more passionate outbursts. Instead he stressed the idealistic character of Christianity and hopes to cultivate the spiritual capacities of the individual through his sermons.

Perhaps what accounts for Channing's unusual spirituality in his conception of human nature. Revolting against the constraints of Calvinism, Channing regarded human nature as a source of unending spiritual potential in which divinity is present. In this light, spirituality for Channing became the continuous pursuit of "self-culture," "the unfolding and perfecting" of man's nature.

The works that David Robinson has selected all show the marks of Channing's spirituality. Whether in his polemical writings, his sermons, his literary essays, or in his remarks on social problems, Channing reiterated his high estimate of human nature and always pleaded for a culture and religion that would expand man's faculties.

Although the essentials of the Christian religion sometimes seem lost to Channing, this volume still makes for interesting reading. To students of American church history, it offers insights into the decline of Calvinism in New England, and to those interested in American culture, Channing's writings mark the beginnings of the Genteel Tradition in this nation's literature.

–D.G. Hart

The Bible Cookbook: Lore of Food in Biblical Times Plus Modern Adaptations of Ancient Recipes
by Daniel S. Cutler (William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1985, 416 pp., $19.95).

This is a book in which the subtitle is a better indication of the contents than the title. About one third of the book includes lists of recipes and about two thirds of the book explains the lore of food in biblical times. The first four chapters are basically introductory. The next fourteen chapters are devoted to the following food items which were eaten in biblical times: spices, lentils, milk, eggs, grains and vegetables, fish, herbs, fruit, beef, veal, lamb, fowl, bread, and honey. Each of the last thirteen chapters begins with a discussion of a particular food item and concludes with a list of recipes which contain that item.

This book is written for a popular audience and would be useful both for those interested in recipes and also those interested in the role of food in biblical times. Cutler is by profession a medical illustrator but has received instruction in Jewish schools. One of the strengths of this work is the author's extensive usage of evidence related to food from the Mishnah and the Talmud. Yet the work is by no means directed only to a Jewish audience. The author also cites evidence from the New Testament and comments on Christian practices. Cutler's attention to both Jewish and Christian perspectives related to food helps to illuminate a number of biblical texts

as well as current customs and practices related to food.

Lest any one be led astray, few if any ancient recipes of biblical times exist. We know very little about how foods were prepared for eating. The second part of the subtitle of this book might better be rendered "Modern recipes which include typical foods eaten in biblical times."

Cutler rightly draws attention to the much neglected subject of food in the Bible. He quotes and comments on a number of biblical and post-biblical texts which relate to food. While he does have a good topical index, it would have been useful to have an index of his profuse citations of primary sources.

Cutler draws upon texts which were written over a period of about two thousand years. One should not assume that practices concerning agriculture, cooking, diet, and meals did not change over a lengthy span of time. Cutler's comments must not be considered as normative for all periods of time. While he does show some historical awareness of the changes in the role of particular food items, further critical distinctions need to be made.

–Stephen A. Reed

The Psalms: Prayers for the Ups, Downs and In-Betweens of Life
by John F. Craghan (Michael Glazier, Inc., 1985, 200 pp., $7.95).

It is harvest time in Psalms studies: Craghan is an excellent harvest hand. He swings a sharp scythe through the fields sown and cultivated by Psalms scholars for the past thirty years, fields now white unto harvest, and winnows out the chaff.

After his opening chapter in which he correlates the nature of prayer, the character of the Psalms, and the rhythms of human life, he arranges six groups of psalms: psalms of descriptive praise, trust, wisdom, royal psalms, laments, and declarative praise. Five psalms are placed in each group, except for the laments, which gets ten. The format is conducive to study, individually or in groups. The academic substructure is rigorous, but in no way ponderous. He wears his learning lightly.

He does better, though, than guide us in study; he directs us to prayer. He shows how the Psalms were and can be prayed, and develops in us a mind-set (spirit-set, soul-set) toward prayer. He concludes each chapter with a New Testament passage, encouraging a continuity between the prayers that lead to Christ and the prayers that are fulfilled in the name of Christ.

–Eugene H. Peterson

Augustine of Hippo: Selected Writings
Translated and introduction by Mary T. Clark (Paulist Press, 1984, 514 pp.).

This compilation of sources takes its place in the Paulist Press series on *The Classics of Western Spirituality*. Its purpose is to make the spirituality of Augustine available to Augustine readers and others interested in the subject. Mary T. Clark, a Religious of the Sacred Heart and professor of Philosophy at Manhattanville College, is well known among philosophers and theologians for her thoughtful analysis and careful translation of Augustine.

Clark draws substantial excerpts from *Confession, The Happy Life, Homilies on the Psalms 119-122, Homilies on the Gospel of John, Homily on the First Epistle of St. John, On the Trinity, On Seeing God, On the Presence of God, The City of God* and *The Rule of St. Augustine*. Brief introductions put each selection in its setting and point to the essential contribution of the work. Each translation is fresh, crisp and readable, and the book contains a substantial bibliography and helpful index.

Augustine's religious experience develops in the *Confessions*, the first of the readings. Then each of the succeeding writings accents a particular insight into spirituality developed by Augustine. Finally in *The Rule of St. Augustine* one sees how closely Augustine articulates the spirituality espoused in the documents of Vatican II. Indeed, one cannot read this material without acknowledging the debt Western Christian spirituality owes to Augustine. Recommended for Augustine scholars and students, and all interested in the nature of spirituality in general.

–Robert E. Webber

Reaching the Unreached: the Old-New Challenge
by Harvie M. Conn, ed. (Presbyterian and Reformed, 1984, 178 pp., $8.95).

This is a valuable set of essays that is remarkable for its vitality and openness. Most were originally given at a conference at Westminster Theological Seminary; hence they aim to challenge the Reformed community. But they deserve a wider readership, not the least because they give ready access to the concept of unreached peoples. Three articles are devoted to this, two of which are by Ralph Winter. The remainder focus on the need to reach unreached peoples, on avoiding past mistakes, and on concrete suggestions for mission boards, seminaries and churches. The writers are seasoned experts and they achieve a good balance between theory and strategy. There is a healthy desire to enter into discussion with the Third World and with the other Christians. As a whole there is here a lot of good sense on missions and it is presented in a refreshing and self-critical manner.

–William J. Abraham

C.S. Lewis: The Man and His Achievement
by John Peters (Paternoster Press, 1985, 143 pp., $5.95).

Mr. Peters adds one more book to the growing list of secondary literature devoted to the life and writing of C.S. Lewis. This slender volume of barely one hundred and thirty pages is a clearly and concisely written introduction to the man and some of his major works. Serious students of Lewisiana will find little new in this book. Indeed, it is a brief sketch of the man's life, and an overview of his work as an allegorist, Christian apologist, literary critic, writer of science fiction, and "letter writer extraordinary." Finally the book concludes with a few pages of appraisal based upon insights from Michael Aeschliman, Clyde S. Kilby, Walter Hooper, as well as some of Peters's own opinions.

C.S. Lewis: The Man and His Achievement is written for and will be helpful to the student who is just becoming acquainted with Lewis. It will be less useful to those who have read most of Lewis's books, as well as the major secondary works such as Clyde S. Kilby's *The Christian World of C.S. Lewis* and the Hooper and Green biography. Unfortunately, the book will be slightly limited in appeal because there is no bibliography, some of the most recent scholarship is overlooked in the analyses, and many of the endnotes for chapter three were inadvertently omitted. Nevertheless, this is the most up-to-date primer.

–Lyle W. Dorsett

BOOK COMMENT CONTRIBUTORS

William J. Abraham is Associate Professor of Evangelism and Philosophy of Religion at Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist Univ.; Rev. Luis Cortes, Jr. is Associate Executive Minister of the Philadelphia Baptist Association; Lyle Dorsett is Curator of the Marion E. Wade Collection and Professor of History at Wheaton College; Vernard Eller is Professor of Theology at the University of La Verne (CA); D.G. Hart is a Ph.D. candidate in American History at Johns Hopkins Univ.; Steve Moore is Director of the Wesley Foundation at Texas Tech, Lubbock, TX; Mark Bishop Newell is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Notre Dame; Mark A. Noll is Professor of History at Wheaton College; Eugene H. Peterson is Pastor of Christ Our King Presbyterian Church, Bel Air, Maryland; Stephen A. Reed is a Ph.D. candidate at Claremont Graduate School; Merle D. Strege is Professor of Historical Theology at Anderson School of Theology; John M. Vayhinger is Executive Director of the Colorado Interfaith Counseling Center; Robert E. Webber is Professor of Theology at Wheaton College.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Response to Donald Bloesch

I am glad that Donald Bloesch has responded, under eight headings, to issues which I raised in discussing his book, *The Battle for the Trinity*. Since three of Bloesch's headings (#1, #2 and #4) concern terminology which I found ambiguous, I am happy to find some of this clarified. I find his elucidation of the relationship between symbol and concept (#4) very precise.

While I never suspected that Bloesch opposed "feminism" pure and simple, I am glad

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to hear that it is "ideological feminism" which he (like myself) wishes to critique (#1). Nevertheless, despite his claim that he uses this latter term "consistently," I find it a mere four times in *The Battle for the Trinity* (pp. 5, 6, 77 and 81). I am also happy that Bloesch does not intend to "associate feminism with the demonic side of Nazism" (#2). Still, I suspect that many will suppose that such an association is implied in his "striking parallels between the two ideologies. . . ." (However, I accept his correction that feminism is no more racially and nationally inclusive than are socialism and welfare liberalism (#3).

In general, though, little purpose would be served by arguing further as to how clear Bloesch's terminology was. While I think my criticisms could be supported by further examples, his recent explanations can only enhance discussion of the important issues he raises.

Far more crucial is Bloesch's understanding of his cardinal doctrine, the Trinity, and especially of the relationships among the trinitarian Persons (#5). While Bloesch affirms the equality of these Persons, he gives "equal weight" to a "basic subordination" in which initiative flows from Father to Son to Spirit. This pattern is indeed found in Scripture, especially where it speaks of creation and preservation. The Father created the universe through the Son, who upholds it (Heb. 1:2-3, Col. 1:16-17), while the Spirit hovers over the creation and brings it to life (Gen. 1:2, Psalm 104:30).

Bloesch, however, gives little attention to my basic point that this is only one pattern of trinitarian relationship found in Scripture. For instance, the Spirit not only "carries out the decisions of the Father and the Son," but often takes initiative. The Spirit empowers Jesus' ministry, raises him from the dead, and bestows new birth upon believers. Generally speaking, as Scripture turns from the origin of all things towards their eschatological goal, initiative originates increasingly from Son and Spirit.

The more one is impressed by the varying relational patterns among the Persons, the less weighty does Bloesch's "basic subordination" appear, and the more fundamental do interaction and intercommunion become to trinitarian reality. In general, the more subordination is stressed, the more does the Trinity appear to support hierarchical relationships in Church, society and between the sexes; the more interaction among equals is stressed, the more important does mutality in all these spheres become. While Bloesch critiques ecclesiastical and social hierarchies in various ways, I suspect that his preference for masculine God-language is related to his emphasis on intra-trinitarian subordination; for this can imply that, within the Godhead itself, "the Father" most fully represents what is meant by "God."

When Scripture deals with creation and preservation, it views God primarily as transcendent; when it speaks of the initiation of salvation, it views him as irrupting into history. These activities, I argued in my article, are often best symbolized by masculine imagery. But when Scripture points towards the eschatological goal of all things, it envisions God dwelling in the midst of creation. This, I argued, is often best symbolized by the feminine. I am surprised, then, that Bloesch apparently finds me dismissing God's male-like initiatory activity "as of minimal importance" (#8). For I had repeatedly affirmed that the protological/"masculine" and the eschatological/"feminine" are equally significant. Without a counter-balancing emphasis on transcendence, talk of divine immanence will indeed lead towards the panentheism that Bloesch rightly fears.

Bloesch also notes that eschatology itself involves "a divine intervention into human history" (#8). While I fully agree, I would emphasize, as Bloesch goes on to say, that this is followed by "the creation of a new heaven and a new earth"; and that this creation, where God dwells among us (Rev. 21:1-4), is the goal of that very intervention. Moreover, I would stress that this new creation has already begun—largely through the outpouring of the spirit who gives us birth, comforts and nurtures us.

Finally, Bloesch claims that use of feminine God-imagery leads to increasingly "impersonal language concerning God." He supposes that my own appreciation for feminine expressions stems from a preference for "symbolic abstractions" over personal terms (#7, cf. #6). To be sure, feminine symbols have often been used to depict the divine as an impersonal, nature-like womb or matrix from which all things ceaselessly and thoughtlessly spring. This kind of depersonalization Bloesch is rightly concerned to avoid.

But surely a God-language adequately expressing the birthing, nurturing, caressing, encompassing activity of the Holy Spirit—and the responsive, serving, self-giving character of the Son—would be far distant from any such impersonal paganism. In fact, by sensitively incorporating such emphases, Christian God-language might well give better expression to some "personal" characteristics which its traditional stress on initiating, commanding and ruling sometimes slights. With Bloesch, I agree that this is difficult to do. I too find that "changing back and forth from Father to Mother" often "draws attention to sexuality" in a way the Bible does not (#7). Nonetheless, I can hardly agree that a use of feminine imagery which is truly rooted in Scripture and Christian tradition will make our God-language less personal. It is far more likely to do the reverse.

Thomas N. Finger
Associate Professor
Systematic Theology
Northern Baptist
Theological Seminary

Eller on Barth

At a number of points in the Sept.-Oct. 1986 **Bulletin** there are to be found writers suggesting (and other scholars cited as having suggested) that one of Karl Barth's major contributions came in his insisting that authentic theological disquisition *must* give attention to the social context and be relevant to the political praxis of those to whom the theology is addressed.

Surely, that observation regarding Barth is correct. However, it says nothing of significance—nothing one way or another—and this for the fact that it stops short. That is, it stops short of recognizing that there are two contrary ways in which theology might be relevant to social praxis. Either theology could come in as *supportive* of particular political ideologies and programs/or it could come in as *critical* of the human presumption represented in any and all political ideology. But *critique* can be just as relevant to praxis as *support* can be.

Nevertheless, the **Bulletin** people see only the supportive alternative and thus present Barth as a forerunner of our contemporary liberal, liberationist, social-activist, revolutionist, politico-theological praxis. This, at least, is their *thesis*—though I haven't seen that much has been done in the way of making their *case*.

On the other hand, what is so very clear is that the first consequence following from Barth's primal centering upon *God* is a radical *critique* of everything human—of everything representative of our trying to run history on our own. And thus *my* thesis is that Barth's social relevance comes in using the Gospel to *critique* both the regnant leftist political praxis of our day and all political praxis else, rightist, centrist, socialist, capitalist, or whatever.

That—against the **Bulletin** commentators— is *my* thesis. And my new book, *Christian Anarchy* (from Eerdmans), is the argument of my case. I give major attention to Karl Barth but also use great gobs of Scripture—and that not only as interpreted by Barth but by Kierkegaard, the Blumhardts, Bonhoeffer, Ellul, and a number of contemporary NT scholars as well.

Vernard Eller
Professor of Religion
University of La Verne (CA)

Bromiley on Barth as Socialist

May I make a few comments on Steve de Gruchy's interesting article on socialism and hermeneutics in Barth (Sept.-Oct. 1986 **Bulletin**)?

He makes two good points for which we should be grateful. Barth's social concern undoubtedly contributed to the revolution in his approach to scripture. He also maintained a lifelong inclination to leftish programmes that would remedy economic and social injustices.

Nevertheless, we should also be aware of some counterbalancing facts warning us against too broad conclusions.

Thus in 1914 Barth was just as disenchanted with the Social Democrats as with the churches, and did not want Rade to treat him merely as a champion of the Religious Socialists (*Barth-Rade Briefwechsel*, p. 120).

Again, he joined the Social Democrats, first in Switzerland, later in Germany, only for specific reasons, and was not a party member either at Göttingen and Münster, or in the

later years in Basel (*Letters 1961-8*, pp. 303f.; *Final Testimonies*, p. 25).

Again, he stated categorically that he was "never a doctrinaire Socialist" (*Final Testimonies*, p. 39; cf. *Letters 1961-8*, p. 303).

Finally, he warned Hromadka against the trap of "not letting the *analogans*" (the gospel) "be clearly, soberly, and irreversably superior to the *analogatum*" (political insights and opinions), just as we must never understand the gospel or the biblical witness in terms of any specific philosophy.

Advocates of a Socialist Barth seem to be imposing on Barth himself the very thing he feared in Hromadka. As he put it, he had an "extremely allergic reaction" to "all identifications" and "all the drawing of parallels and analogies" in which reversal takes place, resulting in "a philosophy of history which does harm to theology and Christian proclamation" (*Letters 1961-8*, p. 105, cf. also p. 83).

Geoffrey W. Bromiley
Emeritus Prof. of Historical Theology
Fuller Theological Seminary

Was Barth Really A Liberation Theologian?

Karl Barth would probably be astounded by Steven de Gruchy's suggestion that he was a "proto" liberation theologian in his methodology (Sept.-Oct. 1986 **Bulletin**). The line of argument is not a particularly new one, and it represents an attempt by the liberation theology people to read back into Barth their own presuppositions.

To accept de Gruchy's thesis that Barth had a liberation hermeneutic, one must accept his argument that Barth's method arose *directly* out of his socialist political sympathies. While there is no doubt that Barth was a socialist, it is a dubious suggestion that his hermeneutic was based *simply* in his praxis.

One has to remember that Barth is reacting off of *ideas*—theological ideas—not simply his social situation. He is constantly pulling against the over-realized theologies of liberalism and throughout all his work he wants to maintain the transcendent "otherness" of God. Barth's methodology is always that of "theology from above," whereas liberation theology starts from below. In Barth, everything is revelation from God; in liberation theologies, revelation occurs in the community of the oppressed. A consistant Barthian position would move in the exact opposite direction of that of liberation theology.

Liberation theologies find hope in the elimination of earthly injustice. Barth finds hope in God alone: "Evangelical theology . . . relies on God who himself seeks out, heals, and saves man and his work. This God is the hope of theology. What we have just said about evangelical theology cannot be said about any of the theologies that are devoted to the gods of man's devising . . ." (*Evangelical Theology*, p. 152).

Had Barth lived longer, I think he would have rejected the liberation theologies as "theologies that are devoted to the gods of man's devising," while remainly sympathetic to *some* of the earthly goals of the same. Barth's socialist leanings were a matter of convenience in agreement with his Christian convictions. It should be remembered that political allegiances in the early part of this century tended toward extremes and that caring, committed Christians were frequently political socialists. Even de Gruchy quotes Barth as saying, "I was less interested in the ideological aspect of the party then in its organizing of unions."

Barth only used socialism as a means to an ends (earthly justice)—not as the basis of a theological agenda to bring about the Kingdom of God. Only Christ can do that—a fact Karl Barth knew and liberation theologians would do well to remember.

Diana Hochstedt Butler
Librarian, Gordon-Conwell
Theological Seminary

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Introducing This Issue

Launched ten years ago and starting as an unpretentious newsletter for the Theological Students Fellowship, the **Bulletin** through the years has brought to its readers outstanding articles by some of today's finest scholars. Holding fast to a common Christian commitment, its contributors have been free to explore ideas and issues from their own theological perspectives. Often they have engaged in provocative discussion, pushing back the frontiers of evangelical thought, yet concerned to remain within the spacious confines of biblical revelation.

This issue illustrates the outworking of that editorial policy. I for one found myself in disagreement with some of the views expressed. But that has been the case, I know, with every issue published. Yet all the viewpoints which are shared with you, our readers, ably articulated by their proponents, need to be heard attentively, considered objectively, and debated irenically. In short, a major function of the **Bulletin** has been and still is to challenge the closed-mind syndrome. Mark Twain's advice is perennially pertinent: "Take your mind out and stamp on it. It's getting all clogged up."

Robert K. Johnston, in examining the contemporary vocation of the theologian (page 4), calls for precisely such an attitude of committed open-mindedness. If the theologian is to do his unique task properly, Johnston rightly insists, he needs both art and heart. Only by integrating these two components is he able to practice his craft with competence.

Reechoing Johnston, Douglas Jacobsen reviews the development of hermeneutics since 1915 (page 8). He argues that the interpretive root metaphors of truth, authority and responsibility demand critical scrutiny if Christianity is indeed to be dynamically relevant.

The comments by the *doyen* of American evangelical theologians, Carl Henry (page 16), reveal the same concern. If anyone within the camp of traditional Protestantism knows the intellectual, cultural, and ecclesiastical terrain of not only the USA by also the world, it is Dr. Henry. In his varied roles as scholar, author, editor and professor, he has been a tremendous catalyst in effecting the transformation of a shibboleth-ridden fundamentalism into a live option for thinking people. His incisive analysis of the movement he so greatly helped to create, what Harold John Ockenga christened the new evangelicalism, should be pondered by his fellow evangelicals. And seminarians should heed the very directive counsel he gives regarding their struggles with theological options.

Donald K. McKim's most helpful bibliography (page 19) offers guidance in the crucial area of Scripture's origin, nature, authority, and interpretation. What a plethora of options that corpus of specialized literature discloses!

Perhaps no other area of theology is more hotly controverted today than that dealt with by Kathleen E. Corley and Karen Torjesen, "Sexuality, Hierarchy and Evangelicalism" (page 23). Here the issues of biblical authority and hermeneutics are volatized. I anticipate that the openness set forth will draw heated rejoinders from our readers. Appropriately, Henry's remarks on hierarchy and related matters (page 25) furnish a sort of postscript to the Corley/Torjesen argument.

Shifting our attention from America to Japan, Yoshiaki Yui's letter concerning the Yasukuni Shrine issue (page 27) is an arresting reminder that public policies have profound theological implications. The stance we take in obedience to our understanding of God's Word may bring us into conflict with our society. Obedient discipleship, as Dietrich Bonhoeffer emphasized and exemplified, does not guarantee the Christian's popularity. And that is a lesson which we US evangelicals, in danger of being culturally co-opted, must learn—if we have not already learned it.

The interpretive reports of Donald Persons (page 29) and Wilma Jakobsen (page 31) tells us about two widely divergent conferences addressing two radically different situations. Yet underlying both is a single question: how can we bear obedient and effective witness (obedient even when not effective!) to the demands of the gospel of our campuses, in our churches, in our own countries, and throughout the world? Quarrel as we do over ways and means, our unifying purpose is to make the Lordship of Christ more than a theological watchword. To borrow a cliché, God talk must issue in God walk.

Even in book reviews, maybe especially in these appraisals, theological options are set before us. How, oh, how to put into practice an aphoristic assertion made by that intriguing coiner of aphorisms, G.K. Chesterton? "The purpose of opening the mind is like that of opening the mouth—to shut it again on something solid."

All of which recalls the concluding sentence in Unamuno's master work, *The Tragic Sense of Life:* "May God deny you peace but give you glory."

Vernon Grounds

The Vocation of the Theologian

by Robert K. Johnston

The fiction of John Updike has its detractors and its disciples. Some consider him to be a master of saying nothing well—a writer capable of dazzling displays of talent and even erudition, but one holding a shallow vision of life. Others consider his work the labor of a serious artist trying to make comprehensible life's mystery. Critics and followers alike, however, consider Updike one of our most sensitive commentators (or better, portrayers) of the American scene. Over the last quarter of a century, Updike has chronicled America's changes in psyche and society, in small town and in suburbia.

Updike has returned to religion time and again. Unable to accept the faith characteristic of his small-town roots, he has nonetheless sought a blessing from above for many of his characters. Whether a frightened boy in a barn shooting pigeons, an adulterous ex-basketball star whose child has drowned, a wayward cleric or an urban artist seeking to uncover the mystery of his childhood sense of place, Updike's archetypal character wrestles with his standing before the divine. As he does, Updike's hero (there are few heroines) mirrors a wider dis-ease apparent in our society.

Given such a pattern, it is significant that in Updike's latest novel, *Roger's Version*, he turns to the question of the vocation of the theologian. His central character, Roger Lambert, 52, is an assistant professor of theology in one of the Boston seminaries (the description fits Harvard although the location is only implied) and an ordained Methodist cleric. He is now teaching, for a love affair with one of his parishoners 14 years earlier has not only ended his first marriage but his first career as well. While wayward clerics have previously supplied Updike his literary grist, Roger is distinct in that he suffers not so much from a sense of guilt but from a pervasive numbness of spirit. He hides this behind an erudition in his public life and a fascination with sexuality in his private life.

Such barrenness of soul and fecundity of body continue themes evident in Updike's *Rabbit is Rich* and is surely a caricature of those of us in the theological guild. But Updike has as usual felt the pulse of the wider American experience. Although the theological crises Americans face is hardly the challenge Roger encounters (of responding to a graduate student who believes the existence of God can be proven by processing the known data about the universe on a computer), the theological enterprise is nonetheless in crises.

Vanderbilt's Edward Farley spoke to something of this issue in his seminal book, *Theologia* (1983), although his purview was the whole of theological education. A better indicator of the crises perhaps is Theodore Jennings' edited volume, *The Vocation of the Theologian* (1985). Growing out of a consultation at Emory University on the redesign of its graduate program in systematic theology, the volume has a list of contributors that reads like a who's who of America's ecumenical theologians—Wainwright, Ruether, Kaufman, Gilkey, Cobb, Cone, and Altizer (Miguez-Bonino represents a Latin American liberationist perspective too). Yet, although the essays in their particularity are meant to further constructive theological work, what is evident to Jennings as editor is "the shifting kaleidoscope of intersections and divergences" within the theological community.[1]

Jennings attempts to give this situation a positive face in his epilogue. He believes "the absence of a consensus concerning (theology's) aim and object, its sources, its center, its boundaries" and the opening of theological work to a "vigorously contested (and celebrated) pluralism" are "the indispensable context for the exercise of theology as a liberal discipline." Yet even Jennings is more candid than this concerning the situation in theology today in his introduction to the volume, which he labels "The Crisis of Theology." He notes that in American theology today, there is "the deflection of theological energy, the avoidance of theological tasks, indeed, even the abdication of theological responsibility."[2]

Theology has been reduced to (1) prolegomenon—the study of questions of hermeneutics, (2) historical theology—the study of other theologians or theological traditions, and (3) interdisciplinary study—the study of theology and literature, psychology, or social sciences in which theology is largely assumed and the creative energy given to bridge-building between the disciplines. For Jennings, the crisis is not to be measured in terms of these activities themselves, all creative and even necessary. Rather, the crisis is observed "in the way in which these activities have usurped the place of actual constructive and/or systematic theological work." "It is the absence, lack, and silence at the center of our work which transforms our scholarly productivity into feverish business (busyness?)."[3] Ecumenical theology seems now to be in eclipse. It no longer shapes culture, life or thought to any significant degree.

Evangelical Trends

A word concerning evangelical theology is similarly discouraging. Evangelicals have come a different route with hardly more pleasing consequence. Historians like Sydney Ahlstrom and George Marsden chronicle evangelicalism's twentieth century unwillingness to entertain a critical spirit. There has been a pervasive anti-intellectualism, a social and political conservatism, a marked otherworldliness, and a separatism both ecclesiastical and cultural that have combined to make evangelicals an "embattled minority."[4] At least such is evangelicalism's fundamentalist legacy.

The first frontal challenge to such a fundamentalism was sounded from within the movement by Carl Henry in his *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*.[5] Since that time evangelicals have entered increasingly into both the academic and social arenas. Their growing involvement has, to be sure, caused a counterreaction by modern-day fundamentalists. The Moral Majority and the new surge in Christian schools and home education are an attempt to stem the tide. Yet for large numbers of evangelicals the break has been made. Any continuing narrowness in traditional evangelical theology is, even to many evangelicals, "obstrusive and a little depressing," to quote James Packer, himself a leading evangelical theologian.[6] There is a recognized need to move beyond a fortress mentality (with its emphasis on apologetics) and speak out clearly and constructively a positive theological agenda. Perhaps Fuller Seminary can be viewed as a symbol of this shift as George Marsden's new book, *Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism* delineates.[7]

In the October 17, 1986 issue of *Christianity Today*, this leading evangelical voice took stock of its last thirty years in

Robert K. Johnston is Dean and Professor of Theology and Culture at North Park Seminary in Chicago.

publishing. Gordon-Conwell theologian David Wells was asked to write on evangelical theology and he labeled his remarks, "A Strange Turbulence." Again, one notes the sense of crisis in vocation that is being suggested. Wells speaks of American evangelicalism beginning as a small movement with dominant theological figures and now being a large movement with few established thinkers. It is not only the ecumenicals with their loss of Barth, Brunner, Bultmann, Tillich and the Niebuhrs who have suffered theological loss. Evangelicals have not spawned a new generation of thinkers either. The result, according to Wells, has been an abandonment of serious theological reflection by many laity, a borrowing from such imports as Berkouwer and Thielicke by many clergy, and a return to historical theology by others.

Hermeneutical theology with its emphasis on revision and creativity dominates ecumenical circles. Catechetical theology with its essentially conservative agenda characterizes evangelical thought. Neither model, however, has proven fully adequate to the contemporary vocation of the theologian.

There has been in evangelicalism, too, a period of theological fragmentation. Carl Henry's six volumes, *God, Revelation and Authority,* demand of their readers a philosophical positioning that has failed to garner evangelical consensus. Other theological volumes are restatements of existing theologies, not fresh formulations. None has captured the broad allegiance of evangelicals. As Wells suggests, "The time is undoubtedly ripe for theologians to capitalize on the rich harvest of biblical studies of recent decades, the maturing awareness of evangelical responsibility in culture and society, and the absence of serious competitors in the wider theological world." Yet Wells admits that such a prospect is not necessarily forthcoming.[8]

Here, then, is the situation facing Christian theology today. Hermeneutical theology with its emphasis on revision and creativity dominates ecumenical circles. Catechetical theology with its essentially conservative agenda characterizes evangelical thought. Neither model, however, has proven fully adequate to the contemporary vocation of the theologian. Packer can praise evangelical thinkers today for "their concentration on the person and work of Jesus Christ."[9] Jennings can celebrate the theologian's "vocation of freedom."[10] But each is all too aware of his tradition's shortcomings. The crises is on both the theological left and the theological right, and it is at present severe enough to have called into question the very vocation of the theologian.

If evangelicals and ecumenicals are to move beyond their present feverish busyness to substantial theological output, they must learn to listen to each other and appropriate one another's strengths methodologically. In particular, evangelicals need to learn from theological revisionists something of theology's *art.* Ecumenicals, on the other hand, need to discover from theological conservatives something of theology's necessary *heart.*

The "Art" of Theology

In one of his Peanuts comic strips, Charles Schulz has Lucy say to Snoopy, "You'll never be a good theologian . . . you're too DOGmatic! HaHaHaHaHa!" After bonking Lucy on the head with his typewriter, Snoopy lies down and reflects in disgust, "I hate jokes like that!" The joke hinges, of course, on the word-play concerning "dogmatic." But it also is dependent upon a general perception of the rigidity and sterility that an over-dogmatism in religion produces. Schulz is correct; dogmatism stifles theological creativity.

The history of evangelical theology's dogmatism is so univocal that Paul Holmer can characterize "systematic theology of the evangelical sort" as "a kind of tenseless, moodless tissue of erstwhile truths, ineluctable, shiny, and necessary . . . teachable, tangible, and orthodox."[11] Holmer has in mind articles such as John Gerstner's "The Theological Boundaries of Evangelical Faith" (in Wells and Woodbridge, eds., *The Evangelicals*), that seek to narrow evangelical theology's boundaries to a tightly reformed perspective (even Finney is called a foe of evangelicalism).[12]

Kenneth Kantzer, too, does not want "to sacrifice the term, Evangelical, for something less than full Protestant orthodoxy," even though his definition and Gerstner's would differ. Kantzer has been a leader in reconciling warring factions within evangelicalism. With evangelicals from Luther's day onward, Kantzer argues for evangelicalism's formal principle of the authority of scripture and its material principle, the gospel. However, when Kantzer discusses what this material principle implies, he narrows in, listing sixteen necessary doctrines: a pre-existent Christ, Jesus Christ as divine-human, the virgin birth, Christ's substitutionary atonement, Christ's bodily resurrection, and so on.[13] One can hardly argue that his list deviates from historic Protestantism (at least, I would not). Nonetheless, the theological task seems finished as we listen to his explication. It is buttoned up tightly. Questions concerning the juxtaposition of biblical images of the atonement, for example, seem out of place. All that seems required is faithful reiteration. Theological creativity seems unnecessary, if not suspect.

To give a third example, Carl Henry edited an early and seminal work entitled *Revelation and the Bible: Contemporary Evangelical Thought.*[14] It includes three articles on special revelation. Not only is there a discussion of "Special Revelation as Historical and Personal,"but articles by Gordon Clark on "Special Revelation as Rational" and by William J. Martin on "Special Revelation as Objective" set the tone for the volume. It is this bias toward philosophical rationalism that has turned much of evangelical theology into little more than elaborate engineering projects—apologetic efforts demanding special form and structure that "tidy up" biblical revelation through "analytic and undefinitional exactness."[15]

In an interesting article entitled "Evangelicals and Theological Creativity," long time Fuller Seminary Professor Geoffrey Bromiley comments, "In this significant field of originality or creativity, Evangelical theology seems to many people to be at an inherent disadvantage." And as this article proceeds, though contrary to Bromiley's intention, such an initial judgment seems, indeed, to be in order. Bromiley would allow for "*sober* creative activity." "Theology must keep a *scientific* procedure in studying and describing the data," he argues. Theology is, thus, an *objective* enterprise" (italics mine). For Bromiley, "false creativity arises when theology is treated as one of the arts instead of the sciences." Such a conservative posture need not close off positive and constructive theological work, he feels. Room for creativity remains in research, interpretation and application. He pleads for evangelicals to move be-

yond a defensive mentality, "a fixation on Liberal extravaganzas of speculation," and to present strong and attractive theological alternatives. Somehow, however, new evangelical efforts at theological creativity seem more likely to be semantic redefinition in the schematic than to evidence real originality.[16]

What these evangelicals and the majority of their colleagues continue to react against is the viewpoint of those like Gordon Kaufman and I.M. Crombie who understand theology to be "a sort of art of enlightened ignorance."[17] They applaud those like Geoffrey Wainwright who expressed the hope in his inaugural address at Union Seminary in 1980 that his listeners would find "nothing substantially *new*" in this lecture. "In theology," stated Wainwright, "novelty is too often too close to heresy."[18]

Yet, theology is not only a science, but an art, and novelty and creativity have characterized the thought of past theological giants. Even Wainwright in his seminal work *Doxology* evidences real originality particularity in his interweaving of Protestant and Orthodox perspectives. Evangelical reticence in recognizing theology's art can only impede its theological progress. As Bernard Lonergan observed in his book, *Method in Theology*, theological "method is not a set of rules to be followed meticulously by a dolt. It is a framework for collaborative creativity."[19]

The edited volume *Christian Theology: An Introduction to its Traditions and Tasks* is one such example of "collaborative creativity." Accepting the premises of the Enlightenment as a given and finding in Schleiermacher's cultural reformulation of Christian doctrine a methodological analogue, the dozen or more leading ecumenical theologians who contributed to the volume agreed that the "tradition must be transformed if it is to be responsive to the challenge of the modern age." Beginning each chapter of their constructive theology with a description of "where we are," the authors assumed disjunction with the received tradition given the Enlightenment and sketched out a program for future system building.[20]

The reformist programmatic spelled out in *Christian Theology* is provocative. It sets a high standard for all in its scholarship and creative vision. However, evangelicals will find its approach unnecessarily one-sided, centering too completely in the Enlightenment emphasis on "the interpretive capacities of the self in the construction of the world."[21] Any substantial help from Scripture or tradition is downplayed in these pages. For these authors, scripture's and tradition's "house of authority has collapsed, despite the fact that many people still try to live in it."[22]

What is presented methodologically, one could argue, is a transformation of Paul Tillich's theology of correlation, the issues of Enlightenment thought finding their complement in the fundamental symbolic content of the Christian faith. But just as question dictated response in Tillich's theology, Tillich's protestation not withstanding, so modern attempts at the art of theological correlation seem too often to reduce revelation's creative impact.

For this reason, I would suggest that the necessary *art* of theological formulation be understood not as a task of correlation, but as a dialogue based in co-relation (I am indebted to Thomas Langford for this insight). There is a transcendent thrust in humankind, a quest, or search, which is evident in our politics and our play, our work and our religion. We often find ourselves propelled beyond ourselves. Moreover, in searching for meaning, we sometimes discover a meaning which transforms that search, so we find what we are seeking without knowing that we seek it. Our search is where we must begin epistemologically, experientially. But having found, in the case of Christian theology, the surprising presence of a divine other—a co-presence, we come to realize that even our search was motivated and directed by the other. The songwriter has expressed it well: "I sought the Lord and afterwards I knew . . . I was found by Thee."

The art of theological co-relation has its dangers. The prevenience of grace can become merely an apologetic device, a means of leveling disturbing insights and preempting productive dialogue. A commitment to Scripture's divine revelation cannot be allowed to fix our experience with Scripture or our conviction as to what Scripture is saying. But a theology of co-relation can also open one up to creative two-way dialogue. As Bernard Lonergan points out, "Theology mediates between a cultural matrix and the significance and the role of a religion in that matrix."[23] Here is the art of theology rightly understood. We begin our life in the world, but we are not limited theologically to that perspective. Our pre-understanding not only provides illumination; it is also in need of transformation. As Peter Berger cautioned in his *A Rumor of Angels*, "We must begin in the situation in which we find ourselves, but we must not submit to it as to an irresistible tyranny."[24]

Perhaps mindful of Schleiermacher's metaphor, evangelical theologian William Dyrness has suggested Scripture will function for the theologian "more like a musical score than a blueprint." "A score gives guidance but it must always be played afresh."[25] We come to the score as modern men and women and the theological music we produce will sound accordingly contemporary. Nevertheless, we are as musicians not left to our own devices. God in his grace has provided us music to play. Such is the artistic task the theologian must accept.

Theology is not only a science, but an art, and novelty and creativity have characterized the thought of past theological giants.

The "Heart" of Theology

If evangelical theologians need to learn from their ecumenical colleagues that theology is moré a dialogical "art" than an analytical "science," ecumenical theologians can learn from their evangelical counterparts that a correlation exists between theological integrity and sanctification. We are surely on sensitive ground here. Too often critics of a particular theologian's formulation have gloated when biographers have exposed personal inconsistencies. Non-Tillichians have noted, for example, Tillich's pornography collection and have been tempted to say, "I told you so." Such cheap theological biography has no place in the Christian community. A theologian's work can outdistance his personal appropriation of it.

On the other hand, the continuing influence in evangelical circles of C.S. Lewis and Dietrich Bonhoeffer is largely due to the strong correlation between their writings and their witness. These men lived out what they wrote with high integrity, and thus their theologies have a compelling quality.

We can, perhaps, be again instructed by Charles Schulz's Peanuts as we consider theology's necessary inner heart. Lucy is once again speaking to Snoopy who has returned to his typewriter on his doghouse roof. She asks rhetorically the

would-be canine theologian, "How can you write about theology? You've never been in a church?" This causes Snoopy to reflect, "Au contraire! When I was at the Daisy Hill Puppy Farm, we went to chapel every morning! I was part of a forty-beagle choir." As Snoopy lies down, putting his head on his typewriter, he rhapsodizes, "You've never hear 'Rock of Ages' until you've heard it sung by forty beagles!" Lucy, again, speaks more than she knows. Schulz's humor hinges on our uneasy awareness that theology today is too often being written irrespective of the living faith of the Christian community.

In his article "The Theologian as Christian Scholar," the present dean of the Duke Divinity School, Dennis Campbell, comments on the professional drift of contemporary theology. He compares the present situation in academic theology to Albert William Levi's discussion of the modern professionalization of philosophy:

> Philosophy today is primarily a matter of professional competence, and we no longer ask if the motive of its possessor is a deep spiritual commitment to the passionate search for some fleeting insight into the wisdom of life .... The divorce between technical concern and spiritual relevance seems to have become absolute.[26]

There has been, argues Campbell, a similar tendency in ecumenical theology for it to become "principally a matter of professional competence." Chief among the many reasons for this reorientation, Campbell believes, is the changed social location of the Protestant theologian from the Christian community to the secular academy. As William Hamilton narrated in his sensitive essay entitled "Thursday's Child," some theologians for whom a traditional faith commitment is not a personal reality feel trapped in doing a job they have no interest in.[27]

For Campbell, the answer to this crises in theology in not a naive return to pseudo-certainties, but a renewed consideration of the role of "the theologian as *Christian* scholar" (italics mine). He argues, "I am not proposing that the theologian cannot work effectively in the secular academy; but wherever the theologian might work, without the church as a primary community of identity and loyalty, constructive theology cannot be sustained."[28]

Such a viewpoint is the *sine qua non* of evangelical theology. To be an evangelical is not only to do theology from out of a biblical center, but to join with others who emphasize the importance of a "personal relationship" with Jesus Christ who is Savior and Lord of one's life. Loyalty to Christ impels the evangelical "to demonstrate God's love and to carry out God's mission in worship, nurture, evangelism, and justice."[29]

This evangelical agenda of sanctification has its historical roots most particularly in pietism. Although this often maligned movement degenerated into anti-intellectual sentimental excess, its flowering was profound and energizing. It is far more telling than is generally perceived that the label "pietist" has become a pejorative one in the theological guild today. Spener in his *Pia Desideria*, and Arndt, in his book *True Christianity*, protested vigorously against a theology gone academic. "What had happened [by the time of Pietism's flowering] was that the *religious* and the personal, experiential dimensions of justification by grace through faith were missing."[30] The Pietists thus argued for the balancing perspective of sanctification.

Pietists sought not to overturn the evangelical Reformation, but to complete and perfect it. They, like their evangelical colleagues in the awakening movements of later generations, sought a reform of the church through small renewal groups and through an extended mission of proclamation and social demonstration. As Richard Lovelace points out, "The majority of the Pietists ... were united in insisting that ministers and church members should reform not only their doctrines but their lives."[31] Their leaders during the seventeenth century worked to create theologies of "live orthodoxy" that challenged both individuals and congregations to move beyond mere mental commitment to conversion and spiritual renewal. The pietist literature is only now being adequately translated and republished, but it is both intellectually profound and spiritually alive.

It would be wrong to isolate theological engagement to within the evangelical community. Among contemporary ecumenicals influenced by liberation and/or post-Barthian models of Christian thought, engagement has a similarly high agenda. But among ecumenical theologians adopting an Enlightenment ethos, churchly and confessional theology is too often criticized. To conceive of theology essentially in terms of the church amounts to "a kind of ecclesiastical positivism," to quote Gordon Kaufman, for example. Kaufman desires theology to interpret and explain the church, not vice-versa. He states:

> ... it is evident that the church does not provide theology with its real foundations (today), nor can the church define for us what theology is or should be as a vocation.[32]

Kaufman is relentless in pushing his point. Although thinking of himself primarily as a Christian theologian, Kaufman is not willing to have Christ displace God in the order of our thinking and valuing. "Theology is," for Kaufman, "first and foremost 'thinking about God,' not 'thinking about Christ.'"[33] Such a public vocation seeks a theology which is intelligible, not authoritative. As such, theology continues to find *God the Problem* (the title of Kaufman's 1971 volume).[34]

Schubert Ogden, in his article, "On Teaching Theology," argues similarly that theology must remain theoretical: "I do not understand my function to be in any way to teach the Christian witness by directly instructing and training my students to bear it."[35] There seems little danger here that students might find the technical, second-order reflection of theology something so worth believing that men and women might live radically new lives on its account.

Conclusion

The vocational crisis facing the American theologian is this: evangelical engagement has yet to produce vibrant theology for it has too often refused to take seriously the "art" of its craft. Ecumenical reflection, on the other hand, has produced more rigorous, thoughtful and creative theology, but theology which is too often sterile, lacking "heart."

There are, however, signs of hope, particularly among evangelicals and ecumenicals alike who have been influenced by Barthian and/or liberation models of theological engagement.

Frederick Herzog, for example, has joined the phrases "God-walk" and "God-talk" in his theological formulation. In writings such as his book *Liberation Theology*, he argues for the overthrow of our present understanding of the human, one at the same time Puritan and Cartesian. We need, instead, to meet Jesus. It is he who will turn us from private, modern individuals to a realization of our corporate identity.

In an article entitled "Embarassed by God's Presence" which appeared in the *Christian Century* in January of 1985, William Willimon and Stanley Hauerwas noted

> ... an increasingly strong stress on Christian formation and sanctification. Wesley was right; the gospel is not simply about forgiveness; it is also about response. The

gospel is more than a set of interesting ideas; it is a whole way of life which requires the church to be holy. It is always *contretemps*, always an alternative to life in the world. We are therefore at odds with those who turn theology into an arcane discipline, the urbane pastime of graduate schools of religion. Theological integrity and sanctification are inextricably related. Christian theology is renewed not by new thinking, but by new living.[36]

Correspondingly, we might take note of evangelical theologian Bernard Ramm's recent book, *After Fundamentalism* (1983). Ramm sees the need to get beyond liberalism and fundamentalism. Taking his cue from Karl Barth, Ramm finds himself increasingly uncomfortable with evangelicalism's obscurantism which has issued from its disregard of the Enlightenment. He writes:

> My concern is that evangelicals have not come to a systematic method of interacting with modern knowledge. They have not developed a theological method that enables them to be consistently evangelical in their theology *and* to be people of modern learning. That is why a new (theological) paradigm is necessary.[37]

Theological mavericks on the left and on the right (liberationists, post-Barthians, and progressive evangelicals) are beginning a theological *rapprochement* that is encouraging. The dialogue must continue with a wider range of significant voices joining in. Both paradigm and piety demand our best present theological efforts.

[1] Theodore W. Jennings, Jr., "Epilogue: The Vitality of Theology," in Theodore W. Jennings, Jr., ed., *The Vocation of the Theologian* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), p. 144.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 145; Theodore W. Jennings, Jr., "Introduction: The Crises of Theology," in Theodore Jennings, ed., *The Vocation of the Theologian*, p. 2.
[3] Theodore Jennings, "The Crises of Theology," p. 4.
[4] The phrase is Sydney Ahlstrom's, "From Puritanism to Evangelicalism: A Critical Perspective," in David F. Wells and John D. Woodbridge, eds., *The Evangelicals* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1975), p. 285.
[5] Carl F.H. Henry, *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1947).
[6] James I. Packer, "Taking Stock in Theology," in John King, ed., *Evangelicals Today* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1973), p. 29.
[7] George Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicals* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987).
[8] David F. Wells, "A Strange Turbulence," *Christianity Today*, 30, No. 15 (October 17, 1986), p. 20.
[9] James Packer, "Taking Stock in Theology," p. 29.
[10] Theodore Jennings, "The Vitality of Theology," p. 145.
[11] Paul Holmer, "Contemporary Evangelical Faith: An Assessment and Critique," in David Wells and John Woodbridge, eds., *The Evangelicals*, p. 78.
[12] John H. Gerstner, "The Theological Boundaries of Evangelical Faith," in David Wells and John Woodbridge, eds., *The Evangelicals*.
[13] Kenneth Kantzer, "The Future of the Church and Evangelicalism," in Donald Hoke, ed., *Evangelicals Face the Future* (South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1978), pp. 132-133.
[14] Carl F.H. Henry, ed., *Revelation and the Bible: Contemporary Evangelical Thought* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1958).
[15] Paul Holmer, "Contemporary Evangelical Faith," pp. 82, 90.
[16] Geoffrey Bromiley, "Evangelicals and Theological Creativity," *Themelios* (Sept., 1979), pp. 4-8.
[17] I.M. Crombie, quoted in Gordon D. Kaufman, "Theology as a Public Vocation," in Theodore Jennings, *The Vocation of the Theologian*, p. 49.
[18] Geoffrey Wainwright, "Toward God," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, 36 (supplementary issue, 1981): 13.
[19] Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), p. xi.
[20] Robert H. King, "Introduction: The Task of Theology," in Peter C. Hodgson and Robert H. King, eds., *Christian Theology: An Introduction to Its Traditions and Tasks* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), p. 14.
[21] John B. Cobb, Jr., "The Religions," in Peter Hodgson and Robert King, eds., *Christian Theology*, p. 355.
[22] David Tracy, "Theological Method," in Peter Hodgson and Robert King, eds., *Christian Theology*, p. 50.
[23] Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, p. xi.
[24] Peter Berger, *A Rumor of Angels* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1969), p. 94, quoted in William A. Dyrness, "How Does the Bible Function in the Christian Life?" in Robert K. Johnston, ed., *The Use of the Bible in Theology: Evangelical Options* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985), p. 161.
[25] William Dyrness, "How Does the Bible Function in the Christian Life?", p. 171.
[26] Albert William Levi, *Philosophy as Social Expression* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), p. 110, quoted in Dennis Campbell, "The Theologian as Christian Scholar," *Religion in Life*, 45 (Autumn, 1976), pp. 319-320.
[27] Dennis Campbell, "The Theologian as Christian Scholar," p. 320.
[28] *Ibid.*, pp. 320-322.
[29] David Allan Hubbard, *What We Evangelicals Believe* (Pasadena: Fuller Theological Seminary, 1979), p. 15.
[30] C. John Weborg, "Reborn in Order to Renew," *Christian History*, 5, No. 2 (1986): 17.
[31] Richard Lovelace, "A Call to Historic Roots and Continuity," in Robert E. Webber and Donald Bloesch, eds., *The Orthodox Evangelicals* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1978), p. 56.
[32] Gordon Kaufman, "Theology as a Public Vocation," in Theodore Jennings, *The Vocation of the Theologian*, pp. 50-51.
[33] *Ibid.*, p. 64.
[34] Gordon Kaufman, *God the Problem* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971).
[35] Schubert Ogden, "On Teaching Theology," *Criterion*, 25, No. 1 (Winter, 1986): 12-14.
[36] William Willimon and Stanley Hauerwas, "Embarassed by God's Presence," *Christian Century*, 102 (January 30, 1985), p. 99.
[37] Bernard Ramm, *After Fundamentalism* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1983), p. 27.

From Truth to Authority to Responsibility: The Shifting Focus of Evangelical Hermeneutics, 1915-1986

by Douglas Jacobsen

American Christianity is dynamic, not static. It exists in a shifting historical situation, not a vacuum. The visible church cannot fully escape this fact of historical change as the climate of the day. From day to day, reactions to it may appear quite imperceptible; in the span of a generation they will become quite apparent, and may even be cataclysmic. (Christianity Today, editorial I:3, November 12, 1956).

This article is about biblical hermeneutics. What I mean by this term is simultaneously broad and yet simple. Hermeneutics refers to the process of thinking by which one renders the meaning of the Bible available to people living in a later age. My interest here is not in the fine points of exegesis or with particular interpretations of particular passages of the Bible. Nor is my interest focused on the particular rules of interpretation that may or may not be part of the hermeneutical tools of a given era. Rather, I want to zero in on the underlying core of a hermeneutical stance—or, to be more accurate, I want to isolate the three different hermeneutical root metaphors that have shaped three different generations of American Evangelical hermeneuts.[1]

Let me expand this idea of root hermeneutical metaphors. Very obviously the biblical hermeneutical process is complex. It is no easy task to understand and to make present to a contemporary audience the meaning of a 2000 year old book. This task is made even more difficult when one is committed to the belief that the meaning of the biblical text needs to be presented both in an academically accurate manner and in a way that will grab the hearts of its hearers. As complex as this picture may be, it is also the case that almost all hermeneutical positions are grounded in some one primary concept, value, or metaphor around which all this complexity swirls in an orderly fashion. This core idea—this root metaphor from which all else grows—identifies the basic point of contact

Douglas Jacobsen is Professor of Theology at Messiah College, Grantham, PA.

where the biblical text meets the contemporary audience. It is not the whole picture, but it defines the foundation upon which the rest of the hermeneutical system is based; and because it is so foundational, it is one of the best means by which to identify the distinctive orientation of any given hermeneutical framework.

My thesis in this article is that three generations of Evangelical biblical interpreters can be identified by three different biblical hermeneutical root metaphors. These "generations" are, on the one hand, capable of being organized chronologically. On the other, they represent, to a certain degree, three different ideal approaches to the Bible, all of which are represented within the contemporary diverse Evangelical panoply. The three metaphors I see as operative in twentieth century American Evangelicalism are: truth, authority, and responsibility.

In chronological terms, a hermeneutic of truth predominated in the Fundamentalist era (for my purposes here I will define that period as roughly 1915-45); a hermeneutic of authority was the majority position in the age of (what I will call here) "Classic" Evangelicalism (1945-75); and a hermeneutic of responsibility has come to the fore in Evangelicalism after 1975 (this last generation I will label Post-Classic Evangelicalism). Contemporary proponents of these different views are hard to identify en mass, but a few representative individuals can be pointed out. John Warwick Montgomery, for example, seems clearly to be operating out of a truth hermeneutic; D.A. Carson, out of an authority hermeneutic; and Robert K. Johnston, out of a responsibility hermeneutic.[2]

While I first became engaged with this subject in an attempt to make sense out of current Evangelical hermeneutical debate, in this article I want to focus primarily on the historical sequencing of these generations. The questions I want to ask and answer are these: (1) Why did this particular understanding of the hermeneutical task come to the fore at this point in time? (2) How was the distinctive hermeneutical root metaphor of each generation expressed? (3) How did the meaphor function in the historical setting of each chronological generation?

Before answering these questions, one important fact should be pointed out. Since my purpose in this article is to isolate the distinctive root metaphors of these three generations of Evangelical thinkers, I will inevitably end up emphasizing differences more than similarities between these generations. That emphasis, which I necessarily must make in this article, should not be interpreted as a total picture of the movement. It is not. Concerns for truth, authority, and responsiblity were important themes for all Evangelicals in the seven decades under discussion. And an essay could profitably be written that traces continuities in the larger Evangelical movement among these lines. Therefore, when I speak of Classic Evangelicalism's emphasis on authority, please do not mistake me for saying that Classic Evangelicals had no regard for responsibility or truth. That would be untrue, as it would also be untrue to say that Fundamentalists lack all concern for authority and responsiblity, or that post-Classic Evangelicals have abandoned the search for truth and a commitment to biblical authority.

The Fundamentalist-Evangelical Generation: The Hermeneutics of Truth

The Fundamentalist movement with its attendant hermeneutic of truth needs to be understood in historical context. Fundamentalists saw themselves as a people under attack—both religiously and nationally. Religiously, they found themselves vehemently criticized by a group of liberal scholars who seemed (to them) to be denying the very foundations of Christianity. This was expressed most clearly in J. Gresham Machen's charge that liberalism was not only a departure from historic Christian orthodoxy, but an entirely different kind of religion.[3] Nationally, Fundamentalists saw American culture heading toward an "age of insanity"—the words are those of Charles Blanchard.[4] There was a tendency in Fundamentalism to link these two concerns, and that makes logical sense when one remembers that until the end of the nineteenth century Protestant Christianity had been the dominant strand in American culture; and that within that Christian cultural core, a nexus of ideas fairly similar to Fundamentalism's essentials of the faith had defined the religious beliefs of the majority of the nation. The self-assigned task of Fundamentalism was to simultaneously defend the orthodox Christian faith and the cultural hegemony of that faith in the nation. The hermeneutical metaphor that could most make those claims stick was truth. Orthodoxy was the true interpretation of the Bible (i.e., true Christian faith), and that true interpretation of the Bible was also true in an absolute sense and thereby deserving of the most prominent place in the life of the nation. It was some time around the year 1915 that this self-understanding really dawned on the Fundamentalist movement. I am not arguing that a hermeneutical concern with truth was absent from Fundamentalist Evangelicalism before 1915. What did happen around 1915 was that Fundamentalism took on a qualitatively different degree of differentiation of identity from the larger Christian community in America, and that accordingly, the hermeneutical commitments of the movement took on a much more distinctive hue. For example, it is not until around 1915 that Fundamentalists come to see themselves as a clearly defined religious community over against mere conservatism in religion. In any case, 1915 is the year *The Fundamentals* were completed, and after that date no one could claim ignorance of either the issues or the combatants.[5]

Fundamentalism was a complex movement—a mix of academic and popular elements blended together out of a diverse ecclesiastical and theological background. Let me illustrate the prominence of a truth hermeneutic in three different strands of the movement. First I will examine *The Fundamentals*, which I take to represent the mainstream of the movement. Then I will look at R.A. Torrey, the most prominent leader of the Bible teachers' wing of Fundamentalism. And finally, I will turn to J. Gresham Machen who represents the Reformed and most academic side of the Fundamentalist coalition.

The Fundamentals are clear in their assertion that Christianity and the Bible are true. The 1917 reprint edition of the series, in fact, makes that claim part of the title—*The Fundamentals: A Testimony to Truth*. Let me illustrate the tack taken in the collection as a whole by looking at the first essay published in this edition, "The History of Higher Criticism," by Canon Dyson Hague from Toronto.

Hague's basic argument is that while higher criticism is not necessarily bad, "the work of the Higher Critic has not always been pursued in a reverent spirit nor in the spirit of scientific and Christian scholarship." The underlying problem seems to be that scholars in the modern world simply rushed too much. According to Hague, it was a "hurrying age" and few scholars—especially those with a bias against the supernatural—took the time needed to make the careful judgments called for in the work of higher criticism.[6]

It is important to note that Hague has no argument with higher critical methods in and of themselves. In fact, he seems confident that the best scholars—the most careful and scientific—would never find their opinions in conflict with true Christianity. He writes:

The desire to receive all the light that the most fearless search for truth by the highest scholarship can yield is the desire of every true believer in the Bible. No really healthy Christian mind can advocate obscurantism. The obscurant who opposes the investigation of scholarship, and would throttle the investigators, has not the spirit of Christ. In heart and attitude he is a Mediaevalist. To use Bushnell's famous apologue, he would try to stop the dawning of the day by wringing the neck of the crowing cock. No one wants to put the Bible in a glass case.[7]

teaches, and do not wish to read into it their own notions and speculations. It is sometimes said that "you can make the Bible mean almost anything." Yes, you can, but the question is not what you can make it mean, but what God intended it to mean, and that is easy enough to find out provided you wish to find out and will get right down to hard, honest, earnest investigation.[11]

Torrey rarely addressed the question of academically-arrived-at truth and how that might or might not affect Christian faith. His concern for truth, rather, was with what he saw as

Three generations of Evangelical biblical interpreters can be identified by three different biblical hermeneutical root metaphors: truth, authority, and responsibility.

While Hague felt that the best academically-arrived-at truth would always support the truths of Christianity as Fundamentalists saw them, he did voice two concerns about academic scholarship. The first had to do with the process of becoming academically proficient both as a scholar and as a Christian. Hague argues that "a little learning" often seemed to incline a person away from the truth. If persons should find themselves in this degenerate state, they should be forewarned and encouraged that deeper study and research will restore a conviction about the truth of the Bible and Christianity.[8] Hague's second concern deals with an entirely different situation—that of the academically uneducated. He seems to say that, while the best education will lead one ultimately to truth, no such education is necessary to interpret the Bible accurately. In very strong words, Hague asserts the right of every Christian to make his or her own judgments about the truth, no matter how little formal education they might have had.

> . . . it is the duty of every Christian who belongs to the noble army of truth-lovers to test all things and to hold fast that which is good. He also has rights even though he is, technically speaking, unlearned, and to accept any view that contradicts his spiritual judgment simply because it is that of a so-called scholar, is to abdicate his franchise as a Christian and his birthright as a man.[9]

Hague was especially concerned that the believer's "right of private judgment" not be jettisoned in response to the conclusions of "avowedly prejudiced judgment." Scholars who denied all possibility of the supernatural, he argues, are not competent to pass judgment on "the Book that claims to be supernatural."[10] For Hague, "truth" was the final criterion of all biblical interpretation, but this truth could only partly be equated with the rigorous academic pursuit of truth.

R.A. Torrey's concerns overlap Hague's at this point. While well educated himself, Torrey was adamant in the opinion that lay people with very little formal education could understand the Bible and its teaching about Christian life and doctrine as clearly as the academically-credentialed biblical scholar. His whole career was stalked on this belief and nowhere does he lay out his views on the subject more clearly than in the first chapter of his book *The Christ of the Bible.* Torrey states:

> We are to study the actual Christ of this Book, not the Christ that we would like to have or love to dream of, but the Christ that really IS. The Bible is one of the easiest books in the world to understand if men really wish to understand it and to find out what it actually

the subjective and soft-headed spirit of the age which led men to jump to premature conclusions, not having rigorously examined all the evidence. His purpose in writing *The Christ of the Bible* was to show that "the Christ of many modern poets and romancers and philosophers, and also the Christ of the rapidly increasing cults, and even the Christ of many supposedly evangelical preachers and theologians"[12]—"Christs" which all these people claimed to find in the New Testament—simply do not correspond to the picture of Jesus found in the Bible. Torrey's remedy for this situation was a strict methodological inductivism in biblical study. His concern was with truth in the sense of fidelity to what the Bible actually said about any given subject when viewed in its entirety. He placed himself in opposition both to all talk about the Bible that seemed purposely to ignore what the Bible said—that is, he opposed all those who used the Bible disingenuously—and he set himself against all soft-headedness that seemed to miss the plain meaning of the text—that is, he hated stupidity. The implication of Torrey's approach is that the truth or falsity of Christianity can only be ascertained if the message of Christianity as it is announced in the Bible is first stated in an accurate, intelligent, and truthful manner.

While Torrey only implies this last dictum, J. Gresham Machen made it explicit. In an address delivered to the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland in May of 1927, he lays out his opinion as follows:

> . . . if the Christian religion is founded upon historical facts, then there is something in the Christian message which can never possibly change. There is one good thing about facts—they stay put. If a thing really happened, the passage of years can never possibly make it into a thing that did not happen. If the body of Jesus really emerged from the tomb on the first Easter morning, then no possible advance of science can change that fact one whit. The advance of science may conceiveably show that the alleged fact was never a fact at all; it may conceivably show that the earliest Christians were wrong when they said that Christ rose from the dead the third day. But to say that that statement of fact was true for the first century, but because of the advance of science it is no longer true—that is to say what is plainly absurd. The Christian religion is founded squarely upon a message that sets forth facts: if that message is false, then the religion that is founded on it must of course be abandoned; but if it is true, then the Christian Church must still deliver the message, faithfully as it did on the morning of the first Easter Day.[13]

For Machen the issue seemed straightforward. Either Christianity was factually true or it should be discarded as a lie. The liberal position against which he was arguing seemed to him to want to wriggle out of this logical choice of options. Liberals wanted to preach the values of Christianity without having to deal with the sticky issue of whether or not the historical events upon which those values had traditionally been based ever really happened. Interpreting liberalism as two-faced because of this stance, Machen concluded that "modern liberalism could be criticized (1) on the ground that it was un-Christian and (2) on the ground that it was unscientific."[14]

Machen's critique of liberalism as unscientific deserves further attention. His attack in this regard in really twofold. The first is rather obvious—one cannot play fast and loose with facts and still claim the title scientific. However, there is another consideration. In Machen's view the liberal strategy for rescuing Christianity from the corrosive intrusions of science was bound to fail. He writes:

> Admitting that scientific objections may arise against the particularities of the Christian religion—against the Christian doctrines of the person of Christ, and of redemption through his death and resurrection—the liberal theologian seeks to rescue certain of the general principles of religion, of which these particularities are thought to be mere temporary symbols, and these general principles he regards as constituting "the essence of Christianity."
>
> It may well be questioned, however, whether this method of defence will really prove to be efficacious; for after the apologist has abandoned his outer defences to the enemy and withdrawn into some inner citadel, he will probably discover that the enemy pursues him even there . . . Mere consessiveness, therefore, will never succeed in avoiding the intellectual conflict. In the intellectual battle of the day there can be no "peace without victory;" one side or the other must win.[15]

Machen was a consistent thinker. His critique of liberalism as unscientific implied that Fundamentalism needed to be rigorously scientific if it claimed to speak of truth, and he did not shrink from that conclusion. Echoing the optimism that was so typical of the age as a whole, Machen chastened his fellow conservatives for slipping into a liberal-style avoidance of encounter with science and philosophy. Against such a position he argued: "We ought to try to lead scientists and philosophers to become Christians, not by asking them to regard science and philosophy as without bearing upon religion, but on the contrary by asking them to become more scientific and more philosophical through attention to all, instead of some, of the facts."[16] The implications of this position for biblical interpretation are clear. While Machen allowed the logical possibility that Christianity could be disproved by science, he had an overwhelmingly optimistic faith that the Bible simply never would be contradicted by the facts of science.

Machen's position brings us full circle back to Canon Hague's argument in *The Fundamentals*. Machen's assertion that better science will prove the truth of Christianity sounds much like Hague's affirmation that the best scholars are sincere believers. It is interesting to note the optimism that is inherent in each of these positions. Fundamentalist expectations of the future were to prove misplaced, but that should not blind us to the fact they really were optimistic about the future. They thought (hoped) that the "insanity" of their age would soon pass.

The optimism of Machen and Hague is important to note, not only because it seems so ironic in restrospect, but also because it gives us perhaps the best insight into exactly what function Fundamentalism's hermeneutic of truth played in the historical setting of the movement. First let me make explicit the very obvious fact that Fundamentalists almost never actually got down to the business of trying to reconcile science and religion—academically-arrived-at truth and Christianity. What they did do was argue that science and religion, truth and Christianity, were really, underneath it all, compatible—even though on the surface it appeared otherwise. What seems to be going on here is what Clifford Geertz describes as a typical religious response to the problem of bafflement—that point at which we discover the limits of our analytical abilities. The religious response to bafflement, according to Geertz, "is not to deny the undeniable— that there are unexplainable events, that life hurts, or that the rain falls on the unjust— but to deny that there are inexplicable events." He goes on to say that "what is important, to a religious man at least, is that it [i.e., our present inability to explain any particular event] not be the result of the fact that there are no such . . . explanations."[17]

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Living in an age that they admitted seemed crazy, Fundamentalists found their hermeneutic of truth to be a useful tool. It gave them a platform that allowed them to address the larger society: The claims of truth are public. But, it simultaneously provided a buffer against bafflement. The world was not really crazy; it only needed to be called back to its senses. Science was not really a threat to religion; it only sometimes seemed so—the best scientists are believers. To notice this social function of Fundamentalism's hermeneutic of truth is not to say that Fundamentalism's intellectual project was either invalid or misconceived. I do think, however, that Fundamentalism's announced hermeneutical agenda was a larger task than that movement could, at its time in history, pull off. And this analysis of Fundamentalism helps explain the later history of the movement.

Fundamentalism's optimism that the truth of Christianity would soon become obvious again, after the insanity of the age had passed, was of course to prove chimerical. The world did not regain its pre-modern senses, and no appeal to truth on the part of Fundamentalists could keep that fact from striking home. By 1930, Fundamentalism was in full flight into separatism (Machen left Princeton in 1929). Since truth, as the Fundamentalists saw it, was being scorned in the public realms of society, the only option seemed to be to establish separate enclaves where truth could be preserved as long as this age of insanity lasted. Fundamentalism's grand scheme of truth thus took on a diminutive form and also an increasingly le-

galistic tone, as concerns for maintaining the boundaries of the community of truth came to take precedent over questions relating to the harmonization of scientific/academic and religious truth. Within these closed communities, dispensationalism rapidly became the leading biblical interpretive framework. This makes sense and supports Fundamentalism's continuing hermeneutical commitment to truth. What dispensationalism is, in a hermeneutical sense, is a neat way of resolving many apparent conflicts in the Bible. It also provides a method by which one can ignore various biblical passages that might not ring true to a twentieth century audience, or that simply might be too uncomfortable to hear. In either of these cases, the "offending" passages are easily relegated to some other age. They just don't apply.

In closing this section, I want to make one last point. Fundamentalism should not necessarily be critiqued for this opting out of the public debate over truth—at least not by us living in the latter years of the twentieth century. The same option, in a different context, is currently receiving a very cordial welcome in the American scholarly community. I refer, of course, to the closing lines of Alasdair MacIntyre's influential *After Virtue*. MacIntyre's concern is with moral not religious/cultural confusion, but his remedy has the aura of deja vu to most American Evangelicals. His solution to the moral schizophrenia of the age?

> What matters at this stage is the construction of local forms of community within which civility and the intellectual and moral life can be sustained through the dark ages which are already upon us. And if the tradition of the virtues was able to survive the horrors of the last dark ages, we are not entirely without grounds for hope. This time however the barbarians are not waiting beyond the frontiers; they have already been governing us for quite some time. And it is our lack of consciousness of this that constitutes part of our predicament. We are waiting not for a Godot, but for another—doubtless very different—St. Benedict.[18]

The Classic Evangelical Generation: The Hermeneutics of Authority

Around 1945 a new hermeneutical paradigm emerged within the American Evangelical tradition centering on the root metaphor of authority. This new idea came into being coterminously with what was then called the Neoevangelical movement. Institutionally this movement found representation in the National Association of Evangelicals; later it received a voice in the form of *Christianity Today* magazine. The leaders of the movement are relatively easy to enumerate. Carl F.H. Henry, Bernard L. Ramm, Harold John Ockenga, Frank E. Gaebelein, E.J. Carnell, Harold Lindsell, and Billy Graham stand out as prominent, but others could be added. For all these individuals, for this institutional organization, and for this journal, the authority of the Bible was a watchword. The accomplishments of the Neoevangelical movement are impressive, especially within the evangelical orb of Protestantism in America. In many ways the individuals associated with it placed a stamp on American Evangelicalism that continues to this day. Certainly it was the dominant evangelical position until 1975. It is proper therefore to label this generation the generation of Classic Evangelicalism.

Evangelicals in this era breathed a different air than that of their Fundamentalist forebears. The cultural situation of the nation had shifted significantly, and Classic Evangelicals had accordingly set for themselves different goals than those of the earlier movement. In order to understand the hermeneutical stance of Classic Evangelicalism it is necessary to be attentive to two factors: (1) the negative reaction against Fundamentalism and (2) the positive response to the new situation facing the nation in this era. Both of these concerns fed into the configuration of the movement as it developed.

The Classic Evangelical view of American history between the years c.1930 and 1945 ran something like this: the Fundamentalist decision to flee the public realm of society and withdraw into separatism had left a large gap in the larger culture. Fundamentalists might have succeeded in protecting their own particular worldview, but the impact on the American society as a whole had been to hasten the public de-Christianization of life. During the war years and immediately following, however, the atmosphere changed. Scientists and secularists seemed to have lost their confidence. They were faltering. The culture as a whole seemed to be coming to the conclusion that it was in a state of crisis, and that crisis was largely a crisis of authority. Into the gap stepped the Neoevangelical movement. This was no time for defensive withdrawal. Now was the time to reemerge into public view. Classic Evangelicals sensed the age was ripe to hear the "Word of God" announced with authority. The time for tedious proofs of the truth of the Bible was past. Rather than lamenting the fact that this was a "hurrying age," as Canon Hague had argued in *The Fundamentals*, Classic Evangelicals sought hurriedly to seize the day. Their strategy was to preach with authority from the Word of God (using the most contemporary forms of media) and to call on people to respond in the moment (for today was the hour of decision).

The above rendering of the rise of Classic Evangelicalism is not necessarily inaccurate, but it is an in-house analysis and one that is at least slightly suspect given the high compliments it gives itself. Most Classic Evangelical self-descriptions paint the movement as a step up from Fundamentalism—they retained all the good points of Fundamentalism but had good manners and charm to boot. That is, pardon the phrase, not quite the Gospel truth.

Yes, Classic Evangelicalism does look good compared to the generation that immediately preceded it—one of decadent Fundamentalism—but compared to the original Fundamentalist generation it is pale. Classic Evangelicals claimed that they, unlike their Fundamentalist forebears, were willing to dialogue with non-E/evangelicals in a scholarly, not judgmental, manner. However, these Classic Evangelicals rarely noted the fact that they could choose with whom they would debate. The Fundamentalists of 1915-30 did not have the pleasure of choosing their debating companions. They had to fight "heretics" within their own denominations. The scope of the classical evangelical task is also, in a sense, diminuative when compared to that of the original fundamentalist generation. Fundamentalists had hoped to maintain the "Christian-ness" of the entire culture. The fact that they lost that battle does nothing to diminish the grandeur of their aspirations. Classic Evangelicals, by contrast, had the relatively easy task of needing only to assert their own point of view; they eschewed the need to defend the truth of the Christian faith and fell back to the relatively safe turf of authoritative pronouncement. Finally, there was an internal inconsistency in Classic Evangelicalism that was lacking in the early Fundamentalist movement. While Classic Evangelicals talked a good line about openness to the culture, they did so while actively constructing a super separatism—an alternative subcultural enclave—in which to live. Classic Evangelical encounters with non-evangelicals were often billed as "dialogues," but they rarely moved beyond the level of apologetics—missionary forays into non-evangelical turf.

Whatever the possible plusses or minuses of the movement

when viewed in historical context, the hermeneutical center of the movement seems, beyond doubt, to have been authority. In discussing the authority hermeneutic of Classic Evangelicalism, I would like to cover the broad gamut of the movement in a manner similar to the discussion of Fundamentalist truth hermeneutics above. The contours of Classic Evangelicalism are, of course, not nearly so precise as those of the earlier movement. The positions taken by the National Association of Evangelicals and *Christianity Today* are of obvious importance. Beyond dealing with these two sources of Classic Evangelical ideas, I will also look at the opinions of two of the most prominent early mainstream thinkers in the movement—Carl F.H. Henry and E.J. Carnell—and at one "left-wing" member of the Classic Evangelical coalition—Dewey M. Beegle.

The constitution of the National Association of Evangelicals as it was formulated in 1942 includes a short six point "doctrinal basis" of the organization. The first article reads: "That we believe the Bible to be inspired, the only infallible, authoritative word of God." The prominence of the Bible in the NAE is obvious—belief in the authority of the Bible even takes precedent over belief in the Trinity, which is the second doctrinal article of the institution. The word truth, however, is never mentioned in connection with the Bible. One might suggest that the concept of truth is inherent in the term "infallible." I would agree. And, I think that truth did play a role in the Classic Evangelical view of the Bible. But, it also seems clear that the relative place of truth as a concept through which the Bible can be made relevant to its modern audience has slipped a good notch from its place of prominence in Fundamentalist rhetoric.[19]

Arguments from silence are by themselves relatively weak, but other documents relative to the founding of the NAE back the points outlined above. In the opening address to the assembled conference that launched the NAE on its way, Harold John Ockenga never once mentioned the truth of the Bible. What he discussed in his remarks, entitles "The Unvoiced Multitudes," was: (1) "the unrepresented masses of Christians," (2) God's promise of power" to change the world, and (3) that "there must be a technic for our purpose." He spoke several times of "true Christians" and of "the True Church," but not of the truth of the Bible. His conclusion reads as follows:

> I say again that we have every reason in the world to believe that there will be a great ingathering of souls before the end of the age. Now is the time for us to do our preaching; now is the time for us to reach out in a frank and positive way. Who knows but what this Council has stepped into the gap for an hour as this?[20]

Ockenga wanted "true Christians" to band together to use the Bible. Now was not the time to quibble over matters of fact and truth. The job before them, as Classic Evangelicals saw it, was immense and urgent. What it called for was not the tedious work of searching for truth, but the effectiveness of simply speaking with authority.

At this point let me interrupt the flow of people and events to address the issue (I think ultimately a side issue) of the inerrancy, or, differently worded, the infallibility of the Bible. The NAE clearly subscribed to the infallibility as well as the authority of the Bible. Doesn't this ascription include truth as a hermeneutical norm? My answer to this is a definite yes and no. Yes, questions of truth did not just evaporate in Classic Evangelicalism. Nor have they since. To disregard truth altogether would, I think, place one outside the evangelical orb.

But, I must also answer no. When Classic Evangelicals spoke of the infallibility of the Bible they only rarely bent the discussion toward topics of truth. Their main use of the term seems to relate only to two issues: (1) whether or not infallibility as a doctrine was explicitly taught by the Bible itself, and (2) the simple fact that a stress on the infallibility of the Bible was pragmatically useful as an encouragement to the faithful and as a critique of liberalism that went down well with the general population.

I do not want glibly to set aside two decades of evangelical spilled ink on the subject of infallibility. But I do think that with regard to the question of hermeneutical stance, it is a secondary concern—at least it was for the founders of Classic Evangelicalism. Later, infallibility did become a shibboleth within the ranks of Classic Evangelicalism. And infallibility has in some recent arguments been interpreted as a hermeneutical commitment—e.g., in recent ETS debate over the membership status of Robert Gundry. But, I think this shift within Classic Evangelicalism coincides with a regression in the movement (similar to that which occured in Fundamentalism in the 1930s and early 40s). Infallibility became a burning issue only in the 60s and 70s when Classic Evangelicals were beginning to sense the limits of their hermeneutic of authority. In an era when established certainties begin to feel inexplicably as if they are weakening, an increasing ossification of those established (and formerly more flexible) positions often occurs. I think this did occur in Classic Evangelicalism and I think it has to a significant degree obscured our vision of the central hermeneutical strategies of the movement. Enough of a digression; back to the story.

What was implicit through its absence in the NAE position—i.e., the shift of hermeneutical focus *away* from truth to authority—was later to be made explicit in Classic Evangelicalism. This shift happened to the movement as a whole, but perhaps it is most visible in the lives of individuals. Billy Graham, writing in the first issue of the first volume of *Christianity Today* (October 15, 1956)—and I am assuming that Graham's position was also that of *CT* itself—reflected on his experience in the following manner:

> In 1949 I had been having a great many doubts concerning the Bible. I thought I saw apparent contradictions in Scripture. Some things I could not reconcile with my restricted concept of God. When I stood up to preach, the authoritative note so characteristic of all great preachers of the past was lacking. Like hundreds of other young seminary students, I was waging the intellectual battle of my life. The outcome would certainly affect my future ministry.
>
> In August of that year I had been invited to Forest Home, Presbyterian conference center high in the mountains outside of Los Angeles. I remember walking down a trail, tramping into the woods, and almost wrestling with God. I dueled with my doubts, and my soul seemed to be caught in the crossfire. Finally, in desperation, I surrendered my will to the living God revealed in Scripture. I knelt before the open Bible and said: "Lord, many things in this Book I do not understand. But thou hast said, 'The just shall live by faith.' Here and now, by faith, I will reserve judgment until I receive more light. If this pleases Thee, give me authority as I proclaim Thy word, and through that authority convict me of sin and turn sinners to the Savior."
>
> Within six weeks we started our Los Angeles crusade, which is now history. During the crusade I discovered the secret that changed my ministry. I stopped trying to prove the Bible was true. I had settled in my own mind

that it was, and this faith was conveyed to the audience. Over and over again I found myself saying "The Bible says." I felt as thought I were merely a voice through which the Holy Spirit was speaking.

Authority created faith. Faith generated response, and hundreds of people were impelled to come to Christ.

For Graham, to ask the question of the truth of the Bible was to miss the point. The crucial fact was that the Bible was authoritative—it was literally God's Word—and its truthfulness had to be assumed by faith as part of one's faith in the God it proclaimed. This kind of "truthfulness"—authoritative truthfulness—was not susceptible to rational debate or empirical testing. For Classic Evangelicals, the authority of the Bible ultimately had to be accepted or rejected as a primary faith commitment. However, they were quick to point out, as Graham does above, that this more-or-less fideistic acceptance of the authority of the Bible was not a decision that had to be made with blind faith. There was pragmatic proof that such a stance was the correct one: It produced converts. Such an argument may or may not be seen as theologically appropriate—few Classic Evangelicals would want to admit such pragmatic proofs into any other aspect of their theologizing—but it does reveal the deep transformation that had taken place in the preceding two or three decades. In the years 1915-30, Fundamentalistic Evangelicals had argued that the claims of the Bible had to be understood to be true to be accepted. Now, the acceptance of the authority of the Bible had been totally removed from the realm.

Edward J. Carnell's opinion regarding hermeneutics and authority is essentially the same as Graham's, but he phrases his position differently and has a few distinctive emphases. Writing in 1957, in a volume edited by John Walvoord entitled *Inspiration and Interpretation,* Carnell gives the following "working criterion" of the Classic Evangelical hermeneutical stance toward the Bible: "Religious thinkers will submit to the Bible only as they despair of learning the meaning of life without assistance from God." This articulation of the Classic Evangelical viewpoint comes in an essay that critiques Reinhold Niebuhr's use of the Bible. Carnell admits that Niebuhr wants to appeal authoritatively to the Bible at different points in his argument to support his case, but he concludes that Niebuhr's selective use of the Bible as an authority simply is not a consistent and coherent position. According to Carnell, one either accepts the Bible whole as being from God and thus authoritative, or one loses the right to appeal to the authority of the Bible. Niebuhr's desire to maintain what Carnell calls "a critical autonomy over the biblical text" ultimately deconstructs any appeals to authority Niebuhr might want to make. Filtered through the subjectivity of the human selection process, in which certain passages of the Bible are declared authoritative while others are shrugged off as irrelevant, the appeal to biblical authority loses all its power. On Carnell's theological map, the road to authority is labeled submission.[21]

Lest this position seem absolutely stark and unbending, let me talk about the flip side—how Carnell contrasted this position with that Fundamentalism. In an essay entitled "Orthodoxy: Cultic and Classical" which appeared in the March 30th, 1960 issue of the *Christian Century,* Carnell critiqued Fundamentalism (especially the Fundamentalism of the 1930s and 40s) for its cold obsession with truth. Fundamentalists, he says, thought they possessed unalloyed truth. As a corollary they also thought they had a monopoly on virtue and accordingly they denounced all who disagreed with them as apostate. Carnell says this had been his own position until he "awoke from dogmatic slumber." It suddenly dawned on him that inclusion in the Church—being a Christian—was not a function of the truths possessed, but of God's grace which operated through faith and repentence. Carnell came to the conclusion that Fundamentalism had confused sanctification (which includes for Carnell "doctrinal maturity") with justification. They had traded in God's grace for doctrinal legalism. Carnell's relief at having his Christian faith freed from the burden of Fundamentalist scholasticism is palpable:

> I know that much of this will sound elemetary to outsiders. But to one reared in the tyrannical legalism of fundamentalism, the recovery of a genuine theology of grace is no insignificant feat. The feat calls for a generous outlay of intellectual honesty and personal integrity.[22]

All of Carnell's thinking needs to be understood in the light of this heartfelt experience of grace. Even the seemingly harsh language of submission that Carnell uses to critique Niebuhr and other "liberals" is at its core rooted in this understanding of grace. Carnell states that the Classic Evangelical emphasis on the authority of the Bible is, in its first sense, a religious affirmation rather than a theological dictate. The norm of submission to the word of God:

> Simply means that since sin is a personal rebellion against God, and since rebellion is an expression of human self-sufficiency, it follows that the natural man will not yield to the revealed word of God until it interests him, and it will never interest him until he discovers profit in such a submission. Whenever God's voice is of neither interest nor profit, man will remain autonomous. Only as one hungers for Scripture will he conform to its teachings.[23]

The writings of Carl F.H. Henry add another dimension to our understanding of the Classic Evangelical hermeneutic of authority, especially regarding the turn away from appeals to truth in hermeneutics. The world Henry addressed had changed vastly since the turn of the century—since the early years of Fundamentalism. "Science," that bugaboo against which Fundamentalism had alternatively fulminated against as the epitome of modern anti-supernaturalism and lauded as the final grounding of Christian faith, seemed to have lost its appeal to the great majority of Americans. To ask if the Bible was scientifically true was to ask a poorly posed question in the 1940s—at least that was how Henry saw it:

> Who today believes in the adequacy of the scientific method to answer all our problems? . . . Who today does not see that the scientific method now has given us a monster so terrible that we all need to be saved from it? No promise of deliverance lies in a weapon worse than the atomic bomb, for that can only multiply our predicament. Who does not sense that the yearning heart of man today reaches for some power beyond nature, some method beyond the scientific, to govern the fickle human temper, lest in the conviction that nature alone speaks the last word, it be to atomic might that men tomorrow will resort in defining what is good and what is true?[24]

For Henry the appeal to good science, even to the best science, was misplaced. Whether or not science should be able to prove the Bible true was beside the point—as well as being presumptuously arrogant about the potential of the human intellect. Viewing developments in this light, Henry interpreted the public faltering of faith in the language of scientific objectivity as a step forward for Evangelicals. It was that faltering of scientific faith that had made the Classic Evangelical "revelation method" (read authority) once again so timely.

Henry intoned that it was "the proclamation of God's self-disclosure in the written Word and in the living Word Christ Jesus, that alone can resolve the corrosive uncertainty of the confused mid-twentieth century mind."[25] Henry's words did not fall on deaf ears. By the mid 1940s even liberal scholars had come to the point of admitting that a positivistic approach to the Bible was not possible. We either approach the Bible as a religiously authoritative book or not. And it is simple fact that our attitudes do affect our scholarship. Truth as a goal seems clearly to have fallen in esteem on all fronts. Further evidence of this development can be found in the life and career of Dewey Beegle.

Beegle's life illustrates both the overwhelming centrality of authority in Classic Evangelicalism and the limits of the movement. The typical way of looking at Beegle is to locate him in the left-wing of Classic Evangelicalism (i.e., that wing of the movement that did not think that language of inerrancy or infallibility was needed to assure the authority of the Bible). His peers recognized him as part of the movement because of his commitment to authority as the primary hermeneutical stance evangelicals must take. But simultaneously Classic Evangelicals have always relegated him to the margin of the movement because he just was not a party line person.

In *The Inspiration of Scripture*, Beegle affirms the importance of authority in the Classic Evangelical movement. His treatment of the subject follows typical lines. Authority convinces; and without convincement people don't believe the wonderful things God has done; and if people cease to believe all that God has done the power of God in their lives seems to evaporate. While recognizing all of this, Beegle also noted (along with Carnell) the very basic religious nature of the issue. "Humble submission to the Christ back of Scripture is far more crucial than one's doctrine of revelation and inspiration."[26] But, Beegle also recognized something else: Authority, if it is to have staying power, must be based on truth. Without such a base all claims to authority ring hollow. The main thrust of his book is that inerrancy must be given up, because it misrepresents the actual nature of the biblical text as we know it (i.e., because it is untrue), so that the authority of the Bible will remain. Let me hop, skip, and jump through three short quotations from *The Inspiration of Scripture*:

> Anyone who has experienced the regenerating power of Christ comes to Scripture with the assurance that it "has the words of eternal life." Where new evidence proves that some statements of God's Word is inaccurate, one can readily accept the fact knowing that the essential truths will never be altered . . .(182)
>
> Difficult though it may be to understand, God chose to make his authority relevant to man by means which necessitate some element of fallibility. Whether we like to think of authority in such terms is beside the point. The facts permit no other understanding of Scripture's inspiration and authority . . .(186)
>
> It is time that all Christians make certain that their foundation is in Christ and his view of Scripture. Gnawing fears will vanish, and vision and power will take their place. We need to be about the affairs of God's Kingdom and that means being on the offensive with the proclamation of the gospel.[27] (188)

Beegle's message is at its core the same as that of all Classic Evangelicals. The world needs the gospel, and it is at this point in time ready to hear it. We have an authoritative message to proclaim. Let us lay aside the disputes that have torn us apart and be about our task. But he goes beyond this. Let us not make inerrancy our new doctrinal legalism to replace the old Fundamentalist legalisms from which we have freed ourselves, he says. Let us be true to truth as we are attentive to God's message in the Bible. We must come to honest grips with the nature of the authoritative revelation God has given us. If we really think the Bible is authoritative, let us accept it as it is—let us not try to polish it up better than God made it. In an odd way Beegle is simultaneously more conservative and more liberal than the Classic Evangelical mainline. He never wanted to let go of the truth hermeneutic of early twentieth century Fundamentalism, and he precurses in many ways the turn to responsibility in recent years.

In summary, what can be said about the Classic generation of Evangelicals and their distinctive hermeneutical emphasis on authority? How successful were they at making their hermeneutical metaphor work? I think overall it worked rather well. The audience they sought to address was one that both hungered for authority and thought it could be found. The Classic Evangelical message that the authority their generation needed was to be found in the Bible met that need. While thus connecting the Bible to the concerns of the wider culture, Classic Evangelicalism's emphasis on authority also helped Evangelicals better define exactly what separated them from that larger culture—and it did that in a much less cold-hearted way than the generation of Fundamentalists that had immediately preceded them.

In its popular cash-out, the simultaneous separating and connecting potential of Classic Evangelicalism's hermeneutic of authority set the stage for this generation's notable achievements in the area of evangelism. Their hermeneutic of authority both allowed their audience to hear the message of the gospel and set up a boundary line over which people who heard that message could step to accept that authority—the latter being a necessary condition for any call to conversion. The importance of conversion is central to this hermeneutic, and the natural fit between this method and Evangelicalism's long lasting commitment to Evangelism is obvious.

On the scholarly level, Classic Evangelicalism's hermeneutic of authority pushed Evangelicals to develop their exegetical skills to the level of real excellence. If the Bible is taken really to be authoritative, the important thing is to understand what it says. In this concern to understand what the Bible says, Classic Evangelicals almost always concentrated on the plain and straightforward meanings of the text. Authoritative texts cannot, afterall, be obtuse writings. Their meanings must be readily available. And, that is exactly how evangelicals of this generation exegeted the Bible. To perform this exegesis well only two tools are essential: the study of language and the study of the historical setting of the text (of course text criticism should also be mentioned here, but that is more a pre-hermeneutical tool than a hermeneutical tool proper). This combination of requirements made the historico-linguistic method of study clearly the hermeneutical tool of choice for Classic Evangelicals.

If the world had stood still, this combination of religious interpretive community and hermeneutical root metaphor seems as natural a marriage as any that could ever be hoped for. However, the world did not oblige Classic Evangelicals by standing still. And that changing world has in recent years called forth yet a third root hermeneutical metaphor by which Evangelicals are seeking to understand the Bible and relay that message to the world at large.

Look for Part II in the May–June issue of the Bulletin

An Interview with Carl F.H. Henry

by Diana Hochstedt Butler

When Publisher's Weekly reviewed Carl Henry's Confessions of a Theologian, they called Henry "The Angelic Doctor: the Thomas Aquinas of the Evangelical World." Although some might consider the comparison dubious, by all counts Carl Henry is the elder statesman of American evangelicalism. He was converted to Christianity in 1933—just past the height of the Fundamentalist/Modernist controversy—and his autobiography reads like a personal history of modern Christianity. Over the course of fifty years, Henry met and talked with many great theologians, traveled the world and was embroiled in many controversies. His personal knowledge of contemporary Christianity is unmatched; his imprint on modern evangelicalism is undeniable.

On a cold Saturday morning in January, my husband and I met Carl Henry in his Arlington, Virginia home. He was standing at the door waiting for us. He quickly ushered us in from the morning chill. He introduced us to his wife, Helga, who, unfortunately, could not stay with us that morning. They walked us through a cozy and old-fashioned living room with over-stuffed chairs and lots of photographs (passing by the largest pile of Christmas cards I've ever seen in a private home!) to the dining room. We sat down, fortified by coffee and Helga's wonderful German cookies, to talk about theology, evangelicalism, and Henry's life.

Sensing my nervousness, Carl Henry was gracious and reassuring. In some ways, it was more of a conversation than an interview! He was interested in our views, convictions and life stories as we were in his. There was much laughter throughout our serious and thought-provoking discussion.

As we drove back to Boston, I felt encouraged by the discussion. But it was not simply a discussion about theology. We had talked of God in an urgent and personal way, a way which affected us and could affect the world.

There is much I'll remember from that morning, but the comment I'll remember most came at the very end. I expressed some frustration about a controversial issue I tackle at times. Dr. Henry asked me my opinion on the subject. I told him where I stood, that I thought it was scriptural and no argument had convinced me differently. He looked straight at me and said,"Don't be pushed around. Stick to the Bible and maintain your integrity."

That is what Carl Henry wants to say to us all.

TSFB: The title of the commencement address you delivered last spring at Westminster Seminary, "Are Theologians an Endangered Species?," is intriguing. Are theologians an endangered species?

Henry: Well, it depends what you mean by a theologian. Every last human being has a concept of God, shoddy as it may be. So you have Buddhist theologians, Hindu theologians and so on. Or you could mean the term as specifically Christian: those who are skilled in theology. More technically, those who are teachers of theology as a specific vocational calling.

Theologians were an endangered species in Jesus' time, when people tended to supply their own interpretation of the Law and miscarried it. And they are endangered in modern times also. Not only because they are answerable to Scripture, but because of the tendency of secular society to look upon theology as not simply obtuse but as superstitious and mystical. Society views theology as essentially subjective; everybody rolls his own. One theology becomes as legitimate or illegitimate as another.

TSFB: You touch on that in the essays in your two recent books, *The Christian Mindset* and *Christian Countermoves*. Is part of your agenda for evangelicalism to get evangelicals to start *thinking* about themselves?

C.H.: This is one of the great weaknesses of our time: that intellectuals are critical of contemporary society, but the masses are contemptious of intellectuals! In point of fact, the media age has raised up a new category of intellectual. The intellectual no longer has to wait for reviews of his book by peers who judge the value or merit of a work. Upon publication, he or she is rushed to the media for interviews, and interviewed by people who are not specialists in the field. They are usually interested in certain facets—what touches lower emotions rather than what touches the essence of critical thought. The media themselves therefore propagate a redefinition of the intellectual. The intellectual has become anybody who can turn a smart phrase—particularly about things that the masses are interested in. And it's done in such a way as to provide a dynamic media interview of it.

Take authors who are interviewed—most often they are chosen when their books make radical claims that have not been verified by the scholarly community. My conviction is that an intellectual is first someone who knows the history of ideas, and who knows the strengths and weaknesses of positions asserted in the history of thought; knows that we live upon the past and that not everything is ideal because it's modern. That is especially true of modern thought. On the other hand, I don't think an intellectual is merely a collector of traditions, a curator of diverse philosophical views inherited from the past—though what is past can often be superior to the present, particularly if the scholarship of the past found a basis for assertions rising above the idea that ideas are culture conditioned. The intellectual makes a case for the permanent validity of truth and morality. That sort of intellectual framework provides a basis for the survival of one's idea into the future. In the biblical context, it is the fear of God that is the beginning of wisdom. In the long history of thought, both Western and Eastern philosophers have been more on the side of God and the supernatural. The great religions of the world tend to be theistic and pantheistic. Theism, or a form of theism, is far more prominent throughout history that the naturalism which has dominated contemporary thought. This question is permanently on the agenda: How to make a case that God makes for himself.

TSFB: Everything you are saying runs against the stream of modern Christianity and especially modern evangelicalism. Do you think evangelicals have gone about making a case for God through their *experience*, instead of what they think?

C.H.: The valid point in that approach is *if* one has no experience of thought, then it is an experientially insignificant notion. God is experientially an insignificant notion. It's mere redundancy to say I have no experience of God unless I experience him. That is so elemental it is hardly worth affirming. The real question is what is the source of true knowledge of God. In modern thought, including much evangelical thought, a case for theism is mounted on the basis of the not-God. The appeal is made either from man's experience, which is cer-

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Diana Hochstedt Butler is a librarian at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

tainly the not-God. The appeal is made either from man's experience, which is certainly the not-God, from nature, from the movements of history, inevitable progress, conscience and so on. My conviction is that it's impossible to rise to God from the not-God. There's always something wrong with the argument. That puts me over against Thomas Aquinas.

TSFB: You stand with Karl Barth on that one.

C.H.: Yes. Only because Barth stood with Augustine and beyond him, with Paul and Isaiah and Moses. We need to begin with God's self-revelation. I break with Barth in my insistence that God's personal revelation is intellectual, cognitive and that God builds truths about himself in revealing himself. That's the great difference. Barth, the early Barth, says that revelation is nonpropositional and noncognitive. God confronts the will in man's decision.

There is a great deal of emphasis on decision in contemporary evangelical thought. We are only now beginning to catch up with the fact that even in mass meetings the call for decision gets a response far greater than the number of deciders who actually survive or affiliate with an evangelical church. Recent estimates have put the figure of casualties in the ninety percent range.

TSFB: Given all you've just said, what areas of theology are the most important for young evangelical scholars to be working on today?

C.H.: First, the doctrine of God. If one discards God, then nature is no longer relativized. All sorts of theories of the causal network of nature that holds man in his grasp, or an indeterministic nature that makes the future wholly unpredictable, or sheer evolutionary nature that supercedes anything that arises in the past or in the present— all those theories gain headway if God is discarded and nature is no longer relativized. Again, if one lets go of God, man is no longer relativized. You get totalitarian views that man himself defines the content of human rights, man himself determines the nature of truth and the nature of good. The latter is an echo of contemporary humanism. We don't confirm the reality of God simply because of what the negation of God makes possible. That's a completely ridiculous thought. God is important because he revealed himself and reveals himself still. He's revealed himself in nature, history, conscience and the mind of man, the *imago Dei*. He's revealed himself specially in the Hebrew Christian history and the Scriptural interpretation of that history. He reveals himself ongoingly in Jesus Christ's universal revelation. He still speaks in and through Scripture.

Evangelical theology tends to treat the doctrine of God devotionally. That in itself is certainly not to be disparged—but it does so to the neglect of the intellectual significance of the doctrine in the contemporary conflict of ideas. Even in the tendency to treat God only devotionally, most evangelical worship tends to be quite thin. Compare some of the Puritans and their writings with contemporary prayers and there's a day and night difference between them. People live with a very thin view of God, a very skimpy view of God. That is why when they run into serious trouble, they buckle so easily. Surely that "fluffy" view of God is not unrelated to the breakdown of faith that issues often in divorce and marital separation and sometimes even suicide in evangelical circles.

TSFB: This is a problem for evangelicalism as a whole; there are many in my generation who grew up within evangelicalism who want nothing more to do with it. People aren't taught who God is in their churches. Many young evangelicals are saying that the worship is feeble, the thinking is feeble. And they think the whole tradition is unrescuable.

C.H.: A lot of it is. Even in its present pulpit presentation, a lot of contemporary evangelicalism is doctrinally very thin. Too much evangelical preaching fails to bring forward into the present the immense importance of biblical revelation. It has to its credit the fact that it is biblically rooted and it presents the revelation of God in its biblical context, but it too often fails to bring forward into the *present* the implication of that biblical content. That probably is the weakness of evangelical preaching. The modernists dwell in the present. They are weak in trying to find anchorage for their ideas back in the biblical soil. We need to focus on evangelism, but we need to take a critical look at evangelism that preaches what happened in the biblical past, and then make an almost Bultmannian turn in the closing one or two minutes and ask that it be appropriated in an internal decision alone—without realizing that what happened in the past has significance for contemporary history. That means we don't stop with the doctrine of God—we go on to the doctrine of creation. It is remarkable that people who go first to John 3:16 forget how much John said about the doctrine of creation in John 1—before he even got around to the doctrine of salvation.

TSFB: In the forties when you, along with others, were frustrated with fundamentalism, you came up with this new term—"evangelicalism"—to describe yourselves.

C.H.: I've always resisted the term "evangelical*ism*." Evangelical is good enough for me. I do think, however, the diversity of evangelicals in our time gives an increasing legitimacy for the term evangelicalism. I've always felt that an "ism" was destined to be a "wasm." We are seeing a mishmash in evangelicalism today. It is encouraged by the evangelical establishment. Whether you think of evangelical crusades or leading magazines, they *try* to reflect as much of the mix as possible. They do not give any critical evaluation of it. Of course, attendance at crusades and the support for the electronic church and the potential subscribers to magazines is tied up with getting the largest response possible. If you are an evangelical you ought to get on the boat with all of us.

What has happened is a lack of responsible criticism of the evangelical movement from its own leaders. That can be done in love. One of the things about *Christianity Today* (when it started) that drew the interest of nonevangelicals was that it contained self-criticism of the movement. Too much of contemporary evangelicalism acts as if it is unqualifiedly normative. Any criticism becomes a betrayal of the cause. For example, when *Newsweek* came out with the cover story on the "Year of the Evangelical" many evangelicals were saying that the last great evangelical awakening had come. That was no more a tribute to evangelical awakening than the man in the moon. Evangelical awakening is here when the world starts judging itself by an evangelical conscience—even though it won't commit itself to evangelical beliefs. That isn't happening. We are far from that today.

TSF: If you would have stayed with *CT*, is that where you would have wanted to go? To support the evangelical movement by both undergirding it theologically and criticizing it fairly?

Henry: Indeed. I had an agreement from Billy Graham that we could even speak critically of his evangelistic meetings. He said he hoped I wouldn't feel compelled to do that all the time!

TSF: Does that lack of ability to look at the movement honestly betray some sort of theological problem within evangelicalism?

Henry: I think so. We are shying away from repentance—and that is the road to renewal. The big question before evangelicals is whether they are going to find a deeper reliance on God and put his claim upon them. I feel that way. I'm ready to plunge in. Frankly, I don't look hopefully on the Reformed

movement, the Arminian movement of the Wesleyans, or the Pentecostals as an alternative to the Evangelical movement. All of this indicates that we have not found unity. We may have found a unity which is superior in some respects to the ecumenical movements, but for evangelicals it's going to take a deeper commitment which involves taking more seriously the doctrine of the church than has been taken in evangelical circles.

to do one article—it should be placed squarely in the midst of one of the best intellectual journals today.

The right authors and issues would have to be joined. It's not so much *who* I'd have as *what* they say. I'm impressed by a good number of writers today, but what is lacking is the strategy, the organizational strategy, that presents them as a cohesive movement assailing the right fortresses. What's lacking is a schematic overview and integration of these efforts.

I do not regard socialism as a benevolent and altruistic alternative—especially* now *that the empirical data is in. One would think that those who profess to be intellectually oriented would at least begin to evaluate some of the data!

TSF: If *CT* called you up and asked you to be editor, what issues would you tackle? Who would you have writing for you?

Henry: If I got that call, I would think I was having a bad dream! I would do precisely what I sugggested to the meeting in Palm Springs of evangelical leaders who were contemplating "passing the torch" to the younger generation: We need an overall strategy that looks at where we are as American evangelicals in the world, what the problems and barriers are, what resources we have for doing something and how they can be most effectively meshed to the need—so that we can do maximally what we have some promise of doing.

I don't mean simply to suggest a strategy of activism. I include in this the need for reviving the prayer meeting, probing a deeper spirit of worship, and stressing a profounder role for Scripture and its bearing upon contemporary society—all of it. The last forty pages of my autobiography gives an agenda. The remarkable thing is that while I was in Asia, I had American pastors ferret me out and say that chapter so gripped them that they wanted their churches to be pilot projects for that sort of thrusting into the future. So there is an agenda. I think *Christianity Today* has its distinctive ministry today. It is venturing the somewhat impossible taks of trying to minister on two fronts, one which is very popular and the other which is cognitive. The tragedy would be if those two do not coincide in their commitment and interest.

TSFB: Which they obviously seem not to—judging from the pages of the magazine.

C.H.: That's true. We had 170,000 paid subscriptions in those days, predominantly pastors and seminarians. Today they have about 212,000, but they've lost the intellectuals. It's too bad. And, ironically, *Christian Century* has become more conservative.

TSFB: Should evangelicals start a new journal for their concerns to be voiced? Or has our society become so obsessed with visual media that a journal would no longer have the kind of impact it had in the 1950s?

C.H.: If that comes about, it ought to come about through *all* the seminaries and the Christian colleges doing it together. We have some good journals today. We have the *Westminster Journal*, the *Trinity Journal*, the *ETS Journal*. But if we had one great journal, there would be a chance of it being read. Another idea would be to have a committee and pick out the people who have ability and place their key articles on key issues right into existing secular nonevangelical journals, then present an award publicly every year for the best article. That's one alternative we haven't thought about. Why start another journal? Wouldn't it be just as effective to have a review committee that venture assignments and make commitments with funds? Even if a professor had to take off a two-hour course They all run around like lonely cowboys at a rodeo lassoing this or that loose cow or bull on the horizon.

TSFB: Is that kind of cooperation possible with the diversity in evangelicalism today?

C.H.: I don't know. Only God knows the answer to that question. Evangelical Christianity may have squandered its opportunity. I don't mean that it will perish, but I'm talking about the opportunity that it had. F.F. Bruce says that the evangelical movement was at its strongest when *Christianity Today* gave it theological leadership. What made evangelical Christianity strong in the contemporary context was the alliance between Graham's evangelism and *Christianity Today*. Graham penetrated across lines into the ecumenical denominations and carried evangelism out of the fundamentalist arena to what was then the mainstream. *CT* carried evangelical beliefs out of the independent arena. It showed there was an international, interdenominational evagelical scholarship. We have allowed that advantage to slip away.

Despite all the claims of the electronic church and despite all the effort of the Moral Majority and the evangelical engagement in the public arena, evangelicals within four or five years may well be back where they started from as a public influence. The Falwell effort to bring about a coalescence between fundamentalists and evangelicals has reached a dead-end, I think. The acceleration of naturalism, or raw paganism, on the American scene is proceeding at an astonishing rate. There is a gratifying evangelical remnant—though it often thinks of itself as much more than a remnant—and we can be grateful for that. But I think the humanism is quickly going out of Humanism and that unless there is an evangelical renewal, in the 1990s we will see a relapse of humanism to paganism, to sheer pagan naturalism—that is what the church will face.

TSFB: That makes me uncomfortable.

C.H.: It did not make the apostles uncomfortable. They continually said God, Christ, the Lord of history, could return right now and wind the whole thing up for judgement. In that context, they found boldness under God. That was the key to their boldness, the key to their wisdom, the key to their peace, the key to everything they had was the fullness of the Spirit in their lives. They lived in two worlds. They lived in the other world as the ultimately real world and, secondly, this world as the world of contemporary opportunity.

TSFB: That kind of bold eschatology can give us hope. Would a clear biblical eschatology empower the church?

C.H.: It would be a great help, but I wouldn't go on eschatology alone. I would center it on the doctrine of God. Then on the doctrine of creation, the doctrine of redemption and eventually the doctrine of future judgment. Of course, the future judgment is already underway because Christ is even

now judging the nations.

TSFB: I'd like to ask you some questions about your autobiography. I must confess that the last chapter moved me, too. Was part of your purpose in writing it to "pass the torch" on to the next generation of evangelical leadership?

C.H.: I have never felt that. One thing about that meeting in Palm Springs—with leaders gathered to pass the torch—bothered me. I ask myself, "Is this a way of perpetuating your centrality and leadership and passing on the torch? Were they passing it on to people whose hands were really out? Are these the people who are going to receive it?" I think that's a great deal of presumptuousness. God called me when I was a pagan. He works that way. Solzhenitsyn did not come to Christianity from an evangelical context. C.S. Lewis didn't come to us out of the evangelical movement. They were both gifts from God. Chuck Colson didn't come out of the evangelical movement. We are so confident about passing the torch within; maybe God has a torch to pass to somebody who is without. Somebody who can really speak in an uninhibited way as not simply a critic, but as one whose work and witness to God is such a blessing that people have to listen. That is often a factor in the renewal of the Christian community.

TSFB: So you weren't purposefully passing the torch, yet you do not refrain from giving an agenda. You said in the preface that you were reluctant to write an autobiography. Why?

C.H.: In part because my conversion was in the context of the Oxford Group. They were often charged by critics as engaging in a recital of their sins. And I've lived through part of an evangelical era in which people turn their liabilities into promotional assets: "How God saved me from twenty years as a drug addict" . . . that sort of thing. One wonders whether the drugs get more publicity than the Divine. I've always been reticent to talk about myself. I'd rather talk about ideas than about myself. I may not seem that way. I guess an ex-newspaperman does not talk about himself but the world around him.

TSFB: The title, *Confessions of a Theologian,* immediately made me think of Augustine's *Confessions.*

C.H.: Yes. That was intended. It was dual entendre: confession in the sense of disclosure and a confession of faith in God.

TSFB: But you never expressed the kind of doubt and intellectual torture that Augustine went through. You seem so confident. Were you personally affected by the winds of twentieth century theology?

C.H.: I wrestled them deliberately in university. I don't often speak about that. I deliberately searched out problems and certainly put myself through intellectual doubts as part of that procedure. But I must say that Christ has been real to me in a vital way ever since June 1933. It was just a blinding experience. I know he is real. He's alive and he is the Risen One. I've never, even in the most serious crises of life, doubted that.

TSFB: So many people have struggles with believing the right things about God. Have you ever felt pulled toward a different theological outlook?

C.H.: I've walked the world and have seen the masses in their poverty. I've had to ask whether the "isms," the ideologies, are really the benevolent alternative. I'm critical. I'm a critic of American society, the "freestyle," the free living lifestyle of America, and its injustices.

But I disagree with left-leaning criticism at a number of points. First, I do not regard socialism as a benevolent and altruistic alternative—especially *now* that the empirical data is in. One would think that those who profess to be intellectually oriented would at least begin to evaluate some of the data! Second, I do not share the view that the West is the worst of all alternatives. The emphasis on self-determination that survives in the free world is far superior to the totalitarian bureaucracy and controls that are characteristic of the communist oriented nations. Third, most of the social criticism of our time evades the central issue of an objective spiritual and moral order. Hence, it can offer no alternatives to the present situation that escapes ideologies which supply a false meaning and hope for human life.

In these three respects I put myself over against the Left, but surely I share the view of the deterioration of American culture. When politicians say that we essentially are a good people, they either have a questionable view of human nature or they look at the intentions of the best segments of American society and confuse them with the mindset and willset of the whole populace.

TSFB: What would you say to a seminary student who was struggling with the theological options?

C.H.: Understand them, so that you fully understand what is involved. See through them. And do this in the light of the biblical view of man. This is a tremendous corrective. The belief in the inevitability of progress and the essential goodness of man encourage one to take an uncritical view of the bureacracies of the totalitarian movements. Remember that Karl Barth, who studied under Harnack and classic liberalism, was astonished one day when he opened the German papers and found that Harnack and others had signed the statements hailing the Kaiser's dream of *Deutschland uber Alles.* They did it because of their optimistic view of nature and history. Barth, having read the Epistle to the Romans, was horrified to discover this. Go back and read Romans. It made a difference to Augustine. It made a difference to Luther.

TSFB: And to Edwards and Wesley.

C.H.: And it made a difference to Barth. God is still waiting for it to make a difference in the lives of others in contemporary society.

The Authority and Role of Scripture (1981-1986): A Selected Bibliography

by Donald K. McKim

Donald K. McKim is no stranger to anybody working to understand evangelical hermeneutics and related views of Scripture. TSF Bulletin is pleased to provide a new bibliography which will guide many through the raging currents of this important discussion. This bibliography updates an earlier bibliography which can still be ordered from TSF Research.

SCRIPTURE

A. BIBLICAL DATA

Barr, James. *Holy Scripture: Canon, Authority, Criticism.* Philadelphia: Westminster, 1983.

Here Barr presents his views of the significance of the biblical canon, Scriptural authority and the functions of biblical criticism. He takes particular aim at the "canonical criticism" position advocated by Brevard Childs. An important contribution to this on-going debate.

Childs, Brevard S. *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture.* Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979.

Childs presents his approach of "canonical criticism" as it applies to the books of the Old Testament. He is concerned especially with the final form of the biblical texts, a theological understanding of canonical texts and how Old Testament texts were used in the New Testament.

Childs, Brevard S. *The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction.* Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984.

Here the "canonical criticism" practices of Childs are applied to the New Testament books.

Marshall, I. Howard. *Biblical Inspiration.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982.

This is a very readable and ably presented account of biblical inspiration from a New Testament scholar. Marshall sees value in the critical study of Scripture within limits and deals also with the "trustworthiness" of the Bible, the inerrancy debate and gives an account of how Scripture is authoritative today. Highly recommended for evangelical readers.

B. HISTORICAL DIMENSIONS

Hannah, John D., ed. *Inerrancy and the Church.* Chicago: Moody Press, 1984.

This is one of a series of books sponsored by the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy to reaffirm and defend biblical inerrancy as vital for the church. This volume is an historical survey from the early church to the present with essays from a number of scholars who uphold the inerrancy view.

Hatch, Nathan O. and Mark A. Noll, eds. *The Bible in America: Essays in Cultural History.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Eight scholars here explore how the Bible has functioned among various groups and at different times in American life. From the Puritans to the present, the book examines how the Bible has influenced civil religion, culture, church life and political rhetoric as well as a distinct view of history and national consciousness in the United States.

Kugel, James L. and Rowan A. Greer. *Early Biblical Interpretation.* Library of Early Christianity, ed. Wayne A. Meeks, Vol. 3. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986.

This is an interesting and important study of how Scripture was interpreted in early Judaism and Christianity. It details the formation of the Old and New Testament canons and also how early Christians adapted the Hebrew Scriptures for their use in light of Christ. Exegetical methods of the early church are also surveyed.

Noll, Mark A. *Between Faith and Criticism: Evangelicals, Scholarship, and the Bible in America.* San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987.

Here is a fine account of how evangelicals in America have interacted with critical biblical scholarship during the last century. Noll traces the emergence of American evangelical biblical scholarship which was substantially helped at many points by the models of British evangelical scholars.

Reventlow, Henning Graf. *The Authority of the Bible and the Rise of the Modern World,* trans. John W. Bowden. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985.

This is an encyclopedic study of the emergence of modern attitudes toward the Bible from the period of Renaissance Humanism through the Enlightenment. Reventlow shows the origins of biblical criticism in the cultural movement of Renaissance Humanism. There are over 400 pages of text and 200 of footnotes so the volume will become a standard source of reference for years to come.

Woodbridge, John D. *Biblical Authority: A Critique of the Rogers/McKim Proposal.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982.

This is a counter to the book by Jack Rogers and Donald McKim, *The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible: An Historical Approach* (Harper & Row, 1979). Woodbridge argues that the tradition of biblical inerrancy has been the historical position of many of the leading theologians of the Christian church through the centuries.

C. THEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Abraham, William J. *Divine Revelation and the Limits of Historical Criticism.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Here is an incisive study of issues relating to belief in Divine Revelation and a host of historical and scientific questions. Abraham presents a strong case for Divine intervention in history in ways which do not cause us to reject the canons of modern historiography. His analyses of Troeltsch and Van Harvey are quite probing.

Barr, James. *Beyond Fundamentalism: Biblical Foundations for Evangelical Christianity.* Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984.

In this book, the ever-engaging Barr raises important biblical and theological issues that must be accounted for in constructing a doctrine of biblical authority. Among these are issues of inspiration, the origins of the world, the relation of Jesus and the Old Testament, etc. Barr's works always challenge and this one is no exception.

Bartlett, David L. *The Shape of Scriptural Authority.* Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983.

The primary focus of this book is on how various types of biblical writings such as prophetic words, narratives, wisdom and testimonies can function as authorities in the Christian community. This approach is somewhat different than usual and opens up a number of important issues.

Carson, D.A. and John D. Woodbridge, eds. *Hermeneutics, Authority, and Canon.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986.

These nine chapters from various scholars focus on the topics of the title from the basic perspective of a commitment to biblical inerrancy. Essays of a theological, historical and interpretive nature are included.

Carson, D.A. and John D. Woodbridge, eds. *Scripture and Truth.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983.

A number of scholars committed to biblical inerrancy here present biblical, historical and theological essays covering a range of topics relating to biblical authority. The pieces are detailed and confront opposing views head-on.

Countryman, William. *Biblical Authority or Biblical Tyranny?* Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981.

Countryman deals with a number of issues related to biblical authority in this book. His strongest statements are directed toward challenging views held by Fundamentalism. For

him, Scripture is not an absolute authority, but only one of the authorities God has given along with other institutions in the church.

Dulles, Avery. *Models of Revelation.* New York: Doubleday, 1983.

Dulles has written a significant volume comparing how revelation is perceived in contemporary theological movements. He deals with revelation as doctrine, history, inner experience, dialectical presence and new awareness before presenting his own model of revelation as symbolic mediation. He next shows how each model describes Christ, other Religions, the Bible, Church and Eschatology. A very fine treatment.

Geisler, Norman, ed. *Biblical Errancy: Its Philosophical Roots.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981.

Here are scholarly analyses of philosophical figures and movements perceived as threats to the concept of biblical inerrancy. The presentations are detailed and vigorously argued.

Geisler, Norman, ed. *Inerrancy.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979.

The essays in this volume are fourteen scholarly papers presented at the International Conference on Biblical Inerrancy in October, 1978. They cover a variety of topics associated with the "inerrancy" of Scripture and are written by those who are thoroughly committed to this view. Biblical, historical, theological and philosophical aspects are covered. The "Chicago Statement on Inerrancy" is included.

Gnuse, Robert. *The Authority of the Bible: Theories of Inspiration, Revelation and the Canon of Scripture.* New York: Paulist, 1985.

This is a very useful survey of various models of biblical authority. Gnuse deals with what he calls: Inspiration, Holy History, Existential, Christological and Models of Limitation. He also discusses the development of Scripture, rise of the canon and the relation of Scripture and Tradition. His extensive bibliography is a fine resource.

Greenspahn, Frederick E., ed. *Scripture in the Jewish and Christian Traditions: Authority, Interpretation, Relevance.* Nashville: Abingdon, 1982.

In these nine essays, Roman Catholic, Protestant and Jewish scholars address the authority, interpretation and relevance of Scripture. This is a helpful collection though not all Protestants will completely agree with the positions advocated by their respective spokespersons.

Helm, Paul. *The Divine Revelation.* Foundations for Faith, ed. Peter Toon. Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1982.

This is a philosophical approach to Revelation dealing with topics such as Natural and Special Revelation, Revelation and Objectivity, Infallibility, Certainty, Evolution, Tradition and Development, and Special Revelation and the Unity of Knowledge.

Johnston, Robert K., ed. *The Use of the Bible in Theology: Evangelical Options.* Atlanta: John Knox, 1985.

A number of important evangelical theologians here reflect on how they use the Bible in doing theology. What emerges is a fascinating array of approaches each with its own questions and concerns yet united by the common commitment to Scripture as the Word of God.

Lewis, Gordon and Bruce Demarest. *Challenges to Inerrancy: A Theological Response.* Chicago: Moody Press, 1984.

This book contains thirteen theological essays by scholars committed to inerrancy that survey positions from the Enlightenment onward that have rejected inerrancy. It also contains an essay that argues for inerrancy on the basis of the Old Princeton theology.

McKim, Donald L., ed. *The Authoritative Word: Essays on the Nature of Scripture.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983.

This volume presents essays by top scholars on different dimensions of the issue of the nature of Scripture. The three divisions of the book are Authority: Sources and Canon; Doctrine and Its Development and Current Views. Among the topics considered are how the Scriptures were formed, canon, revelation, inspiration, the work of the Holy Spirit and recent views of biblical authority. An extensive annotated bibliography is also included.

McKim, Donald K. *What Christians Believe About the Bible.* Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1985.

Here a wide spectrum of views about the nature of Scripture found in contemporary theology is presented. Initial essays concern the Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions followed by ten pieces surveying theological positions titled: Liberal, Fundamentalist, Scholastic, Neo-Orthodox, Neo-Evangelical, Existential, Process, Story, Liberation and Feminist Theology. Each view is presented objectively and on its own terms.

Nicole, Roger R. and J. Ramsey Michaels. *Inerrancy and Common Sense.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980.

This volume shows some differences in evangelical views about the "inerrancy" of Scripture. Its contributors have been associated with Gordon-Conwell Seminary. The pieces present an historical study, focus on terminologies, textual transmission of Scripture and biblical interpretation. The approach is described as "irenic."

Pinnock, Clark H. *The Scripture Principle.* San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984.

This is a major statement on the nature of Scripture from an evangelical theologian which deals fairly and sensitively with numerous issues surrounding the issue of biblical authority. The three parts of the book present Scripture as the Word of God, written in Human Language as the Sword of the Spirit. It will be a most helpful volume for all who contemplate what the Bible is and how it functions.

Youngblood, Ronald, ed. *Evangelicals and Inerrancy.* Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984.

Here is an anthology of selections from the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* which cover a wide range of issues but are united in their adherence to biblical inerrancy. As a sourcebook for the inerrancy view, this is most useful.

D. BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

Carson, Donald A., ed. *Biblical Interpretation and the Church: The Problem of Contextualization.* Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984.

Here are eight essays by an international assortment of scholars who address the problems of biblical hermeneutics in relation to issues facing churches throughout the world. The primary focus is ecclesiological and missiological.

Dunnett, Walter M. *The Interpretation of Holy Scripture.* Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984.

Dunnett deals with theological and interpretive issues in this survey of the practices of biblical interpretation today. He includes chapters on language, literary form and historical and cultural contexts as well as one on models of interpreting Scripture which deal with various literary genre. His bibliography is quite detailed.

Ferguson, Duncan S. *Biblical Hermeneutics: An Introduction.* Atlanta: John Knox, 1986.

This is a fine introduction to biblical hermeneutics that covers major issues of biblical hermeneutics, the practice of hermeneutics and hermeneutics in the life of the church. The chapters are clearly written and quite helpful in setting the landscape of both historical and contemporary approaches.

Froehlich, Karlfried. *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church.* Sources of Early Christian Thought, ed. William G. Rusch. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984.

Froehlich has assembled a very useful collection of texts from the patristic period that demonstrate the emergence of hermeneutical issues in the early centuries. His introduction to the volume traces the major streams and is most illuminating.

Gottwald, Norman K., ed. *The Bible and Liberation: Political and Social Hermeneutics.* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1983.

Twenty-eight chapters by numerous authors make this anthology very significant in describing sociological and political approaches to biblical studies. Social and political hermeneutics are important new methods with far-ranging implications which are clearly seen in these stimulating essays.

Hagen, Kenneth, Daniel J. Harrington, Grant R. Osborne and Joseph A. Burgess. *The Bible in the Churches: How Different Christians Interpret the Scriptures.* New York: Paulist, 1985.

Each author contributes a piece to this work. Hagen writes on the history of Scripture in the church; Harrington on Catholic interpretation and Burgess on Lutheran interpretation. Harrington concludes with a chapter in the convergences and divergences that emerged. Also of interest is that each writer presents a case study interpretation of Ephesians 2:1-10.

Keegan, Terence J. *Interpreting the Bible: A Popular Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics.* New York: Paulist, 1985.

This book focuses on structuralism, reader-response criticism and canonical criticism as leading methods of critical biblical scholarship. A chapter on the history of biblical interpretation and the potential impact of these critical biblical studies methods are also included. A number of charts and diagrams enhance the usefulness of this book.

Lundin, Roger, Anthony C. Thiselton and Clarence Walhout. *The Responsibility of Hermeneutics.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985.

A team of biblical and literary scholars have proposed a new approach to hermeneutical theory. They come to it from a philosophy of action and argue that textual meaning comes from the different interrelated actions by authors and readers who produce and use texts rather than from language itself as the locus of meaning.

McKim, Donald K., ed. *A Guide to Contemporary Hermeneutics: Major Trends in Biblical Interpretation.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986.

Twenty essays here present the variety of approaches to biblical interpretation today. These are divided into: Biblical Avenues, Theological Attitudes, Current Assessments and Contemporary Approaches where the chapters are on the Theological, Literary, Structural, Contextual, Anthropological, Liberation and Feminist approaches.

Radmacher, Earl D. and Robert D. Preus. *Hermenuetics, Inerrancy, and the Bible,* Papers from ICBI Summit II. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984.

This large volume contains sixteen papers and two responses to each from scholars at the second summit of the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy. Included also are four appendices, one of which is "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics."

Russell, Letty M., ed. *Feminist Interpretation of the Bible.* Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985.

Here is a splendid collection of essays from twelve women who portray the varieties of approaches to feminist biblical interpretation today. Each piece presents its own perspective and at points the writers interact with each other. As a picture of what women theologians are saying about biblical interpretation, this is a most important resource.

Swartley, Willard, ed. *Essays on Biblical Interpretation: Anabaptist-Mennonite Perspectives.* Elkhart, IN: Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1984.

These twenty essays from Anabaptist-Mennonite scholars identify the major emphases in Anabaptist biblical interpretation, the development of the place of the Bible in Mennonite history between the sixteenth-century and the present as well as the current endeavors of Mennonites to reflect on methods of biblical interpretation and the authority of Scripture. The concluding essays describe how the Bible may function in the congregation. This is a fine collection.

Swartley, Willard. *Slavery Sabbath War and Women Case Issues in Biblical Interpretation.* Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1983.

By focusing on these four issues, Swartley gives a fascinating study of how commentators have used Scripture to support their views on different sides of these topics. A wide range of material is cited and summarized making this book of real value for data on the issues themselves as well as for the case studies in biblical interpretation it presents.

Vander Goot, Henry. *Interpreting the Bible in Theology and the Church.* Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1984.

In this book, Vander Goot calls for a hermeneutics of trust in the Bible which needs to be read from God's perspective. He calls for the recognition of the priority of text over context, "listening in" over analysis, the literal sense over hidden senses and the canonical sense of Scripture to be found in the context of the Christian church.

Letters to the Editor

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Sexuality, Hierarchy and Evangelicalism

by Kathleen E. Corley and Karen J. Torjesen

The Seventh Plenary Conference of the Evangelical Women's Caucus International, held in Fresno, CA, July 6-10, 1986, was the scene of a difficult and turbulent debate over the issue of gay rights. The debate resulted in the passage of a resolution which supported civil rights for homosexual persons and publicly acknowledged the lesbian minority of the EWCI.[1] The debate has rocked the organization, which had two years previously decided to limit its central focus to the issue of biblical feminism, exception being made for a stand in support of the ERA. The passage of the resolution caused some members to leave the organization and led other non-members to join. The debate has continued within local chapters of the EWCI. The text of the resolution runs as follows:

> Whereas homosexual people are children of God, and because of the biblical mandate of Jesus Christ that we are all created equal in God's sight, and in recognition of the presence of the lesbian minority in the Evangelical Women's Caucus International, EWCI takes a firm stand in favor of civil rights protection for homosexual persons.

The discussion itself was a heated and emotional one, and included anguished testimonies of lesbian Christians, as well as parents and children of homosexual persons, concerning their struggles within their evangelical communities which had not always offered the acceptance and understanding that they so needed. Many voting members present did not want to force a statement on so sensitive an issue, which was evidenced by an attempt to table the resolution as had been done previously at the Sixth Plenary Conference of the EWCI in Wellesley, MA in 1984. Finally, after the motion to table the resolution lost by a narrow margin, the vote was called for and the members present passed the resolution. Eighty voted in favor of the resolution; sixteen were opposed to it; 25 abstained.

It seemed that many members of the EWCI instinctively felt the support of civil rights for homosexual persons was an issue of human rights that was intrinsically related to the issue of biblical feminism, but still hesitated to support a public stand by the EWCI on such a sensitive issue. This hesitancy of many members of the EWCI to take such a stand is indicative of a greater trend within the larger evangelical community to avoid the difficult theological questions concerning homosexuality and lesbianism, as well as other general issues of sexuality. Moreover, the vehement negative response to the resolution indicates such reactions may be based more on prejudice than on careful theological reflection. Anne Eggebroten, a founder of EWCI and a cosponsor of the resolution, comments: "The anger and emotion raised both within the EWCI and the larger evangelical world reveal how deeply important it is to us to believe that homosexuals are *not* children of God, are *not* equal, and do not deserve any protection, even in the areas of civil rights."[2] As Christians in a world that has been deeply affected by Western Jewish and Christian tradition, we need to take a hard look at our own traditions, particularly when those traditions may be fostering injustices and are being used in support of political oppression of minority groups.

That the traditional rejection of homosexuality and lesbianism on religious grounds is being used in the public sphere to deny civil rights to homosexual persons is clearly evidenced in the recent decision of the United States Supreme Court upholding the right of the state of Georgia to maintain laws prohibiting the practice of sodomy (*Bowers vs. Hardwick*, 106 S. Ct. 2841, 1986). Chief Justice Burger, in his concurring opinion, repeated Chief Justice White's argument for the "ancient roots" of the anti-sodomy laws and further stated that, "Decisions of individuals relating to homosexual conduct have been subject to state intervention throughout the history of Western Civilization. Condemnation of those practices is firmly rooted in Judeo-Christian moral and ethical standards." This argument reflects the brief presented by the state of Georgia which states:

> No universal principle teaches that homosexual sodomy is acceptable conduct. To the contrary, traditional Judeo-Christian values proscribe such conduct. Indeed, there is no validation for sodomy found in the teaching of the ancient Greek philosophers Plato or Aristotle. More recent thinkers, such as Immanuel Kant, have found homosexual sodomy no less unnatural . . . To find this tradition and the roots of modern conventional morality and law relative to the crime of sodomy, only a brief historical review is necessary. Sodomy was proscribed in the laws of the Old Testament (Leviticus 18:22) and in the writings of St. Paul (Romans 1:26, 27; I Corinthians 6:9, 10). Sodomy was a capital crime in ancient Rome under the Theodosian law of 390 A.D. and under Justinian. Sodomy was proscribed by the teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas. Sodomy was prosecuted as heretical in the ecclesiastical courts throughout the Middle Ages. During the English Reformation when powers of the ecclesiastical courts were transferred to the King's courts, the first English statute criminalizing sodomy was passed.[3]

This hailing of "traditional moral values" was repeated in various Amicus briefs in support of the petitioner, such as those of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, Concerned Women for America, and the Rutherford Institute. It was therefore on the basis of Western Jewish and Christian moral tradition that the Supreme Court of the United States felt that the continuance of the state anti-sodomy laws was justified.

The response of the official religious bodies submitting Amicus briefs (Presbyterian Church U.S.A., The Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends, The American Friends Service Committee, The Unitarian Universalist Association, Office for Church and Society of the United Church of Christ, and the American Jewish Congress) did little to combat the traditional prejudices against homosexuality reflected in the briefs in support of the petitioner, unlike the brief of the American Psychological Association and American Public Health Associa-

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Kathleen E. Corley is a graduate of Westmont College and attended Fuller Theological Seminary before being accepted at The Claremont Graduate School where she is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in New Testament. Karen J. Torjesen is the Director of Women's Concerns and Assistant Professor of Church History at Fuller Theological Seminary.

tion, which cited recent and ongoing research within these professional organizations that challenged notions of homosexuality as an illness or disorder.[4] It is unfortunate that the religious organizations did not have the support of modern theological reflection and research to dispute those arguments in support of the anti-sodomy laws that were primarily founded in the religious heritage of United States. This lack betrays the need for theologians, biblical scholars and religious ethicists to undertake research into the roots of legal prohibitions against same-sex relations that are found within the Bible itself and in subsequent theological reflection on the biblical texts throughout the history of the Western Church.

All Christian arguments against homosexuality and lesbianism are rooted in a theological definition of sexuality created at the beginning of the Western theological tradition. Thus before the theological arguments against same-sex relations can be considered, the theological understanding of sexuality must be reconstructed.

The civil condemnation of homosexuality as reflected in these briefs and in the larger society is based on a set of theological beliefs that evolved over a period of a thousand years. In the arguments cited in the briefs we are actually looking at the tip of a theological iceberg. Therefore it is necessary to understand the massive theological structure which lies just below the surface of this set of theological briefs on which the social prohibition of same-sex relations is based.

The theological arguments against same-sex relations fall generally into three groups. Such relations are classified either as lustful, or as unnatural (contrary to natural law) or as falling short of full humanness (understood as the complementarity of male and female). We will briefly sketch the historical development of each one of these.

Before starting, we need to understand that all the Christian arguments against homosexuality and lesbianism are rooted in a theological definition of sexuality created at the beginning of the Western theological tradition. Thus before the theological arguments against same-sex relations can be considered, the theological understanding of sexuality must be reconstructed. The architect of the Christian theology of sexuality which has prevailed for fifteen centuries is Augustine. The most important legacy of Augustinian theology is the strange equation between sin and sexuality.

Augustine did his thinking on sexuality in the tradition of the Greek philosophers. They understood the soul, the center of the human person, to be composed of a rational and ruling part, reason, and an irrational part which must be ruled, namely the passions. In the perfected human being the rational part exercised perfect control over the passions. Augustine, the creator of the Christian doctrine of original sin, used this notion of the soul to explain the consequences of the fall. The rational part of the soul was no longer able to govern the passions, specifically sexual passion.[5] Consequently, all of humanity descended from Adam inherits original sin, or the inability to rule the passions.

Augustine equates sexuality with sin.[6] Sexuality itself is sinful because it is irrational passion: Augustine's idea of sex in the garden before the fall is that it was rational and therefore without passion![7] Since the fall, the expression of sexuality is not possible without irrational passion, which is the punishment of Adam and Eve's original disobedience.

Augustine himself struggled and agonized over his conversion to Christianity because in his understanding it meant giving up his sexuality.[8] (In Augustine's day the virginity movement was the most impressive and powerful expression of Christianity). Augustine's first experience of grace was the experience of special enabling power to renounce his sexuality.

According to Augustine, the sinfulness of sexuality can only be redeemed by the good of procreation which adds new members to the church, the body of Christ.[9] All sexuality, however, even sexuality within marriage, remains sinful unless procreation is its object.[10] So, for example, Augustine condemns sex after menopause, because only lust or passion could be its object.

Thomas Aquinas is the major theologian whose arguments against same-sex relations are cited. He builds onto the framework of Augustine's theology of sexuality in two ways. First, homosexuality is sinful sexuality because lustful passion is exercised without the redeeming factor of procreation. It is "contrary to right reason" and "out of control."[11] Lechery, according to Thomas, is less sinful than same-sex relations because although it is lustful, it is still procreative.

Second, Aquinas takes Augustine's notion that procreation is the only redeeming feature of sinful sexuality and uses it to determine the divinely ordained purpose of sexuality. The divinely ordained purpose of sexuality is procreation; procreative sexuality is, then, "according to nature."[12] Thus same-sex relations and masturbation are contrary to nature. Thomas carries the argument further by saying that a sin against nature is a sin against God who created nature, and therefore homosexuality, lesbianism and masturbation are equivalent to sacrilege.[13] Both of these theological arguments developed during a period when celibacy was the ideal. They are based on the premise that sexual passion is sinful and that to be truly human is to be rational, and rationality is expressed by ruling the passions.

The repudiation of the monastic system during the Reformation led to a rejection of celibacy as the ideal. Marriage was no longer seen as a "hospital for incurables to keep them from falling into graver sins" but as a holy obligation placed on all men and women.[14] This led to a slightly modified vision of what it meant to be fully human. To be human is to exercise dominion. The primary form of this dominion was the rule of the male over the female, husband over wife.[15] By the Augustine definition of human nature, women were not fully human because they were more irrational (sexual) than men. By the Reformation definition of human nature women were not fully human because they could not fully exercise dominion.

This ordering of male over female was understood to reflect the divine order established by the will of God and to reflect the rule of God over the world. This theological understanding of human nature underlies the arguments that homosexuality and lesbianism are wrong because they fail to achieve the ideal rule of humanity over the world, which entails the complementary relationship between a man and a woman, with the man as the ruling head over the woman. So Karl Barth, for example, argues that man cannot be man except in relationship to woman, and that woman cannot be woman except in

relationship to man.[16] This is the theological basis for his condemnation of same-sex relations. The relationship between man and woman is not an interchangeable one; they have different natures. One is created to stimulate, lead and inspire, and the other is created to respond and follow.[17] Thus they cannot be who they are except in relationship to each other—male and female. Homosexuality and lesbianism therefore violate this divinely instituted hierarchical order.

As heirs of this theological tradition, many within the modern Christian community feel unable to support any theological statement which moves toward a theological acceptance of homosexuality or lesbianism.[18] The official position of the Catholic hierarchy housed at the Vatican, as expressed by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, upholds the traditional condemnation of homosexual practices, and considers the current efforts to elicit the support of the clergy for legislation decriminalizing such practices as manipulative and detrimental to the common good of society. Bishops are therefore advised to keep the defense and promotion of family life as their uppermost concern when they assess proposed legislation. Moreover, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith advises that support "be withdrawn from any organizations that seek to undermine the teaching of the church."[19]

Other Christian organizations try to keep the theological issues of same-sex relations separate from the civil issues. These organizations attempt to maintain a theological disapproval of the practice of same-sex love and then couple this disapproval with a call for tolerance of these practices in the public sphere in the name of human rights. This is evidenced in many official Protestant church statements on homosexuality and lesbianism, in various theological and exegetical writings, as well as in the statement of the EWCI itself.[20] The EWCI resolution was clearly an attempt to make a resolution which was limited to the issue of civil rights, to avoid the theological furor that would have arisen had the resolution made a clear bid for the theological acceptance of the practice of lesbianism. Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, on the last day of the Seventh Plenary Conference, pointed out that the organization had "not made a theological judgement concerning homosexuality."[21] Due to the diverse nature of the EWCI membership, the resolution was limited to a call for civil rights to allow many members to remain within the organization and continue to participate in the ongoing discussion of the theological and exegetical issues on both the local and national level. The statement itself, however, has been taken by some as an implicit acceptance of lesbianism as a valid life-style for certain Christian women, although that was not the intent of the EWCI.

Important as it is for Christian organizations to support human rights in the secular sphere, even though they are not able to offer theological justification for those rights, in light of the current abuse of Christian religious authority within the dominant society, does not the Christian church also have a moral responsibility to begin to critique and reevaluate the theological and exegetical arguments that are being used to deny civil rights to homosexual persons? As the denial of human rights for homosexual persons is based on historically religious moral precepts, can the church hope to affirm and procure the civil rights for homosexual persons without being willing to examine the theological foundation within their own tradition upon which the anti-sodomy laws are based? One could argue that no hope of a solid basis for change on the civil level can take place without any support for that change on a theological level. Although it is important that Christians

Carl Henry on Hierarchy

There are a lot of references to women in *God, Revelation and Authority*, 5 and 6. Look *women* up in the index. I think women are great. Life would be terribly monotonous without them.

First, what is our question? Christ is the head of the church. Second, in New Testament times we have the universal priesthood of believers, male and female. Women are priests no less in that universal priests are all believers. So Paul is surely not a male chauvinist and anti-feminist when he says that the exclusive male priesthood of the Hebrew theocracy is gone forever. Christ has destroyed it. Next, prophecy in New Testament times, which is not prophecy in the Old Testament understanding but nevertheless prophecy, is the proclamation of Christ and belongs to women no less than to men in the New Testament era by the work of the Holy Spirit. "I shall pour out my Spirit upon all flesh and they shall prophesy." And Peter says that in a sense, Pentecost is the beginning of this. That doesn't mean inspired teaching but testimony of Christ in the New Testament. And certainly the New Testament says there is a service ministry from women, deaconesses, they're in the New Testament. Service ministry as I understand it can be temporary or it can be permanent. I have no problem with deaconesses in the Lutheran churches as a life vocation and that sort of thing.

What that doesn't settle is the question of women in the role of pastoral leadership in the churches, whether they should be ordained or not. Well, first the New Testament does not stipulate ordination; it does not mandate ordination for anybody. The cases of ordination are rather simple and they represent a recognition on the part of the church that the Holy Spirit has set aside a person for a particular work. I don't see any necessity in the New Testament for ordaining. You don't have the same mandate—as you do in the great commission—for ordaining men who are called to ministry in the modern sense. That whole question of ordination in those universal terms is something that needs to be squared with the New Testament.

But in any case, I have read Paul many times and reread him within the last few years because I was on the committee of the Southern Baptist Convention when this issue of women's ordination came on the floor. I cannot get around the fact that Paul seems to say that there is a basis in the order of creation and in the order of redemption for restricting the role of pastoral leadership in the church to the male or at least excluding the woman from that realm. And it is quite possible to get around this by saying this is a cultural accomodation. But if you do, I think there is a hermeneutical shift and I don't think those who do it on the basis of an hermeneutical shift have clearly worked out the implications of what this implies for apostolic teaching generally. I might wish it were not so. I know gifted women and certainly have no objection to them teaching Sunday School classes. I know that the bottom would fall out of the mission field if it weren't for the women who go, bless their hearts. I know many gals, even from the earlier years, seminarians and collegians who went out. They were as interested in marriage as we were. They just put it all onto the cross. So there I am. I've sort of wrestled with that in volume 5, I think in *God, Revelation and Authority.*

Taken from a conversation with Carl F.H. Henry by Diana Hochstedt Butler for TSF Bulletin.

continue to support the separation of moral and legal issues, it could be that in the case of homosexuality, the theological disapproval of homosexual and lesbian behavior based on unexamined interpretation of the few biblical texts which discuss it would weaken an intent to support rights for homosexual individuals. Even though certain evangelical organizations like the EWCI may not be able to resolve the theological problems surrounding homosexuality for many years to come, surely discussion can take place in church governmental bodies, as it has in such denominations as the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the UCC. The open discussion of homosexuality and lesbianism on the local and congregational level would also do much to alleviate the unfounded fears and prejudices that many Christians have for those with a homosexual orientation. The EWCI attempts to allow for such discussion and diversity of opinion by offering numerous workshops in its plenary sessions, and by encouraging discussion in local EWC chapters throughout the country.

Where does such a reappraisal begin? First, it must begin with careful consideration of those biblical texts which proscribe homosexuality and lesbianism, particularly since the traditional interpretations of these texts and their significance for the modern church have come under question in the past few decades.[22] Although an article of this scope cannot hope to discuss or settle such complicated issues as the relevance of the Holiness Code and its purity laws for the Christian Church (Lev. 18:22) or the lexical problems surrounding the translation of *malakos* and *arsenokoites* in I Cor. 6:9-10 and I Tim. 1:9-10, we would like to discuss briefly the one clear prohibition of lesbianism by Paul in Romans 1:26-27, as it is often this text which leads even the most compassionate of Christian theologians, biblical scholars and ethicists to conclude that homosexuality and lesbianism are "unnatural." Why does Paul call same-sex relations "unnatural?" That is a question all Christians must ask, biblical feminists in particular. Lewis B. Smedes, in his sensitive discussion of homosexuality in his well known book, *Sex for Christians*, while affirming that Paul must be right in his rejection of same-sex relations, also comments, "I do wish we had a clearer grasp of why homosexuality is unnatural," and points out that Paul also calls long hair on men "unnatural" (I Cor. 11:14). "Nature does not speak as clearly to me about long hair as it did to Paul," Smedes writes, "but long hair and homosexuality are hardly in the same category."[23] What has hairstyles to do with homosexuality? More importantly for biblical feminists, what has hairstyles to do with a rejection of same-sex relations between women?

That the prohibition of same-sex love in Rom. 1:26-27 is related to the question of hairstyles in I Cor. 11 has not escaped the notice of certain scholars.[24] Just how the two are related, however, has been somewhat unclear. A recent study of I Cor. 11 by Jerome Murphy O'Conner, however, has argued that it is possibly same-sex love and gender distinction that is at issue in Paul's concern for hairstyles, and that the Corinthians' disregard for gender distinction in their dress reflects an interpretation of Gal. 3:28.[25] Bernadette J. Brooten, in her recent article on Rom. 1:26, has clarified the relationship between Rom. 1:26 and I Cor. 11 by indicating Paul's hierarchical world view inherent in both passages.[26] What is "unnatural" about same-sex relations between women and gender differentiation in appearance is that both reflect an upsetting of the hierarchical ordering of creation. Brooten writes:

> The discussion of headress and hairstyle is quite reminiscent of the ancient discussions of same-sex love. For the man, the fear is that by looking like a woman a man loses his masculinity and can sink to the level of a woman. Short hair on a woman is one of the signs of her becoming like, or trying to become like a man . . . A woman cannot sink to the level of a man. She can only make ridiculous, yet nevertheless threatening, attempts to rise to that level.[27]

The ancient sources Brooten cites object to women either dressing like or behaving like men, especially when they attempt to imitate the aggressive sexual role usually assigned to males in the order of creation. It is therefore Paul's hierarchical definition of maleness and femaleness which leads him to reject same-sex relations between women, a hierarchical definition which he shared with the Greco-Roman writers around him who objected to women overstepping the passive sexual role assigned to them in Greco-Roman culture.

Discussions of homosexual behavior in antiquity do not parallel discussions of lesbianism in antiquity. Although there is a relationship between discussions of same-sex relations of men and women in that such behavior in both cases calls into question the order of society, the practice of homosexuality is not uniformly objected to in Greco-Roman sources as is lesbianism. On the contrary, although the common argument against homosexuality is that it is also "contrary to nature" or "unnatural,"[28] there are many positive arguments for it, even to the extent that it is considered by some to be more "according to nature" than heterosexuality. Robin Scroggs argues that this is precisely because it avoids any movement towards the female, and is therefore a more masculine activity which indicates a superior nature.[29] Scroggs also argues that the dominant form of homosexual relationships in antiquity were primarily that of an adult male and a boy or youth (i.e. pederasty).[30] Another view is that of John Boswell, who does not conclude that the apparent prevalence of homosexual relationships between adults and boys is truly indicative of reality in the ancient world.[31] Neither of these authors, however, sufficiently differentiates between male and female homoeroticism in their analysis of same-sex relationships in antiquity. This discrepancy between ancient views on lesbianism and homosexuality should warn us away from subsuming discussions of lesbianism under discussions of homosexuality.

Paul's rejection of lesbianism reflects the rejection of female homoeroticism found within the literature of the Greco-Roman world. Although Paul allowed celibacy for women, which would have circumvented the male headship of a spouse (I Cor. 7:8-9, 25-35, 39-40), and although Paul recognizes the work of women in their ministry to the church (Rom. 16:1-16; Phil. 4:2-3) and permits them to prophesy in the assembly (I Cor. 11:5), "What he could not accept was women experiencing their power through the erotic in a way that challenged the hierarchical ladder: God, Christ, man, woman."[32]

It would appear then that in Paul issues of sexuality are theologically related to hierarchy, and therefore the issues of biblical feminism and lesbianism are irrefutably intertwined. For biblical feminists, how one deals with the issue of hierarchy is central. Some argue that the New Testament does not support a strictly hierarchical pattern for relations between the sexes. Others argue that even if the New Testament does reflect a hierarchical world view, as that world view is not specifically Christian, there is no reason to inflict such world view on the modern church. The opinions on the significance of hierarchy for both church structure and ordination as well as sexual relations are diverse. Many denominations have in effect dismissed possible biblical mandates for a hierarchical church structure which place women under the authority of men (such as I Tim. 2:11ff) by their ordination of women to positions in which they will have spiritual authority over men in the congregation. Even the assertion that wives should sub-

mit to their husbands found in the household codes (Eph. 5:21ff; Col. 3:18), which is also based on a hierarchy which makes the husband the head of the wife (Eph. 5:23), has been called into question by certain interpreters, particularly those who wish to emphasize the notion of "mutual submission" within marital relationships.[33] Clearly, the larger evangelical community needs to reach a consensus on whether or not the maintenance of hierarchy between the sexes is important within either sexual relationships or church structures. A determination of the significance of a hierarchical world view for the Evangelical churches becomes central, particularly if it will help us in our struggle over the issues of homosexuality and lesbianism.

In the end, it would seem that if the church is going to deal with the issues of sexuality it is also going to have to deal with hierarchy. We need to grapple with the possibility that our conflicts over the appropriate use of human sexuality may rather be conflicts rooted in a need to legitimate the traditional social structure which assigns men and women specific and unequal positions. Could it be that the continued affirmation of the primacy of heterosexual marriage is possibly also the affirmation of the necessity for the sexes to remain in a hierarchically structured relationship? Is the threat to the "sanctity of marriage" really a threat to hierarchy? Is that what makes same-sex relations so threatening, so frightening? Certain theologians and ethicists have begun to ask these questions.[34] Evangelical Christians need to begin to question their unexamined positions on sexuality and hierarchy, particularly if they wish to have a voice in the call for equality for all men and women, not just a few.

[1] For a discussion of the proceedings of the Seventh Plenary Conference of the EWCI, see *Update: Newsletter of the EWC* 10 (Fall 1986) as well as Anne Eggebroten, "Handling Power: Unchristian, Unfeminine, Unkind?" *The Other Side* 22 (Dec. 1986), pp. 20-25.

[2] Quoted by William O'Brian, "Handling Conflict: The Fallout from Fresno," *The Other Side* 22 (Dec. 1986), pp. 25, 41.

[3] Brief of petitioner Michael J. Bowers, Attorney General, on Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit; Dec. 19, 1985; Bowers vs. Hardwick, no. 85-140, pp. 20-21.

[4] Brief of the Amicus Curiae, American Psychological Association, American Public Health Association, p. 8ff.

[5] Augustine, *The City of God* XIII, 13; XIV, 19.

[6] Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence* I. 6, 7.

[7] Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage* II.

[8] Augustine, *Confessions* Bk. VIII, XI.

[9] Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence* I. 4,5.

[10] Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage* XIII, 15.

[11] *Summa Theologica*, Pt. II, Ques. 154, art. 11.

[12] *Ibid.*

[13] *Summa Theologica*, Pt. II, Ques. 154, art. 12.

[14] Luther, *Sermon on the Estate of Marriage*, 1519.

[15] Luther, *Commentary on Genesis* 1:26, 27; Calvin, *Commentary on Genesis* 1:26, 27.

[16] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. III, pt. 4, p. 166.

[17] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. III, pt. 4, p. 170.

[18] Karl Barth, "Church Dogmatics," in *Homosexuality and Ethics*, Edward Batchelor, Jr., ed. (New York, NY: The Pilgrim Press, 1980), pp. 48-51; Don Williams, *The Bond that Breaks: Will Homosexuality Split the Church? (Los Angeles, CA: BIM, Inc., 1978); David Atkinson, Homosexuals in the Christian Fellowship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979); Lewis B. Smedes, *Sex for Christians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1976), pp. 62-75; "Scripture and Homosexuality," in *Homosexuality and the Church: A Report of the Assembly Committee on Homosexuality and the Church*, Gordon S. Dicker, ed. (Melbourne, Australia: Uniting Church Press, 1985), pp. 40-53.

[19] Letter of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith entitled "The Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons," printed in *Origins*, 16:22 (Nov. 13, 1986), pp. 377-382; par. 16. This Letter is originally dated Oct. 1, 1986, but was released Oct. 30, 1986. It was signed by Cardinal Ratzinger and approved by Pope John Paul II and is therefore an accurate representation of the opinion of the church hierarchy of the Vatican.

[20] Lutheran Church in America, American Lutheran Church, United Methodist Church, in "Appendix B" of Brief of Amici Curiae, The Presbyterian Church (USA), The Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends, The American Friends Service Committee, The Unitarian Universalist Association, Office for Church and Society of the UCC, The Right Rev. Paul Moore, Jr., on Writ of Certiorari to the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals, Bowers vs. Hardwick, no. 84-140, in the Supreme Court of the US, Oct. Term, 1985. See also Brief of the Amicus Curiae, American Jewish Conference. For an enumeration of recent church discussions of homosexuality, see Robin Scroggs, *The New Testament and Homosexuality: Contextual Background for Contemporary Debate* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), pp. 1-16. Various scholars who call for a legal tolerance of homosexuality while maintaining a theological disapproval are William Muehl, "Some Words of Caution," in *Homosexuality and Ethics*, pp. 71-78; H. Kimball Jones, "Toward a Christian Understanding of the Homosexual," in *Homosexuality and Ethics*, pp. 105-113.; Atkinson, *Homosexuals in the Christian Fellowship*, pp. 120-121. A few ethicists, while maintaining a clear disapproval of homosexual practice for Christians, feel that celibacy is not possible for certain homosexuals, nor is change to a heterosexual orientation. They advocate an "optimum homosexual morality." See Smedes, *Sex for Christians*,, p. 73; H. Kimball Jones, "Toward a Christian Understanding of the Homosexual," in *Homosexuality and Ethics*, p. 109ff.

[21] Quoted by Joanne Ross Feldmeth, "Fresno '86 Conference: Surviving Our Adolescence," *Update* 10 (Fall 1986), pp. 15.

[22] Letha Scanzoni and Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, *Is the Homosexual My Neighbor?* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1978), pp. 54-72; Norman Pittenger, *Time for Consent: A Christian's Approach to Homosexuality* (London: SCM Press, 1976), pp. 81-87; Scroggs, *The New Testament and Homosexuality*, pp. 99-129; "Perspectives on Biblical Passages Dealing with Homosexuality," *Homosexuality and the Church*, pp. 29-39. For an overview of recent literature, see "Study Report of the Assembly Committee on Homosexuality and the Church," *Homosexuality and the Church*, pp. 9-28; Atkinson, *Homosexuals in the Christian Fellowship*, pp. 4-28.

[23] Smedes, *Sex for Christians*, p. 67.

[24] Smedes, *Sex for Christians*, p. 67; Helmut Thielicke, "The Theological Aspect of Homosexuality," *Homosexuality and Ethics*, pp. 96-104.

[25] Jerome Murphy O'Connor, "Sex and Logic in I Cor. 11:2-16," *CBQ* 42 (1980), pp. 482-500.

[26] Bernadette J. Brooten, "Paul's Views on the Nature of Women," in *Immaculate and Powerful: The Female in Sacred Image and Social Reality*, Clarissa W. Atkinson, Constance H. Buchanan, Margaret R. Miles, eds. (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1985), pp. 61-87.

[27] Brooten, "Paul's Views," pp. 76-77.

[28] Scroggs, *The New Testament and Homosexuality*, p. 59.

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 48.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 34.

[31] John Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century* (Chicago and London: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1980), pp. 28ff.

[32] Brooten, "Paul's Views," p. 78.

[33] See Don Williams, *The Apostle Paul and Women in the Church* (Van Nuys, CA: BIM, 1977), pp. 88ff. Scott Bartchy is also a key proponent of this view. His paper entitled "Patriarchy and Submission in Ephesians 5?" was the topic of a panel discussion of the Women in the Biblical World Section of the SBL chaired by Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Susan B. Thistlethwaite at the recent Annual Meetings of the AAR and SBL in Atlanta, GA, Nov. 22-25, 1986. Other panelists included David Balch and Katie Cannon. The session drew a crowd of over 100 scholars, which is evidence of the keen interest in the topic of hierarchy in religious academic circles.

[34] Tom F. Driver, "The Contemporary and Christian Contexts," pp. 14-21; Gregory Baum, "Catholic Homosexuals," pp. 22-27; Rosemary Radford Ruether, "From Machismo to Mutuality," pp. 28-32, all in *Homosexuality and Ethics*.

Japanese Christians and the Yasukuni Shrine Issue

Introduction

Regardless of the social and cultural matrix within which a given Christian community may find itself, sooner or later it will inevitably be forced to grapple with the problem of competing demands for allegiance.

Since its inception in the 16th century, the Christian church in Japan has been acutely aware of the conflicting demands of Christ and Caesar for loyalty. And although the post-World War II Constitution guarantees complete freedom of religion, there has been recently an increase in activity linked to attempts to provide official government sanction of religious values and traditions closely associated with Shintoism, Japan's major indigenous religion.

The focus of the current controversy is the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo, which was established in 1869 to venerate those who had died in battle in service of the Emperor. Those killed in action were automatically enshrined as kami (divine). Over 2.4 million persons have been enshrined there, including the group of A-class war criminals from World War II headed by General Tojo. There have been repeated attempts to place the Shrine under official government sponsorship, but so far without success. However, the Christian community is alarmed by increasing support for such a move, and has been actively opposing it for several reasons. Not only would this be a clear violation of the constitutional principle of separation of religion and state, but it would have disastrous consequences for Christian evangelism in Japan. Throughout its

history in Japan, Christianity has been regarded largely as an irrelevant Western import, and has been rejected in favor of indigenous beliefs and traditions. Japanese national identity has been intimately identified with the values and traditions of Shintoism. This, of course, was most explicit in the extreme nationalism and militarism of the Emperor cult in pre-war Japan. Christians fear that the Yasukuni Shrine could become a rallying point for a resurgent nationalism which would not only have profound political repercussions in Asia, but would further alienate Christianity for being "un-Japanese."

Although still numerically small, the Japanese evangelical community is mature, and is increasingly vocal in social issues. The open letter which follows was written by a Japanese evangelical, Rev. Yoshiaki Yui, in an effort to increase understanding of the Japanese situation among North American Christians. The evangelical church in Japan needs our support and our prayers.

Mr. Yui is a graduate of Asbury Theological Seminary (M.Div.) and Princeton Theological Seminary (Th.M.), and is currently pastor of Nagatsuta Christ Church. He also teaches at Tokyo Christian Theological Seminary—**Harold Netland, Tokyo.**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I write this open letter out of a sincere desire to further your understanding of the present situation in Japan and to encourage you to pray for the Japanese evangelical church.

The Christian Church in Japan faces many obstacles, but a growing concern in recent years has been the problem of the Yasukuni Shrine. The Yasukuni Shrine is a major Shinto shrine where soldiers who have died are honored and worshipped as gods. Some historical background may be helpful.

Japan has a history of oppression and persecution toward Christianity. In 1549 when Roman Catholicism was introduced to Japan, those who were in power reacted by banning Christianity and severely persecuting believers. This policy was strictly enforced through 300 years of the Tokugawa regime. When Japan was again re-opened to the West, the new government that came to power in 1868 had no intention of changing the policy of banning Christianity, although pressure from the West forced Japan to allow entry of some Protestant missionaries. But whenever the Japanese Church began to grow, she was hit hard by the hammer of state-sponsored religion.

Soon after the restoration of imperial power in 1868, the attempt to revive the Shinto religion was accompanied by renewal of strong opposition to Christianity. For example, the Imperial Rescript on Education was promulgated in 1889 with the purpose of setting up a national standard of morality based upon Shintoism and emperor veneration. This document was employed by conservatives as a basis of argument against Christianity. It was clearly the nationalistic, patriotic fervor embodied in the Rescript that unified the nation and established national identity. The Japanese Church gradually yielded to the intense pressures of the government and "nationalized" Christian doctrines and programs by stripping off all Western color, and subjected itself to sheer compromise with Shintoism and emperor worship.

The Yasukuni Shrine became the pre-war rallying point of national identity, and was one of the chief symbols of the old value system. Japanese citizens were forced to worship the "deified" war dead there. The Shrine was used as a tool of totalitarian control by the government. Those who would not worship there were branded as un-Japanese and unpatriotic, and were subjected to severe punishment, including, in some cases, even martyrdom.

Following World War II, with the new Constitution guaranteeing freedom of religion and placing Shintoism on the same level as other religions, the Yasukuni Shrine was reduced to the status of a local shrine.

However, with the great economic success of the past decades, the Japanese people have begun to search for their spiritual identity and have once again turned to traditional Shintoism for meaning. So some in present day Japan are beginning to revert to the former military and spiritual values. In Japan, reverting to the old conservative value system inevitably involves a return to a nationally supported Shintoism and the restoration of government regulation of education and other institutions.

In the past twenty years, pressure has mounted for the nationalization of the Yasukuni Shrine once again. Every election year the ruling Liberal Democratic Party politicians promise to nationalize the Shrine. Although three recent attempts at nationalization of the Shrine failed in the Japanese Diet, a popular groundswell of opinion favoring nationalization makes this course of action seem nearly inevitable. There is increasing pressure to once again make the Shrine a national Shrine and a symbol of national identity and unity. This, however, would pose a great threat not only to peace and democracy in Japan, but also the propagation of the Gospel in Japan.

The trend toward a return to the old values is matched by a trend toward justifying Japan's role in World War II and the years of expansionism prior to the war. Presently, under the Ministry of Education, there are efforts to rewrite the history of Japan, resulting in teaching students the history of World War II very differently from the way it is taught in other countries. Although several years ago there was a sharp outcry from other Asian countries against such rewriting of history, no substantial changes have been made.

Many were shocked when it was revealed in 1982 that Class A war criminals, who had been executed for their war crimes by the Allied powers, were enshrined in the Yasukuni Shrine as martyrs and gods. Yet, this act is simply indicative of the broader trend toward justification of Japan's role in the war. Many Christians point out that glorification of the war dead at the Shrine was the prop used to support the pre-War spirit of nationalism of the military state. They see the present move to nationalize the Shrine and restore Shintoism as a necessary prerequisite to the future militarization of Japan.

It was Shinto nationalism which, in the years prior to and during World War II, resulted in Japan's ruling over other nations in Asia and causing immeasurable suffering. The wounds caused by the exploitation and suffering of the Chinese and other Asian peoples at the hands of the Japanese have never completely healed. Some years ago, a book was written with the title *When Justice Calls For Us.* Written by Yong Chan Pak, a Korean pastor, the book is the story of his father, Gwan Jun Pak, who refused to bow before a Japanese Shinto Shrine in Korea, when Japan controlled Korea. Gwan Jun Pak came to Tokyo and walked into the Diet building and threw a letter of protest into the chamber where the Diet was in session. He was arrested and put in prison, where he died. The author, in his visit to celebrate the publication of the Japanese edition of his book, stated:

> My heart has been deeply grieved to find here in Japan a definite trend toward the revival of the old Japan in the repeated and persistent attempt to revive the nationalization of the Yasukuni Shrine and worship at the Shrine by the Emperor and high government officials.

On August 15, 1985 Prime Minister Nakasone visited the Shrine for the first time in his official capacity as prime minister, and was harshly criticized by China, Korea, and other Asian countries. Unfortunately, however, no strong words of criticism were heard from the U.S. and European countries.

The Yasukuni Shrine issue makes Japanese Christians realize how shallow democracy really is in Japan. Religious freedom and separation of religion and state are ideas fostered by democracy. To take away spiritual freedom is to deprive of all freedom. In 1971, some in the ruling Liberal Democratic Party stated, "Japan has become very prosperous economically, but as a result has lost its humanity; materialistically prosperous but spiritually and morally poor. The way to return to this humanity is to champion the Yasukuni Shrine." This is clearly a case of politics reaching its hands into personal and spiritual affairs which are out of its sphere of concern.

Japanese Christians fear the loss of religious freedom which has been enjoyed since the destruction of the military regime in 1945. We believe that in facing the Yasukuni Shrine issue we are engaged in spiritual warfare with the principalities and powers of evil (Eph. 6:15), who are seeking to frustrate the task of evangelization of Japan and the world. We desperately need the prayers of our brothers and sisters worldwide, as we struggle to find the most appropriate way to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ here in Japan. Please pray that we will be uncompromisingly faithful to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and that we will not repeat the mistakes of the past, as we endeavor to bear witness to our Lord in Japan today!

For the Sake of the Kingdom,
Yoshiaki Yui

The Pain of the North American Heart: Reflections on A Recent Ecumenical Student Gathering

by Donald Persons

We need to reflect long and hard about the events of the last several months in which U.S. young adults and theological students gathered to better discern their role in the U.S. ecumenical movement. The young adults & students met in the context of the WCC and NCCC/USA national conference in Cleveland, OH, challenging U.S. Christians to "Embrace the World," and calling for "greater participation of a new generation of ecumenical leaders."

Two objectives were accomplished in the students' meeting. First, those in attendance were exposed to the ecumenical commitment and work of leaders of the World Council of Churches and of U.S. churches involved in the National Council of Churches of Christ. Second, we witnessed a "phoenix event" as the planning committee of the Christian Theological Students Consortium of the U.S. (CTSCUS) handed over its responsibilities to a newly formed Ecumenical Network of Theological Students (ENTS). The purpose of ENTS was suggested only in the closing worship: to foster dialogue among Christian theological students and theologically-engaged persons in the U.S. This is to be accomplished through a newsletter, pursuit of ecumenical academic forums and the continued presence of a WCC staff resource person.

At the same time, there was little discussion of a student role in ecumenism or mission in North America. Issues derived from the addition of "young adults" to the concerns of CTSCUS were poorly addressed. There was no talk about what we experience locally as young adults/theological students. Our rich ecclesial and theological diversity was not really tapped. So it becomes obvious why it was so difficult for the student assembly to arrive at a concrete purpose for its new creation, ENTS. Though the appeal for wider regional participation may first appear wanting, there is, nevertheless, a great significance in the presence of students at the meeting of the WCC and the NCCC/USA with implications for ecumenical aims to "Embrace the World." This article will attempt to draw them out.

Donald Persons is currently a Senior in the M.Div. program at Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, MA and the Assistant to the Judson Professor of Missiology. He is seeking ordination in the United Church of Christ.

The Participation

The participants gathered from across the country in response to a call from the Consortium of Theological Students of the U.S., the movement originating in the Vancouver Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC, *Gathered for Life*, p. 16). Most came from various seminaries and Bible schools and cut across a vast array of denominational, ethnic, theological and even national borders. Three factors became immediately obvious:

1) U.S. theological students represent a much wider age group than merely young adults, with the average age of U.S. theological students in the early thirties. The 85 were not able to bring together under one roof the wealth of an inter-seminary movement along with the critical issues of young adults who are either students, workers or young professionals.

2) The participation and leadership of women and black students was fairly strong, but the meeting did not at all suggest the reality of the U.S. population. There were but two Hispanics and a couple of Canadian Asian guests. Where was the vast Hispanic and Asian American church? Was there a problem in inviting their involvement? Or does this suggest that Hispanics and Asians are not found in many theological institutions? If so, why? Hard questions, yes, but also ones which suggest a truth of student movements: they are useful in monitoring or at least suggesting the missionary health of the Church and its institutions. Great care must be taken in nurturing them.

Few of us had been to Vancouver or had ever participated in a national ecumenical event. This author was among the "new" people. He was also one of the many who had never found a way to get into the work of the WCC & NCCC/USA. Hence, the call to "Embrace the World" was an exciting possibility and vision, but we realized that most students did not yet have a sense of where the previous people were leaving them. We were still too mystified by the diversity of those gathered in Cleveland to be able to step forward together into our future.

"Embrace the World" in Student Perspective

It was clear in the larger forum that embracing the whole

world is painful for North Americans. It is an embrace characterized not by our imperialism or paternalism, but by our opportunity to listen and by "the strength of our Christian powerlessness" (from the keynote address, Dr. Emilio Castro). We are reconciled with a God who loves the world back to life. Looking upon the wrenching issues of U.S. domestic life and foreign affairs, we could easily despair. The U.S. people—who all Christians are called to embrace—are emerging into the latter part of this century with an agonizing pain of racist alienation, a guilt, yet pride, over our ability to manipulate the world for our own "national interests" (or, ecclesial world manipulation by U.S. church interests), economic loss for our little people, and bewilderment over reconstructing a humanity of cultural rupture and uprootedness. Indeed, it is where rugged individualism (see Bellah's informative book, *Habits of the Heart*, Chapter I) has become a vague covenant of the neighborless. Let us call it "the pain of the North American heart."

The Christian students in Cleveland stumbled across this pain in trying to agree on a purpose. We struggled for our very self-identity between a long historical legacy of U.S. student movements and the call for a "changing of the guard" which launches us directly into the heart of an ecumenism which revitalizes the Christian world mission in and through our North American context. The 85 young adults and theological students who met gave very confusing and unclear signals. Measuring the expectations of the passing generation of ecumenists against the current student disarray, the U.S. churches could be on the threshold of a major crisis at a time of wrenching challenges in U.S. national life. Will the ecumenical movement rise to proclaim the gospel (Good News) closer to the pain of the North American heart? How can students then best serve as witnesses who embrace that pain? How should theologically engaged persons understand the revival of an ecumenical seminary movement like ENTS?

A Legacy of Student Movements

This is not the first time students have struggled for a sense of purpose. We recall the Mt. Hermon 100—college people who gathered ecumenically under the leadership of evangelist Dwight L. Moody in 1886 (Wallstrom, p. 42). Then this movement helped create the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, with a watchword which thrust the churches together, later reinterpreted to mean "the evangelization of the world in (every) generation" (Robert, p. 146).

In the 1890s we saw the creation of the World Christian Student Federation, founded by John Mott. "This was the movement which was destined to produce the great bulk of the modern ecumenical movement" (Rouse & Neill, p. 341), including the IMC, Faith & Order, and Life and Work Movements, leading also to the inclusion of eastern Orthodox churches in 1911.

At the same time, there arose the Inter-Seminary Movement, to propagate mission involvement and study. In the 1920s there was evidence of growing missiological maturity and integrity. The aim was to "permeate with the Spirit of the Gospel not only individuals, but also society and international relationships" (Wallstrom, pp. 84-85). In 1948 the ISM was linked to the World Council of Churches at a time when U.S. students gathered so "that many came back to the college campuses determined to live a better life and to do more thinking along international lines" (Wallstrom, p. 70). In 1969 it finally voted to absolve itself.

If student ecumenical movements in the fifties were marked by recreation and pastoral care, students of the sixties were a full swing away from this in an emphasis with the WSCF on social revolution and death to the status quo of social structures. In 1966, the University Christian Movement made its historic stand on civil rights (Rouse & Neill, p. 356). Developing a very distinct contrast to this social activism was what is now known as the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, wherein the depth reality of the Gospel was re-emphasized.

At Vancouver, 200 U.S. and Canadian students gathered to form the Theological Students Consortium. This was made to link seminarians together and for seminarians to have a formative ecumenical experience to take into the churches. Out of this assembly grew the U.S. version of TSC, CTSCUS, in November, 1983. In 1985 in Washington, D.C. it held a national event and it also held a Seminar for Ecumenical Training in which it had broad representation and was divided regionally for a more incarnational approach. Today, we have ENTS as the continuation of that movement.

Notice again how the shift in emphasis to unity without a basic clarity of mission (world/gospel engagement) signaled in every case the waning of student movements and the lingering of burdensome student structures. Latourette, the great church historian, on reflecting upon the history of ecumenism, concluded that "the ecumenical movement was in large part the outgrowth of the missionary movement" (Rouse & Neill, p. 353). Purpose is derived from reflection upon God's liberating and reconciling engagement with a broken world. Lack of purpose is deadly to students. We need not expect any less of a failure of the modern-day ENTS if it does not seek to serve the gospel of Jesus Christ in these days.

The Call to "Change the Guard"

The same can be said of the North American churches. Contemporary ecumenical structures continue to prove muddied, confusing and unattractive to students who demand a great sense of clarity of purpose before responding to a call to "change the guard." We want to know what it is we are called to guard! In fact, would we not rather communicate a contextually-relevant Gospel, than hold it in safety? The old ecumenical movement assembled this October 2-5 in Cleveland communicated two things to the students by its speakers and forums: 1) U.S. Christians must wait and listen to the Third World people and seek ways to relate more justly to them, and 2) U.S. churches must be re-directed to reforming U.S. foreign and domestic policy.

These points reflect a great maturity and wisdom. They have been long in coming to our ears. But they still display a crippled U.S. missiology. They fail to get in touch with the complex institutions and peoples of the contemporary United States. They still shift our primary mission away from our own communities. It reflects a missiology which exports missionaries, but not with a crucified mind or a sense that we have dealt with issues in our context and can share our brokenness as equals with the whole Body of Christ. It is interested in the mission of the other five continents to themselves, but not yet the fullness of "mission in and through six continents" (WCC, Mission & Evangelism, p. 66).

But the U.S. is no longer the center of Christianity, as Buhlmann has pointed out (*The Coming of the Third Church*). Nor can we speak any longer of a Third World when we recognize the expansive ethnic and minority communities and religious systems now impoverished by yet re-shaping U.S. society (see Samuel & Sugden, *Sharing Jesus in the Two Thirds World*). Furthermore, there is the tremendous challenge of dechristianization confronting the U.S. world outside our ecclesial barriers, as well as all the implications in and beyond the church of the cry for the considerations of gender in personal

and public life.

One can perceive among the student participants an ever so slight shift in ecumenism out of our identification with this reality. Perhaps behind our hesitancy and lack of "official" goals is a consensus that something can emerge out of ENTS if anywhere in North American Christian life. *It must.* It is with faith and sweat and blood that the U.S. Church must newly identify itself with God in the waning moments of the 20th century. ENTS must serve this end. The theologically engaged North American ought rightly give birth to a wholly new, wholly continuous church witnessing to the Gospel in all six continents through the pain of the North American heart.

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The Kairos Convocation

by Wilma Jakobsen

The time has come. The moment of truth has arrived. South Africa has been plunged into a crisis that is shaking the foundations and there is every indication that the crisis has only just begun and that it will deepen and become even more threatening in the months to come. It is the KAIROS or moment of truth not only for apartheid but also for the church.

These opening words of the Kairos Document, first published in September 1985, have proved to be more than prophetic. Since that time, the crises in South Africa has intensified, and the challenge for the church in its struggle there increases every day. The closing call of the Kairos Document to the "Christian brothers and sisters throughout the world to give the necessary support . . . so that the daily loss of so many young lives may be brought to a speedy end" led to much discussion and positive responses from churches throughout the world. It was this call which led the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (N.C.C.) to sponsor the Kairos Convocation in mid-November 1986.

The aim of the convocation was to focus and reflect on the question of what solidarity with the suffering majority of God's people in the South African population requires of U.S. Christians. With this aim in mind, a diverse group of approximately two hundred people gathered at Chicago Theological Seminary for the Kairos Convocation. A number of South Africans were present, including guest speakers Rev. Frank Chikane of the Institute for Contextual Theology, Dr. Gabriel Setiloane and Rev. Malusi Mpumlwane, both from the Religious Studies Department of the University of Cape Town. Other South Africans included those presently studying in the U.S.A., as well as those exiled from their homeland. Many of the Americans present had been active in South Africa at different times. The ecumenical nature of the conference demonstrated by the wide variety of denominations and perspectives reflected, with about ten percent being evangelical.

The Kairos Document, issued by a large group of South African lay and professional theologians, arose out of a concern to discover how to respond as Christians (especially as pastors in townships) to the intensification of repression, violence and civil war in their country. The document first analyzes and critiques what it terms "state theology," the dominant ideology of the Afrikaner government and church, and "church theology," which refers to the tendency of the white English-speaking churches to indulge in much talk but little concrete action. It then explores "prophetic theology," which outlines the direction the churches should move to make an authentic response to the crisis (yet—also kairos—opportunity) which the situation in South Africa presents.

The structure of the Kairos Convocation reflected that of the document, and thus the plenary sessions focused on state theology, church theology and prophetic theology, with each major address followed by responses from a panel reflecting different backgrounds and ideologies. Each session began with expositional Bible study by Dr. Thomas Hoyt of the Hartford Seminary Foundation. The Bible passages related directly to the focus of the address, and the studies were a highlight of the conference for many. Romans 13, Revelation 13 and Luke 4:16-21 thus formed the backdrop to the major addresses, and it was exciting to hear how Dr. Hoyt set the passages into their historical context and applied them into the present times.

The plenary sessions were always followed by small group discussions, which picked up on issues raised in earlier presentations. It was here that the issues were debated more intensely, as each group contained such a wide variety of people. It was in these groups that frustrations and feelings of powerlessness were aired. It was also impressive to see the willingness to be self-critical, reflecting what the Kairos Document meant for the U.S. church as well as the South African church. This self-critique often ranked alongside the never-ending "but what are we going to *do*?" questions about South Africa.

This willingness to reflect on the need for justice here in the U.S. as a necessary aspect of support for suffering Christians in South Africa meant that the focus on "church theology" was possibly the hardest to deal with. This is because its critique of "active-in-rhetoric-lacking-in-action" churches hit home for many people present. In her main address on this topic, Dr. Sheila Briggs of the University of Southern California, said church theology is a co-opting of the church by the state; it is a praxis by which the church is not imitating the praxis of Jesus of Nazareth, rejecting the radical demand of Christ to take up the cross. She agreed with the Kairos Document that too often in church theology, reconciliation in South Africa is based on a false perception of reality, because the conflict in South Africa is not based on misunderstanding, but on two opposing realities. Church theology is ultimately aligned with the status quo, unwilling to take the risks of

Wilma Jakobsen is a divinity student at Fuller Seminary and a native of South Africa.

radical obedience to Christ, which was difficult to own under this self-critique of many U.S. churches.

In some ways it was easier to explore the concept of state theology because it related more to governments and less to individuals in the church. Dr. Richard Mouw of Fuller Theological Seminary placed the Kairos Document firmly in the tradition of orthodox Christianity in developing its position that apartheid is repugnant to the Word of God. Dr. Mouw emphasized the *proper* ministry of government, with the need for a *just* law and a *right* order, not only law and order. He agreed with the Kairos Document that "state theology" is based on an improper understanding of Romans 13, and that the South African government has neglected its nurturing responsibility and failed to do the work of justice. The implications for the U.S. government can be seen in the way it needs to deal with economic apartheid, and the need for a critique of the values of the U.S.

As the conference moved through times of worship and discussion, it could be said that the hallmark of the conference was intensity. The presence and participation of so many deeply committed South Africans deepened this feeling, particularly in the evening worship services. The opening night, when Rev. Frank Chikane spoke of his struggle to maintain his commitment to non-violence under experiences of severe torture, was a powerful example. Another memorable act of worship included testimony from six South Africans about life under the State of Emergency. This service led to a prayer vigil for South Africa and particularly for detainees, which lasted until 4 a.m. This underlying commitment to worship throughout the conference served to increase its impact as an event which was very meaningful to the participants.

As the conference moved on to discuss "prophetic theology" and its challenges, Dr. Cornell West of Yale University Divinity School outlined three necessary components. First, religious vision—of the imago Dei, our fallenness, and the coming of the kingdom to empower us; the Kairos Document gives hope. Second, intelligent historical and social analysis. Third, political action and praxis, to work out the options and alternatives of how to live in our brokenness of circumstances.

There was no doubt in anyone's mind that some kind of action had to be taken by the convocation. A statement was drafted by a small committee, and then distributed to the discussion groups. Opportunity was given for input from the groups, and discussion raged fast and furious about varieties of wording and ideas. Time was a limiting factor as the plenary group also discussed various options for action to be taken up as a result of the convocation. Ideas ranged from planning a mass march of protest in Pretoria, South Africa, in 1988, to convening discussion groups about the Kairos Document, the Kairos Covenant (the statement) and the convocation itself, in local church settings. Although it was not clear that an authorized follow-up could be orchestrated by the N.C.C., it was clear that the individual participants would continue their activism in local settings, using material from the convocation.

The conference closed with a very moving worship service. Participants signed the Kairos Covenant, to a background reading of the covenant made by Joshua in chapter 24. In so doing, they pledged a deep commitment to respond to the Kairos of these times, to be in solidarity with the oppressed in South Africa. The singing of the national anthem of South Africa, Nkosi Sikelel i' Afrika (God Bless Afrika) by this group of committed South Africans, Americans and others, marked the end of a convocation which, although it had its frustrations, yet proved to be intense, inspiring, moving and challenging. It remains to be seen what the outcome will be, but the challenge of the Kairos Covenant is there, for those who are willing to read it and work towards justice both in South Africa and also the USA.

THE KAIROS COVENANT

An Initial Response of U.S. Christians in Solidarity with the Oppressed in South Africa

This is the time of crises and judgment—a KAIROS—for U.S. Christians.

God speaks to us today. In the prophetic cry of our sisters and brothers in South Africa we hear God's Word.

—It is a call for confession and repentance for our participation in the sin of apartheid; —It is a call to conversion, and we give thanks for it; —It is a call to understand and act in solidarity with all who are bound by the chains of apartheid; —It is a call to speak out and take action against the fears, the rationalizations, the paralysis, the policies, the structures—whether in church or society, whether in the U.S., South Africa, or elsewhere in the world—against all that contributes to continuing oppression.

The grace of God compels us to respond.

The KAIROS of these times judges our nation as well. U.S. administration support of the government of South Africa is mirrored by a domestic policy, grounded in racism, that imposes economic apartheid. Its victims are disproportionately men, women, and children of color. The majority of our people remain insensitive to the poverty and oppression of their sisters and brothers throughout the world and unaware of our complicity in the systems that inflict and prolong their suffering.

Called to a new radical commitment by the KAIROS of our times and in active solidarity with our oppressed sisters and brothers in South Africa, we pledge in the name of Jesus Christ crucified and resurrected:

—to tell the truth about the evil of apartheid in South Africa and work to abolish it; —to offer increased support to the people of South Africa in their own struggle; —to support the peoples of southern Africa who are victims of U.S. and South African political, military, and economic destabilization; —to speak the truth of justice in our churches; —to fight racism, sexism, and economic injustice in our own society; —to challenge our social and political structures to send clear messages to the South African government: we will not as a nation tolerate apartheid, and we will encourage all other nations to stand together against it; —to renounce a self-centered U.S. lifestyle that exists at the expense of blacks in South Africa and other oppressed people in our country and throughout the world.

The hour is late. The judgment of God is at hand. God asks us to love more deeply, work more diligently, risk more courageously. We give thanks to God for this opportunity to help prepare the way for the gift of a reign of justice in which the present signs of death will be swept away and God's new Life will fill us all.

Bibliography: Books on South Africa

by Kathy O'Reilly

Move Your Shadow, by Joseph Lelyveld, Times Books, 1985. One of the best books about South Africa, this Pulitzer prize winning account was written by the New York Times' correspondent to South Africa. Archbishop Desmond Tutu aptly describes the book as "a searing indictment of South Africa's apartheid system."

Crossing The Line, by William Finnegan, Harper and Row, 1986. What happens when a California "surfie" and world traveller finds himself teaching in a Cape Town "colored" high school for a year? The answer's in this articulate account of apartheid at all levels, especially education.

The White Tribe of Africa, by David Harrison, Macmillan, 1981. Tells the story of the white Afrikaners, who currently rule South Africa. A well written and researched account of how the Afrikaners got into power and why they are so reluctant to surrender it. The book arose out of a five-part BBC television series.

The Apartheid Handbook, by Roger Omond, Penguin Books, 1985. An excellent resource to help you wade through the myriad insidious policies of apartheid. The book is usefully structured in question-answer format and provides valuable information on issues ranging from health and education to the military, the press, the church, prisons, etc.

Freedom Rising, by James North, Macmillan, 1985. Subtitled "Life under apartheid through the eyes of an American on a four-year clandestine journey through Southern Africa." The author links current events and personalities with the history of South Africa and apartheid. Excellent chapters on the "bantustans" or homelands, and the mining superstructure.

Soweto: The Fruit of Fear, by Peter Magubane, Eerdmans, 1986. A pictorial recollection of the 1976 uprising in Soweto, captured by photographer Magubane. About 700 people died in the uprising; Desmond Tutu provides a foreward.

Cry, The Beloved Country, by Alan Paton, C. Scribner and Sones, 1948.

The True Confessions of an Albino Terrorist, by Breyten Breytenbach, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1985. The hellish life of South African political prisoners, as experienced by Afrikaner dissident poet Breytenbach.

Nelson Mandela, by Mary Benson, Penguin Books, 1986. One of three or four books detailing the life of the ANC leader and prisoner for life.

Apartheid is a Heresy, ed. John W. de Gruchy and Charles Villa-Vicencio, David Philip/Eerdmans, 1983. Includes essays by Allan Boesak, president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and Afrikaner theologian Beyers Naude, also Archbishop Desmond Tutu. The book serves to "clarify the issues and to challenge the Churches and their members to decide for or against the Gospel of Christ's reconciliation."

Hope and Suffering, by Desmond Tutu, Eerdmans, 1983. A collection of sermons and speeches by the Nobel laureate and Archbishop of Cape Town. "My vision is of a South Africa that is totally non racial," he writes. "I am an unabashed egalitarian and libertarian because God has created us freely from freedom."

Kathy O'Reilly is a South African writer living in Pasadena, CA.

Resistance and Hope, ed. Charles Villa-Vicencio and John W. de Gruchy, Eerdmans, 1985. A collection of essays in honour of Beyers Naude, the Afrikaner theologian who has been banned and has suffered greatly for his unwavering anti-apartheid stance. A part from the editors, contributors include Buti Tlhagale, Frank Chikane, Allan Boesak, Gabriel Setiloane, Desmond Tutu and others.

Cry Justice, John de Gruchy, Orbis Books, 1986. An inspirational collection of prayers, meditations and readings from South Africa; to be read alone, or studied in groups. There are 31 sets of readings, so the book can be used for one month's private devotions. *Cry Justice* ends with a "love feast," a eucharist celebration.

Walking on Thorns, by Allan Boesak, Eerdmans, 1984. Seven sermons and a letter to the South African minister of Justice, by Boesak. "If they kill us it is not because we have planned revolution. It will be because we have tried to stand up for justice, because we have tried to work for true peace."

The Unquestionable Right to Be Free, ed. Itumeleng J. Mosala and Buti Tlhagale, Orbis Books, 1986. Subtitled "Black Theology from South Africa," this book features essays on many aspects of black theology and how the system of apartheid has affected it. Areas covered include the historical origins of black theology, current themes and emphases, a township perspective on violence and the use of the Bible in black theology.

The Kairos Document This historical and timely commentary addresses the "Kairos," the moment of crises the South African church faces. First published in 1985, the document offers a critique of state, church and prophetic theology, as well as a challenge to action.
A recent edition includes the Harare declaration and a call to prayer for the end of unjust rule. Write Theology in Global Context Program, 22 Tenakill Street, Closter, NJ 07627.

Suggested Resources

Evangelicals for Social Action publishes a monthly news/prayerletter called *Intercessors for Peace and Freedom in South Africa.* The letter provides analysis of recent news events, interviews, prayer topics and resource information. It promotes a non-violent approach to the crises in South Africa and calls concerned Christians to respond from the basis of prayer. No subscription fee. Write Evangelicals for Social Action, 712 G. Street S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003. Phone (202) 543-5330.

Africa News—a bi-weekly publication reporting on the whole continent, but with lots of news of South Africa. Write 720 Ninth St., Durham, NC 27702. Phone (919) 286-0747.

AF Press Clips—this is put out by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of African Affairs. Features press reports from the U.S. media. Write U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520.

The International Defence and Aid Fund—serves to provide financial aid to those South Africans facing legal action due to their opposition to apartheid. Also aids families of apartheid's victims. The IDAF has extensive resources to offer—books, posters, records, photo exhibits, covering a wide range of issues. Write for their information package and catalogue of publications, P.O. Box 17, Cambridge, MA 02138.

Amnesty International—published a South Africa briefing in March 1986, covering areas like detention without trial, banning, torture. Write Amnesty International USA, National Office, Publications Dept., 322 Eighth Ave., New York, NY 10001.

The Southern Africa Media Center/California Newsreel, offers a number of films and videos for rental or purchase. Highly recommended: Witness to Apartheid, Nelson and Winnie Mandela, and South Africa Belongs to Us. For a brochure, write California Newsreel at 630 Natoma Street, San Francisco, CA 94103. Phone (415) 621-6196.

The American Friends Service Committee recently released "South Africa Unedited," a half-hour documentary on repression and violence in South Africa, and interviews with a number of anti-apartheid leaders. Write AFSC, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102-1479. Phone (215) 241-7060.

The Voice of Outsiders: Is Anybody Listening?

by William Dyrness

It is just possible to travel to Atlanta without visiting the South. Almost 5,000 of us did it in November for the annual meetings of the American Academy of Religion and the Society of Biblical Literature. Outside of the southern accents of the staff, a few sides of grits and the ever-present iced tea, we might have been in Denver or Buffalo. Beyond that, papers on the structure of Nahum or Derrida's deconstructionism are not calculated to instill a sense of place.

But by the happy foresight of the local hosts of the section of Arts, Literature and Religion, some of us escaped this place-warp. For three splendid hours one afternoon (was that Sunday?), we moved our discussions to the Atlanta College of Art, to focus on an exhibition in progress there: "Revelations: Visionary Content in the Work of Southern Self-Trained Artists."

There we saw the South—or at least that vast rural South with roots reaching deep into Scripture, Indian traditions and even African religion. Stone, paper, and corrigated tin were covered with obsessive graffiti, tortured crucifixes and vodoo charms. One, Mary T. Smith inscribed her paint on tin with: "The Lord know your hart; I love to bee for the Lord, he know the good (sic)." Here Mary speaks for the nameless host of faithful who paint "Jesus Saves" everywhere along southern two lane highways—the same ones who unfurl giant banners reading "John 3:16" on Monday Night football. Many of the visions were apocalyptic in character, like "The Giant Destruction Ray" (by Prophet Royal Robertson) and "The Road to Eternity" (by Reverend Howard Finster). Some, like Nellie Mae Rowe, recall childrens' drawings of fish and birds. For all the visions were supernatural in meaning. As Nellie says, "If you ask the Lord, he'll bring you out of a lot of things. But I'll tell you this: this world is not my home . . . It's just like in that song, 'come and let me go to the Land where I'm bound,' 'cause there's peace and joy in heaven."

In the lecture which followed, writer Tom Patterson (Director of the Jargon Society (!)), with obvious affection led us on on an extended slide tour of some of the settings for this art. We met the late Eddie Owens Martin (a.k.a. St. EOM) maker of an entire imaginary village, the Land of Psaaquan. My favorite was Reverend Howard Finster who has made his property into Paradise Garden and the World's First Folk Art Church. The structures are constructed with thousands of found objects, broken pottery, mirrors and old television parts and is richly annotated with Scripture texts.

What was going on, I wondered through all this, in the heads of my colleagues with their Chicago and Harvard Ph.D's? Here was an earthy obsessive reality light years away from the rarefied discussions of Bronze Age Archeaology across town. Somehow I felt more in touch with life that afternoon than at any other time of the three day conference. "Strange" and "unreal" are after all in the eyes of the beholder. I doubt on any absolute scale that Howard Finster is any "further out" than Hans-Georg Gadamer. Flannery O'Connor was once asked why she so often wrote about freaks: "I say it is because we (in the South) . . . are still able to recognize one. To be able to recognize (a freak) you have to have some conception of the whole man, and in the South the conception of the whole man is still, in the main, theological."

Ironically, Nathan Scott, AAR President, the final night of the conference called for a polyphonic dialogue (or multi-logue) in which we learn to know ourselves by hearing other voices. I wish Scott had been to our Sunday Testimony Meeting, for he would have seen Reverend Finster's sign in Paradise Garden:

> I took the pieces you threw away and put them togather (sic) by night and day. Washed by rain. Dried by sun. A million pieces all in one.

I sometimes felt as if we were intellectual Marthas, so busy collecting and classifying voices that we listen to none of them. Indeed it could be we miss some of the most vital cries from outside our walls. These may be the most important, for they speak of integration and re-connection with our past, each other, and most of all with our God. They may turn out to be the Marys who have something clear to say because they have sat at Jesus' feet.

But I can hear someone saying: This is all very well, but is this art? Interestingly this exhibition is only one of several major shows in the last few years focusing on naive or outsider art (not even properly called "folk art" because it has been handed down from generation to generation). Even the experts are recognizing a vitality and a connection with our roots that the world of art has long since lost. There were reports of art students who are turning to these primitives for inspiration in the face of vacuity of accepted teaching. I find this all very exciting; I only wonder how long it will take theologians to recognize their own parallel emptiness.

William Dyrness is Professor of Theology and Culture at New College Berkeley.

BOOK COMMENTS

Preaching Paul
by Daniel Patte (Fortress Press, 1984, 95 pp., $4.95). Reviewed by Andrew Trotter, Director, Christian Study Center, Elmbrook Church, Waukesha, WI.

Daniel Patte, professor of New Testament at Vanderbilt University and ardent champion of structuralism as a method of biblical exegesis, has written a concise, readable book giving his insights on how one should "preach Paul." His main audience is, of course, preachers, but it should not be limited to them. Patte believes preaching is more than just speaking from the pulpit of a church and stresses the witness character of all Christians everywhere as they "witness to the gospel by and through their own 'speeches' [daily conversations]" (p. 9). He accomplishes his goal of writing in such a way that the layman

can benefit from his work, and pastors should not shrink from giving this book to lay people. It does not deal with such things as method and technique but rather attempts to "present as clearly and concisely as possible the main features of Paul's teaching so as to focus the discussion upon its implications for preaching and witnessing to the gospel in contemporary situations" (pp. 9-10).

The book is not exhaustive, as one can see from its length, and it is not intended to be so. It is by design a condensation of Patte's much more comprehensive *Paul's Faith and the Power of the Gospel: A Structural Introduction to the Pauline Letters* (Fortress Press, 1983) and reference should be made to that book for deeper study. *Preaching Paul* is built around fifteen theses Patte sees as descriptive of the "characteristic features of Paul's faith for proclamation" (p. 17). Each thesis is followed by a series of "Notes" reviewing various Pauline passages and defending the thesis from them.

Paul's faith is portrayed in this work as "fundamentally characterized by three interrelated features. It is charismatic, typological, and eschatological" (p. 16). It is charismatic in that it displays a belief in believers directly discovering, through faith, "revelatory manifestations of God in their experience," and eschatological in that "no believer can claim to have the complete and final revelation;" this will come only at "the time of judgment, when Christ will return" (pp. 16-17). But this content of the message is not proclaimed by Paul simply through speaking; fundamental to Patte's book is that Paul transmits the gospel not only by communicating the facts of the gospel (the message about Christ's death and resurrection) but also by "helping others to recognize manifestations of God, or Christ, in their experiences, and to understand how they should respond to these manifestations of the divine" (p. 17). A view of God's power "bearing down on [people] in uncontrollable and unpredictable ways" (p. 19) is essential to Patte's presentation of Paul's gospel; it is at these times of awareness of the numinous, that we must learn as preachers how to proclaim God's manifestations in the presence of our hearers and how to discern just what are and what are not manifestations of God in the first place (p. 19).

Jesus: The Death and Resurrection of God
by Donald G. Dawe (John Knox, 1985, 205 pp.). Reviewed by Clark H. Pinnock, Professor of Theology, McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ontario.

The first thing to point out about this book is that it is not aptly titled. It is clear from the way it begins and ends that the subject it treats is the finality of Christ in relation to the problem of religious pluralism. This is a topic Professor Dawe has written about before, and it is one which obviously concerns him greatly. As a Christian he believes that Jesus is Lord of all, but when he looks at the world he does not see the great world religions disappearing. Furthermore he relates to us a moving religious experience which he had at the Sikh temple in Amritsar, the genuineness of which he is not capable of doubting. So this is a book about the finality of Christ in a world of religions despite its title.

Therefore what Dawe is after is a Christology which, while not sacrificing the uniqueness of Christ, will nonetheless be able to let us think positively about the other great world religions. With Küng he admits to wanting to think of them as the ordinary means of salvation (p. 149). To this end Dawe gives us a solid section of Christology in which he presents Jesus as the representative of humankind and also the promise of its future. The present title refers in fact to part one of the book but not to the whole of it. Typical of a learned professor, it is not always clear to the reader why certain information is included, but the gist of this second Adam Christology is clear enough and helpful in any context. The problem is that the exegetical evidence falls short of what he wants it to prove in the area of the religions.

The key move comes in part two of the book. Dawe wants us to believe that a fresh way to read the scriptures in Christology would be to think of an effect of the work of Christ as involving "the encoding of new being" on the whole human race (p. 145). Because of God's reconciling act in Christ we can expect to discern a death and resurrection pattern everywhere, and when we do we may conclude that God is at work there redeeming humanity. It is as if God has stamped the race with a new genetic imprint as a result of the cross and resurrection (p. 147). To quote Dawe, "This power of new being, encoded in Jesus, is at work wherever men and women give up their present centers of security in trusting openness to the transcendent" (p. 148). Thus the world religions have Christ working in them even now. In this way Dawe believes we can retain the finality of Christ and still see in the other religions the means of grace.

By way of response, I would want to identify with Dawe's concern that we relate meaningfully our belief that Jesus is the only Savior with the fact that multitudes have never heard this message and never been able to make any decision positively or negatively about it. I think we do need to say something sensible about this problem. But I cannot find in the New Testament the idea of God encoding the race with the cross and resurrection dialectic. It is surely wishful thinking on Dawe's part and not a direction which the scriptures themselves take. Surely the NT is very clear that the Spirit has been poured out in power upon believers for the express purpose that they should be ennabled to bear witness to Christ unto the ends of the earth. The fact that Dawe cannot believe that Christianity will replace the religions is neither here nor there (p. 154). What God plans to do about Islam, for example, is his business. Maybe a dramatic change is just around the corner. If we are going to guess, we may as well guess in the biblical direction, not against it. What we know is that God has empowered the church to move in the strength of the Spirit to bring salvation and deliverance to sinners dwelling in darkness. To think that the world religions are a means of grace goes contrary not only to scripture but also to evangelistic experience working among them, Dawe's own experience notwithstanding.

This still leaves the problem which Dawe and I are both worried about. How do those who have never heard the strong name of Jesus participate in his redemption? Are they simply excluded in their millions? For me the answer lies in the direction of I Peter 3:19 and 4:6 where the apostle seems to indicate that the unevangelized are given a revelation of Jesus Christ after this life if they do not receive it before. Lacking in complete certainty exegetically, this solution at least enjoys probability and does not stretch our credibility the way Dawe's does. There is a problem here which we need to work on. I did not find this book much help in its resolution.

Heaven and Hell: A Biblical and Theological Overview
by Peter Toon (Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1986, 223 pp., $8.95). Reviewed by Colin Brown, Professor of Systematic Theology, Fuller Theological Seminary.

This is a book which delivers what its subtitle promises. It gives an overview first of what the Bible has to say about heaven and hell and secondly what theologians down the ages have had to say on the same subject. It is a book, the author is at pains to point out, that is not intended as "a contribution to scholarly debate." Rather it is presented as a basic textbook for college and seminary students and as a handbook for pastors, preachers and teachers.

The author sees himself as standing in the tradition of Anslem's *credo ut intelligam*: he seeks understanding from the standpoint of faith. Scripture is the record of God's self-revelation and a unique source of information concerning heaven and hell. Hence, this study is essentially exegetical. It deals with the interpretation of biblical pronouncements and the evaluation of theological opinions in the light of this interpretation. Peter Toon shuns speculation. He desires to base his interpretation on explicit statements rather than general considerations concerning (e.g.) the character of God, christology, the nature of time and space. Thus he is uncomfortable with the view which he associates with T.F. Torrance, Murray Harris and F.F. Bruce, that at death the believer is clothed with a resurrection body. This view does not quite rank as a heresy. But Toon rejects it because it "does not seem to give sufficient prominence to the fact of the End and the great consummation of God's salvific work" (p. 128).

Toon strives for balance and sensitivity in presenting the arguments for and against the annihilation of unbelievers, endless punishment and universalism. He concludes that annihilation is not a Christian doctrine and that biblical universalism does not mean the salvation of all but the universal offer of salvation, leading to universal judgment and the recognition that God is truly all in all. Heaven is both a place and a state. Hell is to be thought

of in terms of loss of beatific vision and "possibly" pain experienced through the senses, though we must "recognize always that we are speaking figuratively" (p. 201).

The strength of this book is also its weakness. Its strength lies in the way that the author assembles and lays out in a clear fashion a mass of pronouncements on heaven and hell. As such it is a lucid guide book to key texts on these subjects and to such related topics as the lake of fire, soul sleep, annihilationism and sundry forms of universalism. But herein lies the weakness. For what we are given is exegesis without hermeneutics—or rather, exegesis which does not attempt to come to terms with hermeneutical questions.

Of all the theological issues, none bristle more with hermeneutical questions than the subject of heaven and hell. What is the nature of the language used? How do space-time concepts apply? How do we think of God in relation to heaven and hell? Despite Toon's efforts to be guided by explicit scriptural pronouncements, some of his own judgments are tacitly affected by hermeneutical considerations. He recognizes that language about hell is figurative. His dismissal of the above noted views of Torrance, Harris and Bruce is not based on precise exegesis of passages like II Cor. 5, but upon general considerations about assumed incompatibility with his understanding of the End-time. Likewise the discussion of annihilation is not settled by exegesis but by a series of warnings to those "who might be tempted to abandon the traditional view too easily" (p. 179).

All this raises the questions of whether hermeneutics can be left to the realm of scholarly debate and whether we do a service to students, pastors and teachers (and those who they teach) if we try to do exegesis without hermeneutics.

Race, Religion, and the Continuing American Dilemma
by C. Eric Lincoln (Hill and Wang, 1984, 282 pp., $17.95). Reviewed by Mark Bishop Newell, Ph.D. candidate, University of Notre Dame.

In 1944, Gunnar Myrdal's *American Dilemma* concluded that the high Christian ideals embodied in the American creed were in serious conflict with the way Americans behaved, especially in regard to relations between racial groups. Not a new idea then, it pervades American society today and is the organizing theme of *Race, Religion, and the Continuing American Dilemma*. C. Eric Lincoln here publishes eight essays, previously delivered orally in various forums, which treat the dilemma in the context of black religion and the Black Church in particular. This is at once a tantalizing, energetic account and a constantly annoying one.

Lincoln tantalizes the reader with his candor and insight right from the outset. Noting the strangeness of our dilemma, he refers to James Watt who lost his job as Interior Secretary on the heels of an embarassing remark about " a Black . . . a woman, two Jews and a cripple." "Our outrage," says Lincoln, "was more because Mr. Watt embarassed us by 'going public' with some of our most deeply held private sentiments" (xii) since many of us seem to care about the poor and disadvantaged only in the abstract. The first three chapters attempt to give some perspective to the dilemma, and then to trace the racial factor shaping American religion and how it led to the formation of the major black denominations. This carries the story to the mid-twentieth century and the next four chapters deal with black ethnicity and religious nationalism, American pluralism, blacks in relation to Mormons, Muslims, and Jews, and the role of the courts in settling the race issue. He concludes with "Moral Resources for Resolution," primarily emphasizing the role of M.L. King.

By far the most complete and helpful chapters from a historical standpoint are the four dealing with comparatively recent events, and the best of these is the fourth on black ethnicity and religious nationalism. Here, Lincoln is at his best in explaining the role of the Black Church as "the spiritual face of the black subculture" wherein "whether one is a 'church member' or not is beside the point" (p. 96). The religious factor is then related to ethnicity which is concerned with racial and cultural heritage, and to nationalism which takes several conflicting and confusing political roles. This chapter does a masterful job of explaining how religion (M.L. King, Leon Sullivan, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference) related to Black Power, the Black Manifesto, and individuals such as Malcolm X. His appeal is "not to the Black Church but to America" (p. 117) and to the white church who thinks the problem is solved. "It is an illusion, and the great tragedy of our dilemma is the persistent notion that, having made our ritual ablutions, we are entitled to the peace of the blessed" (p. 118). Taken together, these middle chapters provide an excellent survey of the Civil Rights Movement and the integral relationship between black churches and American society since World War II.

Unfortunately, there is much that is persistently annoying throughout this book—the negative sort of annoying things that detract from the book's prophetic message of reminding us that racism persists in America and in our churches and needs to be constantly crushed. While the treatment of recent history is fairly solid, early chapters covering events before 1900 are too sketchy. For detail, Albert Raboteau's *Slave Religion* is better, and relevant chapters in Ahlstrom's *Religious History of the American People* provide a better survey. Documentation is thin, with most primary sources quoted second-hand. Similarly, the "selected" bibliography omits too many major works such as the *Harvard Guide to American Ethnic Groups* and important authors like Nathan Glazer. By ignoring Glazer, Lincoln apparently ignores his discussion of affirmative action. As a result, the chapter on legal remedies of the dilemma, while helping us really feel the tragedy, fails to address the slender legal thread on which affirmative action goes too far. Here is a basic inconsistency in Lincoln's thought, for while he can argue in one context that children can hardly be held responsible for behavior of their ancestors (p. 150), on affirmative action he implies the opposite, viz., that remediation ought to have no limits in correcting past injustices (p. 207). Stylistically, the second person plural is rampant, bothersome terms like "Blackamerican" seem to contradict the basic theme by setting an ethnic group above America, and vaguely defined terms like "White Church" give the book a persistent lack of precision. Many of these annoyances may stem from the book's genesis in oral presentation, and one wishes that Lincoln had done a better job of revision for publication, replacing rhetoric with clear, concise argumentation.

Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms, Drawn Principally From Protestant Scholastic Thought
by Richard Muller (Baker, 1985, 340 pp., $14.95). Reviewed by Bradley L. Nassif, lay theologian of the Antiochian Orthodox Church, and Ph.D. candidate, Fordham University.

This book gives us the meaning of Latin and Greek theological words. The words themselves are extracted mainly from the vocabulary of "Protestant Scholasticism" which flourished in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The dictionary also includes words which originated from the patristic and medieval church insofar as those terms were received by the Protestant scholastics.

Muller gives two reasons for writing the book: "first, the accurate presentation of the vocabulary of Protestant orthodoxy, and second, the needs of students in their encounter with works currently accessible in which the orthodox or scholastic Protestant vocabulary appears." For these reasons, the author intends the dictionary to be used by students and professors as a companion to the classical writings of Protestant scholasticism, and its modern exponents such as the textbooks of Charles Hodge, Francis Pieper, Louis Berkhof, Otto Weber, Karl Barth and others. The goal is to illuminate the theological meaning of the Greek or Latin phrases that are sprinkled throughout these books.

The layout of the text is broadly structured in the prevailing dictionary format. The terms are alphabetically arranged and cross referenced. The length of the definitions range from very brief to extensive. Where appropriate, some terms are traced back to their philosophical roots and particular historical contexts. A splendid example of this can be found in Muller's definition of the trinity (*trinitas*). The Latin word is first translated and defined. The author then takes four pages to summarize the church's reflection on the trinity starting from the patristic and medieval church on through its later Protestant scholastic equivalents and elaborations. Related terms and controversies over the trinity are introduced and summarized along the way. Whenever this approach is used, it enables the dictionary to serve as a brief handbook to theology and the history of Christian

thought. Muller's glimpses into Eastern Orthodox thought, which are scattered throughout the dictionary, are refreshingly accurate. Understandably, however, the meaning and history of the Greek terms are not always thorough, since Protestantism itself had a limited exposure to Byzantine theology.

The dictionary also clarifies the similarities and differences between the two great systems of Protestantism, the Lutheran and Reformed traditions. Arminianism is treated as well. The reader can learn the theological comparison of these groups by reading key terms such as the will of God (*voluntas Dei*), predestination (*praedestinatio*), free will (*liberum arbitrium*), the presence of Christ in communion (*communio corporis*), infant baptism (*baptismus*) and many more.

In addition to these merits, however, the book contains certain stylistic problems and theological temptations. At times Muller's concern for accuracy outweighs the need for learning. Some terms are simply too concentrated and complex for the beginning student to understand (e.g. *communicatio idiomatum*, communication of proper qualities). Moreover, those definitions which have their foundation in patristic theology can easily lead readers to impose in their minds a rigid "patristic system" on the early church which, in fact, never existed. The patristic texts which have been quoted by Protestant scholastics often have been used as "proofs" of theological systems which were deeply alien to the real mind of the Fathers. For them, theological reflection was more a "story" than it was a "system."

These limitations, however, should not overshadow the immense value of Muller's dictionary. The author has painstakingly provided us with the means to master the technical vocabulary of the Protestant heritage. The dictionary is clear, concise and carefully nuanced. It is a trustworthy and precise reference tool that deserves wide acceptance from seminaries and libraries. The book will accomplish its goals for its intended audience with great success. It will also go far to promote a more responsible understanding of Protestant scholasticism among those who are outside the Reformed or Lutheran traditions.

Saints and Society: The Two Worlds of Western Christendom
by Donald Weinstein and Rudolph M. Bell (The University of Chicago Press, 1982, 314 pp., $25.00). Reviewed by Thomas O. Kay, Associate Professor of History, Wheaton College (IL).

History is replete with examples of those persons who have stood apart from the mainstream of life, whether due to moral goodness, eccentric behavior or other unusual characteristics. The Saint, one who exemplifies the personal, positive virtues of a culture, is not only a phenomenon of Christian culture but can be found in any society exemplifying those ideals associated with the value center of the culture. *Saints and Society* is a well defined effort to get at some of the fundamental relationships between those persons who become set apart as saints and the society which produced and maintained them. The work of Weinstein and Bell is limited to seven centuries (1000-1700). The work makes several significant contributions to important aspects of church history.

The study first looks at sainthood in terms of family structure, children, adolescents, adults and the virtue of chastity. In contrast to the much current literature about the medieval family, Weinstein and Bell assert that the Middle Ages knew childhood, that this notion pervaded all of society and that the ideals of childhood saintliness were a source of stress for the family. The call to sainthood did not know social class, place or nationality.

The adolescence of those called to be saints is seen to be rather typical of many of the concerns usually a part of family history. In the middle ages the life of piety and sainthood was often regarded as the best. Spiritually precocious youth were usually encouraged to go into the service of the church. The prevailing social values reinforced those trends and when parents seemed to support the contrary models the young person would use the ways of the church as a means of making a protest. This became a more sharply drawn conflict in the 13th century and following due to the opportunity for new careers in law, medicine and scholarship which were sometimes regarded as an option of equal value to that of sainthood. Adolescent saints did not exhibit great signs of their calling, but seemed only to serve God and the Church faithfully.

An additional chapter discusses the impact of the ideal of chastity and virginity upon the saint, male and female. A distinction is made between the completely chaste person, a virgin, and the one who as an adult enters into a pact of chastity in order to live a saintly life. The former was certainly regarded as the superior option.

Those converted to sainthood as adults often brought with them from a life of preparation additional insights for spiritual service that went beyond the more narrowly defined role traditionally entertained by the church. This tended to accent some tensions between laity and clergy. The relationship between this tendency and the reformation is suggestive. The authors comment,

> The Reformation shattered this precarious balance between lay inspiration and clerical authority. Luther's doctrine of the priesthood of all believers was the Emancipation Proclamation of lay piety, the climax of a long quest for spiritual equality and individual responsibility before God. Reformation Catholicism chose the opposite solution, reaffirming clerical authority and leadership. Lay piety was to flourish only within bounds set by the hierarchy; no amount of individual inspiration or mystical communion with the God head could replace the priest at the altar (p. 119).

These observations and others from Part I are supported by 14 pages of statistical analysis based on the information gleaned from the narrative sources. The authors have carefully and coherently discussed (in readily understood language for the most part) their method and they provide a very useful verbal interpretation of the various charts and tables.

Part II deals with the piety of the saints. Who were the saints? When did they live? With which social class did they identify? What were the relationships between the male and female? It is noted that there were changes to the responses to the foregoing questions during the time covered by the author's research. These changing responses reflected important movement in social history and the values of the culture. Many of these changes were associated with the social, economic, political and religious adjustments that were a part of the 16th and 17th centuries.

While drawing a series of interesting conclusions to the whole study, the authors raise new questions and make suggestions for continuing research. Of more than usual interest is the recognition of the paradox of a saint's life and a saint's cult. The latter often became associated with material values which the life of the saint sought to deny. While medieval thinking could accept this dichotomy, the paradox was laid open by protestantism which placed the responsibility of sainthood upon every Christian.

Perhaps the most important conclusion is this:

> Conversion stories, whether in childhood, adolescence, or adulthood, suggest that the time from the end of the twelfth century to the early sixteenth century formed a coherent period in the history of the family. More than in either the two centuries preceding or the two following, this was a time when affective family ties were positively affirmed, when the idea of the family as a unit of love relationships emerged as an object of reflection in both religious and secular literature. Appreciation of childhood and adolescence was an integral part of this heightened family consciousness, along with a growing sensitivity to the psychology of these two life stages. This is a different picture of the history of the family from that offered in the work of Ariés, Stone, Lebrun, Shorter, Poster, and others who maintain that the affective family emerged in eighteenth-century Europe. Our data strongly suggest that the affective family was not unknown in medieval society, that it began to come into its own in the thirteenth century, flourished in practice and theory in the fifteenth, and declined from the mid-sixteenth century through the late seventeenth. It follows that what Stone and others discover in the eighteenth century is not the first appearance of the affective family and the idea of childhood but a *re*appearance (pp. 245-246).

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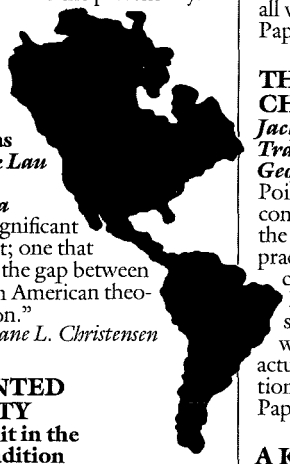

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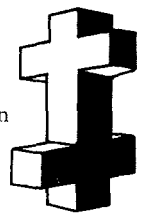

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An appendix of sources including a list of saints considered in the study, notes and index are useful additions to this work.

Saints and Society seems to be a signal work in many respects. It is extremely well done social history. It is an understandable and useful venture into quantitative history that does not leave the lay person befuddled by the jargon of the discipline. It has resurrected hagiographical sources for reconsideration, a project in which several medievalists have recently been involved. Once considered virtually useless for scholarly endeavors and suitable only as pious exemplaries, Saints Lives are now considered to possess authentic historical value as is evidenced in this study. Finally the work is of importance due to the collection of useful, recent bibliography of value to the scholar who would continue work in this field.

Edith Stein: A Biography
by Waltraud Herbstrith (Harper & Row, 1985, 113 pp., $15.95). Reviewed by Kelly James Clark, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Gordon College.

Edith Stein (Oct. 12, 1891 to Aug. 9, 1942), the subject of this intriguing biography, is little known to Anglo-American Protestants. Her life was a remarkable amalgam: she was a Jewish-born German nun, philosopher and mystic who was killed in a Nazi concentration camp and is now under consideration for sainthood in the Roman Catholic Church. From a devout Jewish family, this precocious young lady embraced atheism from ages 13 to 21. In college she stumbled upon the writings of Husserl and was soon to become what Husserl called his best doctoral student ever (surpassing even Martin Heidegger). Through the influence of the philosopher Max Scheler as well as faith-full Christian friends, the Master of phenomenology's prized pupil, after experiencing moral unworthiness and despair, was shortly thereafter baptized a Roman Christian. The final step was taken after she had spent the night reading Teresa of Avila's autobiography, whereupon completion, she exclaimed, "This is the truth." To the dismay of her family she enthusiastically followed the devout life of teaching and prayer of a religion at a Dominican sisters' school. This phenomenologist soon found her interest in scholarship revived after exploring the favorable yet foreign depths of the scholastic thought of Aquinas' *de Veritate*. Through her study of Thomas she learned that the intent of faith was not merely for moral transformation, it should also lead one to the Truth. In addition Aquinas awakened in her a sense of divine mystery begun by Teresa of Avila, of the need for personal experience, of the mystical. She eventually would satisfy her desires, again to the consternation of her family, to plumb the depths of the divine in the contemplative life of a Carmelite nun.

In the early to mid 1930's rising anti-Semitism obstructed her appointment to a university post, led to the neglect of her mentor's, Husserl's (a Jew, who underwent a little known death bed conversion which is recorded in this book), work, and caused the victimization of Jews by university students. She immediately called upon the Pope to issue an encyclical in criticism of Nazi anti-Semitism; the inappropriate reply was a benediction for Edith and her family. In 1938 news of S.S. attacks on the lives, homes and businesses of Jews in Germany reached Edith's convent and engendered a growing sense of mission that she would soon suffer her own cross. She escaped to Holland but soon requested complete identification with her suffering people and Christ crucified in a final oblation on behalf of peace. After the Nazis occupied Holland the churches strongly expressed their concern about the deportation of the Jews. In retaliation for the Church's defiance the Nazis placed all Jewish Catholics under arrest and Edith was soon deported to her death, ultimately to her own Golgotha: Auschwitz. She had achieved, in her own words, "the peace of someone who has reached her goal."

The biography is marked by the typical tendency to make saints out of martyrs (little is recorded of Stein's post-conversion dark side). Yet her triumphant life and tragic death provide urgent and needed reminders of crucial lessons for all thinking Christians. She had an intense desire both passionately to speak and humbly to work against social injustice and she demonstrated an intense commitment to the vanishing belief that the life of the spirit entails due attention to the life

of the mind. Perhaps her greatest virtue is that her social zeal and intellectual acumen are rivaled only by her life of contemplation and love of God.

Schools of Thought in the Christian Tradition
Edited by Patrick Henry (Fortress Press, 1984, 193 pp.). Reviewed by David Wells, Andrew Mutch Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

This book, containing ten essays, is a *Festschrift* for Jaroslav Pelikan, the Sterling Professor of History at Yale University. The editor has tried to produce a coherent book, rather than merely having a string of unrelated essays. The essays, for example, have chronological sequence. There is an essay on Alexandria roughly in the third century (Robert Wilken); two essays are on North Africa and Jerusalem mainly in the fourth century (William Blake and Francine Cardman); there is an essay on Byzantium in the ninth century (John Meyendorf); the editor's own essay looks at attackers and defenders of icons in the eighth and ninth centuries; biblical exegesis in Charlemagne's time is discussed (Ann Matter), as is medieval Paris (Marcia Colish), ministerial education in the University of Berlin in the nineteenth century (John Stroup). Essays following one another in this kind of chronological sequence suggest that there is an overarching theme or an underlying hypothesis which is being explicated. Is this actually the case?

The theme is this notion of "schools" which is conveyed in the book's title, so these essays supposedly are showing how Christian faith has been taught, learned and transmitted in various contexts, be they geographical or institutional. The problem with this, of course, is that *school* has a wide range of meaning and for that reason it really does not provide a focus for the book, although the editor thinks that this lack of clarity is most beneficial! Wilken observes that being in a school may suggest being part of a line of thought from the past or it may mean being part of a novel departure. The word "can refer to a certain set of ideas, a way of interpreting the Bible, a form of spirituality, a style of pedagogy, a method of theological dialectics, an institution" (p. 15), to name only a few of the nuances. These essays reflect this wide and disparate sense of meanings which the word has. For that reason Outler's introductory essay on tradition is of very little use since it is hard to tell how such a notion is actually to be related to the matters under discussion in the book such as, for example, the medieval theologies in Paris and the modern theologians at Berlin, except perhaps that all these essays are concerned with matters of the past and so in that undifferentiated sense might be said to be talking about "tradition."

It is this absence of a disciplining concept that perhaps explains some of the extraordinary *lacunae* in this book. Why ask for an essay on the school at Alexandria and not for one on its rival at Antioch? Worse still, why omit the Reformation period entirely in a book designed to honor the man who has given so much of his time to the study and publication of Martin Luther's ideas? There surely are good reasons for including an essay on the "school" at Wittenberg or the one in Switzerland in the sixteenth century. The same could be said of the period of classical orthodoxy, Lutheran and Reformed, which followed. As it stands, the reader passes directly from Paris in the Middle Ages to Harvard in the Colonial period!

The result of this, I am afraid, is that some of the fine essays in this book may be lost to specialists who ought to know about them. These essays are technical, well informed, and often present the subject matter in new ways. The essays are especially provocative for those whose understanding and experience of theological education is limited to the twentieth century context of university lectures and professionalized learning. Many of the factors which in the past have properly been seen to be part of the doing of theology have become casualties in this modern context. Wilken, for example, develops the idea of the place of virtue and the value at Alexandria of a one-to-one relationship between teacher and student; Meyendorf underscores the place of spirituality in the doing of theology in the East, Patrick the way that Liturgy shaped doctrine, and Endy underscores the way in which the "doing" of theology was neces-

sarily related to its pastoral practice in Puritan America. Reading this book brings into focus interests in the teaching and learning of faith which have often either faded from view or been deliberately jettisoned. For this reason the book is interesting; its chief role, however, will be to service specialists in the fairly narrow areas in which the authors have written, and with perhaps one exception, have written very well.

Offense to Reason: The Theology of Sin
by Bernard Ramm (Harper & Row, 1985, 187 pp., $15.95). Reviewed by Todd Saliba Speidell, Ph.D. candidate in Systematic Theology, Fuller Theological Seminary.

Bernard Ramm's *Offense to Reason* is a commentary on the polemic of Pascal: sin is folly to autonomous reason but wisdom to the perceptive mind. Ramm's very readable book is not an irrationalist deprecation of reason; instead, it challenges modernism's attempts—from the Enlightenment to contemporary social science and existentialist literature—to account for sin in secular vocabulary. Although there is relative value in understanding these versions of "sin" or evil, suggests Ramm, the degree and scope of sin is more adequately portrayed by the Christian doctrine. Sin is not only acknowledged by Christians, however, but is universally witnessed by world religions as well as secular thinkers.

The cosmic corruption of the sin of Adam (who is both a generic and historical person) is more than direct rebellion against God; it is also manifested in personal and social, and national and international inhumanity. The adequacy of a doctrine of sin, then, is determined by its power to unmask our sinful existence in the multifarious domains of life and to summon us to responsibility before a judging yet forgiving God. Ramm examines visions of sin, from the theology of Irenaeus to the theology of liberation, and elaborates the implications of the doctrine of sin for psychotherapy, literature, philosophy, science, and religion. The doctrine of sin, insists Ramm, is simultaneously the most adequate and comprehensive rationale to account for the contradiction and disorder of human life.

Ramm's book provides a realistic, comprehensive, and hopeful version of sin. That is, he looks at the reality of evil and suffering in this world without succumbing to hopeless prognoses for humanity. In fact, his contention is that *only when we face the reality of sin do we have hope*. The confession of sin is an abandonment of autonomous attempts to explain and expiate our sinfulness. Sin is not a judgmental concept that leaves us in our misery, but a positive term that throws us upon the mercy of God. Ramm holds up a mirror to our sin, not as a doom-and-gloom prophet, but as a realistic pastor-theologian who has looked in the mirror himself.

Ramm rightly calls us to understand sin by grace, Adam by Christ, or law by gospel. He does not, however, develop this key insight, which should perhaps serve as the *leitmotif* for a constructive doctrine of sin. Instead, he sprinkles the theme throughout his wide-ranging exposition and evaluation of selected figures from the history of philosophy, theology, literature, and the social sciences, and in his exegetical insights into Christ's central place in salvation-history. Ramm's book would be improved with the elaboration of his Christocentric understanding of sin, possibly as its central and creative theme.

Ramm's most important contribution, however, is a positive statement of the doctrine of sin. He accomplishes this by providing a comprehensive perspective on its manifestations, an integrative assessment of its relation to various fields of human activity, and a critical survey of biblical, historical, philosophical, theological, literary, and scientific versions of the doctrine of sin. Ramm's book, which is both manageable in size and momentous in scope, would prove significant in the study of systematic theology—or in any field concerned with the problem of sin.

Pilgrims in Their Own Land: 500 Years of Religion in America
by Martin E. Marty (Little, Brown and Company, 1984, 488 pp., $25.00). Reviewed by Bryan V. Hillis, Ph.D. student in History of Christianity at the University of Chicago, Divinity School.

In contrast to earlier efforts that "tell the story of American religion," among which Martin E. Marty numbers Sydney E. Ahlstrom's *A Religious History of the American People* (Yale University Press, 1972) "the most expansive and successful" (p. 478), *Pilgrims in Their Own Land* is based on the assumption that "it is impossible to find a single ideological thread uniting the Americans in their spiritual pilgrimage" (p. ix). Hence in this historical narrative of American religious history, Marty looks to the main players in that pilgrimage and the dreams that drove those pathfinders. Taking up his own pedagogical challenge to re-envision American religious history, Marty has re-told the story of five hundred years of religion having borrowed the image of the unsettled wanderer or "pilgrim" from Jacques Maritain's *Reflections on America* (1958). As Marty informs us on page one of his text, Maritain regarded Americans even in their own land as "prodded by a dream," "always on the move" and with a "sense of becoming." Marty's hope is that this metaphorical image will reveal something of the spiritual quests of the pathfinders of American religion and their followers who together searched for "home," or "spheres where they might find meaning and something to which to belong" (p. x).

Starting with what he calls "the first migrants," the American Indians, Marty provides us with both the context for and the insights of America's religious visionaries. The political maneuvering of an explorer like Columbus are explained insofar as these illuminate that person's religious aspirations. Marty's concluding comment regarding this

particular spiritual pilgrim, as based on the report of his admiring biographer Bartolome de Las Casas, is that "Columbus did so many other pious things . . . one wonders how he had time to sail ships so masterfully" (p. 22). These humorous asides, together with superbly chosen anecdotes do not blur Marty's scholarly insights or historical narrative but rather flavor the material with a vitality that is informative as well as entertaining.

Marty's biographical method allows him to deal with many themes of American religious life such as missionary efforts, church state relations, ethnic groupings, communal experiments, social reforms, political intrigue, theological controversies and denominational renewals, just to mention a few. All events and people are placed in roughly chronological order though the problems inherent in writing a bird's-eye view of 500 years of religious history within a space less than 500 pages means the reader has to be aware that a strict chronological order will not always obtain. Still, a perfectly logical narrative is established and maintained throughout, even when the plethora of movements and cults of the modern era are described.

One of the most obvious strengths of the book is that Marty's religious, social, and political precis help the reader understand how reasonable and attractive these religious options were for leader and adherent alike within the matrix of the contemporary world. What is even more notable about Marty's method in this regard is that at no point, are reductionist explanations offered. Marty keeps to his task as an historian; namely, to tell the story of real people struggling with real problems and breaking new religious paths with their solutions. "Being religious" takes on a liveliness in this book that no previous monograph of this type has supplied as the reader empathizes with the pilgrim in the search for the realization of a new religious vision.

However, choosing the right "pilgrims" to tell the American religious history within the pages of one monograph is a difficult task. Marty has already been criticized by reviewers such as Robert T. Handy (*Christian Century*, Sept. 26, '84, pp. 876-878) for missing some important "pilgrim" theologians (i.e. Nevin, Clarke, Cone and Ruether) and by Louis Weeks (*Theology Today*, Apr. '85, pp. 142-144) for not dealing adequately enough with the black religion of slavery or with female pilgrims. It is also ironic that a scholar such as Marty, known for his commentary on the modern religious world, has given such scant attention to more recent developments. Even these critics though, acknowledge that Marty has accomplished his main purpose of telling the story of American religion through the efforts of its pioneers in a comprehensive and compelling manner.

Additional features of the book include its thorough index where almost any figure of religious importance in America can be located and then placed very quickly in his/her proper context by reference to the text. The ten-page "Suggested Reading" section, though far from a complete bibliography, serves as an excellent directive source. The fact that *Pilgrims* is now available in paperback makes it an even more attractive purchase for either the private library or for use in an introductory course to the history of American religion.

There is no question about the fact that Marty's effort here will go a long way towards achieving one of his stated aims in writing the book; namely "to enlarge the cohort of readers in the field" (p. 478). The fact that a renowned scholar like Handy is also able to assert that even "veteran scholars and participants in American religious life have much to learn and savor" in this work makes Marty's achievement all that more impressive.

The Christian Hope
by Brian Hebblethwaite (Eerdmans, 1985, 244 pp., $9.95). Reviewed by Rodney L. Petersen, Assistant Professor of Church History and the History of Christian Thought, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

"Born anew to a living hope," Peter writes (I Peter 1:3), and so we have been. However, the exact nature of that "imperishable, undefiled, and unfading" hope has been the subject of much debate and speculation in the history of the Church's earthly sojourn. Hebblethwaite maps that journey. In doing so he provides his own vision for a Christian eschatology today.

Two-thirds of Hebblethwaite's analysis is devoted to current theological reflection as affected by scientific discovery, philosophical analysis, and a sense of the world religious community. This reflection has yielded a more balanced eschatology, he believes, as earlier hope for a gradual realization of God's kingdom on earth has been countered by a fresh sense of eternity and the futurist demands of Christian hope (p. 201). In light of this admitted emphasis upon modernity, Hebblethwaite's analysis of earlier periods of the Church's speculation tends to become generalized, a problem that is compounded by a spotty although suggestive bibliography and few references.

First, though, the background of Christian hope in the Old and New Testaments is sketched. Jewish hope, initially focused upon the future of the community, becomes more cosmic and individualized by the later prophets. We are introduced to reflection on Jesus' hope and that of the diverse New Testament community as Christianity is shown to take form in the context of messianic and apocalyptic expectations. Our study focuses on classical definitions of Christian hope, summarized in the work of Lactantius, Eusebius of Caesarea and Augustine. Medieval hope is boiled down to the essentials; Reformation reflection is presented as an outgrowth of such and is hastily surveyed. A more detailed analysis of this latter period would have been helpful for an appreciation of later perspectives. Hebblethwaite relies upon T.F. Torrance's trichotomy of eschatologies (faith, hope, and love) in Luther, Calvin, and Bucer respectively. Little is done with the way in which religious self-identity, eschatological expectation and exegetical methodology inter-penetrated either here or in earlier periods.

Modernity begins for Hebblethwaite with the Enlightenment. The challenge to classical eschatology comes in at least three areas: the idea of progressive revelation (Lessing), a stress upon the moral import of biblical hope (Kant), and a fresh effort to distinguish the divine in biblical imagery from historical context (Semler). These areas become the foundation for further reflection, particularly in the beginnings of a Christian social theology. Scant attention is given to millenarian and revivalist hopes (which rest "on a complete failure to discern the nature of biblical prophecy, let alone the apocalyptic literature of late Judaism and the early Church," p. 128). Hebblethwaite hastens on to the twentieth century, to 1) reactions to liberal theology 2) Roman Catholic reflection and 3) contemporary Protestant theology. A deficient sense of transcendence in the nineteenth century (the "liberal equation of the Kingdom of God and a perfected human world on earth") has been readressed in the twentieth by "reintroducing the idea of eternity" (p. 151). Balanced Christian hope may be seen in the future-oriented work of Moltmann and Pannenberg (pp. 184-189) together with the impact this has had upon "this-worldly" hope seen in liberation theology (cp Berkhof, p. 194).

Having surveyed the past, Hebblethwaite further outlines his perspective derived from the revealed nature of God, the demands of theodicy, moral and religious plausibility. Three points may be noted. It is universalist in hope yet affirms the possibility of final separation, interpreted as annihilation (p. 216). Hebblethwaite appreciates Barth's christological reinterpretation of predestination but argues that his complicated reasoning is not necessary if one can "dispel the notion that all is fixed in advance" (p. 138). Nevertheless, having summarized the work of Baillie, Robinson, and Hick, Hebblethwaite notes the "weighty objections" of Travis (pp. 194, 215-17) to universalism (*Christian Hope and the Future of Man*, 1980). Second, critical of traditional ways in which final separation from God's love has been conceived (p. 213ff.), Hebblethwaite explores dimensions of "pareschatology," i.e., "the intermediate state beyond death and prior to the final consummation" (p. 218). Such sanctification as occurs here is offered as a speculative solution to the problems of unbelief and misbelief (p. 219). Roots for an expanded vision of purgatory are laid by Hebblethwaite in the context of biblical hope and in the theologies of Clement of Alexandria and Origen (p. 49). Finally, contemporary Protestant thought, affected as it is by current evolutionary and cosmological reflection, must affirm a continuing creative process in God's future (p. 224), postulating "further, new creative acts of God, if man is to have a future not only beyond the death of individuals, but also beyond the heat-death of the universe" (p. 176). Here Hebblethwaite's thought is processive in nature if not, strictly speaking, process theology, a movement with a generally deficient sense of Christian hope (p. 183).

Christian hope in its traditional categories

is affirmed (excepting millenarianism), if speculatively explored. Jesus Christ remains in his historical incarnation and resurrection the "central pivot" (p. 223) of a consummation (p. 225) that affirms continuing individuality (beatific vision) and union (communion of saints and Kingdom of God). However, the question that confronts the reader is what to make of Hebblethwaite's imaginative reflections, particularly in the areas noted above. He freely cites the agnostic caution offered by Paul (I Cor 2:9) in terms of heavenly speculation, a word that might be offered here. Hebblethwaite's proposal is clearly imaginative. In the end one is confronted by the question of the validity of trajectories of hope beyond the explicit letter of Scripture. Yet, the proposal does not lose in intelligibility because of the generally sound analysis, historical perspective and theological scope. This study will prove helpful as a summary of Christian hope for the interested lay person or beginning theological student. It is generally fair, excepting a too quickly eliminated millenarian vision. One is challenged on a topic that will only continue to become more central in Christian discussion as our global community with its varying religious traditions becomes one before apocalyptic problems and possibilities.

BOOK COMMENTS

Marxist Analysis and Christian Faith
by Rene Coste (Orbis Books, 1985, 232 + vii pp., $11.95).

Rene Coste is a Catholic, and a professor of social theology at the Institute Catholique in Toulouse, France. This work was originally published in a French edition in 1976. In it Coste pays attention to large-scale contemporary development within Marxism and is not so tied to specific intramural disputes within Marxism as to be outdated today. And although much contemporary liberation theology is rooted in Marxist concerns or conceptions, this is not primarily a work on liberation theology. It is primarily about what Coste takes to be mainstream Marxism and whether a Christian can accept such teachings and still be a Christian.

Valuably, Coste's work shows an independence and accuity of judgment. Though a Catholic, Coste cites as his most important theological influences Karl Barth and Nicholas Berdyaev. And though he avows a strong egalitarianism in his introduction, in his conclusion Coste writes words of caution to a group of fervently Marxist worker-priests that suggest Coste's own misgivings about Marxism: "Have they really understood that the Marxist critique of religious alienation wants not only to question the weaknesses of the church but radically to destroy any idea of the supernatural origin of Christianity, or that Marxist materialism involves the absolute rejection of God?"

Coste is careful in distinguishing aspects of Marxist analysis and prescription and clear in his treatment of the mainstream and its tributaries. For those interested in Marxism and Christianity, particularly as seen by one sympathetic to Marxism but more dedicated to Christ, Coste provides us with a good book.

—Paul Faber

The Church in the World: Opposition, Tension, or Transformation?
by Robert E. Webber (Zondervan, 1986, 333 pp., $11.95).

Robert Webber presents a textbook survey of Christian thought about the church's relation to society, culture, and politics. After an exploration of New Testament teaching, he follows the theme through the history of Christianity. In the Reformation he distinguishes policies of opposition (Anabaptists), paradox (Luther), and transformation (Calvin). After a look at social theology (liberal and evangelical) ca. 1900, Webber surveys recent opinions in the World Council of Churches, the Roman Catholic Church, "the religious right," and the World Evangelical Fellowship. He offers balanced evaluations of the ideas he describes, and concludes with positive, timely theological formulations.

Although he sometimes condenses and simplifies excessively, Webber provides valuable information and comment as an introduction to present-day discussion. His church/world theology focuses on Christ's dominion, the challenge of demonic "pow-

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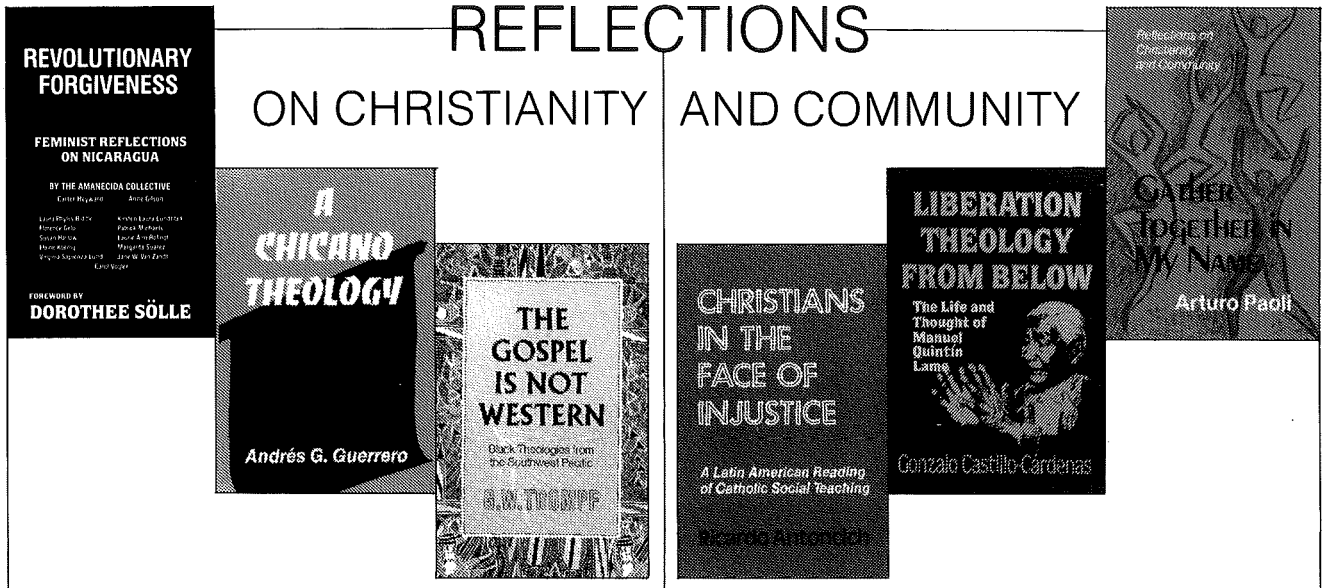

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Foreword by Dorothee Solle

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ers," and the church's eschatological role between the times. He presents it as the biblical teaching and as a new ecumenical "convergence of thought," but neglects its history—not mentioning Oscar Cullman, Karl Barth, or Hendrikus Berkhof. Webber avoids discussing specific social issues, confining his critiques of "extreme liberation theology" and the "religious right" to theological content instead of policies.

–Jack P. Maddex, Jr.

Getting Nowhere: Christian Hope and Utopian Dream
by Peter S. Hawkins (Cowley, 1985, 133 pp., $8.95).

The sense of expectations unmet, Hawkins believes, gives rise to utopian imagining. In this book he traces the history of the idea of utopia from its twin roots: biblical and Greek. From the former comes the conviction that human happiness is always a gift from God, from above; the latter tells us that it is in our power to build the kingdom. The tensions between these perspectives provides the focal point of this history. While the renaissance believed our nature (and thus our societies) could change, Thomas More imagined a utopia that left room for better things, open to God. In the 1880's Edward Bellamy wrote an "extravagently optimistic" account of the year 2000. For him and LeCorbusier (The Radiant City) utopian ideas are more important than the people who live there.

So when "nowhere" becomes someplace utopian possibilities become an awful nightmare and writers (Orwell, Huxley, and Zamiatin) imagine how to avoid utopia. Can we really do it better than God? B.F. Skinner still insists we can, Walker Percy is not sure. Hawkins insists that we must repudiate the tendency to hold either purely earthly or purely heavenly hopes. By God's grace we can imagine the ideal, but we can also work toward it. Utopia is a dynamic rather than a design.

A helpful study that shows how utopian thinking inevitably raises religious questions. But are biblical hopes only from above or do God's acts in history provide the model and impetus for change?

–William A. Dyrness

On Being Family: A Social Theology of the Family
by Ray S. Anderson and Dennis B. Guernsey (Eerdmans, 1985, 168 pp.).

"God has placed human persons in a created order for which the covenant love of God provides the fundamental paradigm for parenting, sexuality and marriage and the formation of family life. From the perspective of the church as the new family of God, the human family is liberated from its own failures and fears, and each person is affirmed as having a place in God's kingdom. Through Jesus Christ, to whom we are connected by grace, we are all brothers and sisters. We are family."

So write Professors Anderson and Guernsey from their perspectives as professors at Fuller Theological Seminary; Anderson of Theology and Ministry, and Guernsey of Marriage and Family Ministries and the Directorship of the Institute of Marriage and Family Ministries at Fuller.

Any Christian marriage and family counselor as well as a local pastor would recognize and be equally at home with the biblical base of this social theology. For these authors are thoroughly committed to the "authority of the Scriptures as normative" for their theological anthropology and family sociology respectively.

From their team teaching at Fuller, they produced four assumptions: (1) they are deliberately non-Cartesian (i.e. they see the task of science not as being to reduce the world to progressively smaller and more "accurate" properties as in Newtonian physics) (2) the family is systematic rather than linear in understanding of causality (3) the family is relationistic rather than reductionistic, and (4) finally, the family is fundamentally dynamic rather than static, i.e. they emphasize process rather than structure.

Standing for freedom in choosing rather than the usual scientific determinism in family development, they describe "parenting is somewhat like the 'gift of the Spirit' to which Paul refers in his letter to the Corinthian church" (p. 64). Throughout the volume, although written from a "scientific sociological" point of view, the golden threads of personal testimony and Scriptural support for their theories appear again and again. An example could be, "the role of parenting is to contextualize and historicize the self as existing before and with God" (p. 70). Or again, "parenting is accountable to the commandment of God rather than to intrinsic human or creaturely possibilities" (p. 71). In their emphasis on General Systems Theory they suggest "the viability of modern systems theory in the process of interpreting Scripture, especially in the area of biblical teaching about family roles." A student might need a modicum of socio-analytic language to understand this book, but any student would benefit personally through careful reading, especially if married and parenting children while under the pressures of supporting a family and preparing for ministry.

–John Monroe Vayhinger

To Be Human: An Introductory Experiment in Philosophy
by Xavier O. Monasterio (Paulist Press, 1985, $7.95).

This book provides practical and clear introduction to the human philosophies of B.F. Skinner, Jean-Paul Sartre, Karl Marx and Abraham Maslow. Strangely for a book from Paulist there is no reference to a theological or religious dimension.

Within this—very serious—limitation, the book makes a useful contribution to the philosophy of the person. Monasterio explains that for Skinner, behavior is a function of environment rather than consciousness, while for Sartre it expresses the dignity of being free. The one underemphasizes human agency; the other overemphasizes it. Marx recognized the importance of work which is socially produced, but denied existence to the individual. Most helpful is the treatment of Maslow's view that human nature is constituted by a characteristic set of needs. Set in a hierarchy, these needs suggest rather than dictate growth toward full human potential, and it may be helped or hindered by the more powerful cultural demands. While Maslow is helpful in shaping a more open and dynamic view of the person in which environmental and individual factors interact, Monasterio points out the underlying childish optimism that easily dissolves into the vacuous therapies of self-realization and peak experiences we see all around.

Monasterio seeks to move toward an integration of insights from philosophy and the social sciences but comes far short of any compelling vision of humanity, or any realistic account of human evil. We are merely urged toward a vague post-capitalism where we all seek to make ourselves a little better than our capitalist environment.

–William A. Dyrness

Selective Nontreatment of Handicapped Newborns
by Robert F. Weir (Oxford University Press, 1984, 292 pp., $27.95).

Weir begins his study of the moral dilemmas in neonatal medicine by arguing that selective nontreatment is a continuation of the historic toleration for infanticide against handicapped newborns. He then discusses the varying views on selective nontreatment held by leading physicians, attorneys and ethicists, offering his assessment of each position. Weir himself rejects both sanctity and quality of life arguments in favor of a "best interest of the child" criterion. Recognizing the great suffering attached to some severe conditions, he seeks to assess whether the child's life is likely to represent "a fate worse than death or a life worth experiencing even with the handicaps." He attempts to delineate an approach to selective nontreatment decisions on this basis.

Weir illustrates his presentation with numerous case studies, also providing helpful descriptions and general prognoses for the severe medical conditions encountered in hospital neonatal intensive care units. He recommends that treatment/nontreatment decisions be made according to diagnostic categories and outlines the manner in which certain conditions ought to be handled. Because nontreatment decisions do not necessarily result in a quick or painless death, Weir allows that "under certain conditions it is justifiable to kill birth-defective infants who have previously been denied treatment on sound moral grounds."

Carefully tackling this most complex issue, Weir provides both professionals and interested laypersons with a systematic and informative text. He summarizes the diverse positions accurately and gives a valuable ov-

erview of the medical, legal and ethical dimensions. Both his effort to establish more solid criteria by which to make these difficult decisions and his procedural suggestions have merit. Several fundamental problems in his recommendations remain, however. In allowing for the rare case of direct killing of newborns he fails to deal with the moral responsibility for that action. By maintaining that newborns are "potential" persons who, though having a general claim to protection do not have the same moral status (or rights) as "full" persons have, he circumvents some of the most serious implications of nontreatment decisions.

–Christine D. Pohl

Saints and Sinners in the Early Church: Differing and Conflicting Traditions in the First Six Centuries
by W.H.C. Frend (Glazier, 1985, 183 pp., $8.95).

A major misunderstanding that many people have regarding ancient Christianity is that it was characterized by a single tradition.

While there is no question that Christian orthodoxy became the dominant view of Christianity in the ancient world, it must not be forgotten that orthodoxy was forged in the context of competing views. Thus the Gnostic Marcion contributed to the development of the canon, Arius to the development of the Trinity, Apollinarius to the formation of Christology, and Pelagius to the soteriological consensus.

Frend tells us that this book is really about the sinners—the losers in the battle for orthodoxy, what he calls the "might-have-beens" of their time. These are the Gnostics and thinkers like Origen, Pelagius, Nestorius, Severus of Antioch and movements like Donatist Christianity in North Africa.

This book should be read because it reminds us first of all that the present tension in Christianity between the established church and fringe groups are not new. The origin of this struggle and even the shape of it go back to the early church. Second, the research that made *Saints and Sinners in the Early Church* available points once again to the need for an on-going scholarship. Recent discoveries in ancient thought as well as those that are bound to come from continuing archaeological exploration are a continual reminder that true scholarship never stands still. The *full* story about the early church, its saints and its sinners, has yet to be told.

–Robert Webber

Calvin and His Times
by Jansie van der Walt (Promedia Publications, 1985, 154 pp., $5.00).

This summary of Calvin's life moves from his student days in Paris to his last years in Geneva. In its brevity we are clearly introduced to the scope of his work against the backdrop of political and religious turbulence and personal tragedy. The humanity of Calvin and his age are highlighted through frequent citation of personal correspondence and reminiscence. Concerning personal tragedy, Calvin writes: "Nothing robs us of our strength and dejects us so much as the question: Why? Why did God do it?" Further on he adds, " . . . in the school of Christ we do not learn to suppress the emotions God has given us, and to become stony-hearted" (p. 86). Or note the description of Cardinal Contarini at Regensberg: "He made the sign of the cross over us so often, that his arm should surely be sore and stiff for at least two days" (p. 87).

Van der Walt fleshes Calvin out for us in a fine focused way. He is no longer the stony figure we associate with the Wall of the Reformers. Our interest is piqued by a winsome presentation that, unfortunately, lacks adequate footnotes and, therefore, full usability. While of interest for the general reader, without such notation and with little theological reflection, the study is less than what it might have been in this year (1986) of a feast of publications celebrating the 450th anniversary of the Reformation in Geneva.

–R.L. Petersen

Church and Confession: Conservative Theologians in Germany, England, and America, 1815-1866
by Walter H. Conser, Jr. (Mercer University Press, 1984, 361 pp., $28.95).

This creative and wide-ranging book fills a long-felt need. It discusses, with considerable sympathy, the efforts of "confessionalists" in Germany, England, and the United States from 1815-1866 to stand against the tides of individualism and economic change sweeping their societies. Conser argues that a common pattern emerged in each country. Neo-Lutherans in Germany (like Wilhelm Löhe, August Neander, and August Vilmar), Anglo-Catholics in England (chiefly John Henry Newman and other leaders of the Oxford Movement), and a variety of theological conservatives in America (e.g., Philip Schaff, John W. Nevin, Charles Hodge) turned to Christian traditions from the Reformation and beyond to express Christian faith. They saw both the religious liberalism and the rampant piety of their day as variations of a common fallacy. This fallacy involved the exaltation of self against community, the preference of individualistic interpretation over the authority of revelation, and the push for scientific rationalism at the expense of religious mystery. Although the conservatives differed among themselves on important issues, they also agreed that the organic connections formed by past Christian experience defined the essence of the faith.

Conser makes his case by following the same three-fold exposition for each country: setting the religious scene, describing the leading ideas of liberal and pietist spokesmen, and then expounding the counter-proposals of the confessionalists as "romantics" seems forced, given the extent of the differences among themselves. And it may not be as clear as Conser thinks that the conservative confessionalists were as soundly defeated as he contends in the book's epilogue. But on balance, this is a most welcome book, recommended for its sensitive reading of neglected theological figures as well as for the strength of its comparative analysis.

–Mark A. Noll

BOOK COMMENT CONTRIBUTORS

William A. Dyrness is Professor of Theology and Culture at New College Berkeley; Paul Faber is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Hays State Univ., Hays, KS; Jack P. Maddex, Jr. is Professor of History at the University of Oregon; Mark A. Noll is Professor of History at Wheaton College; R. L. Petersen is Assistant Professor of Church History and History of Christian Thought at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School; Christine D. Pohl is a doctoral student in Ethics and Society at Emory University; John Monroe Vayhinger is Executive Director of the Colorado Interfaith Counseling Center; Robert Webber is Professor of Theology at Wheaton College.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS FELLOWSHIP

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Introducing This Issue

When our publisher sends me page proofs of a forthcoming *Bulletin*, I find myself impressed with the quality and breadth of its content. That was my reaction (ignoring, please, the article which I have contributed), as I read through this May-June issue. Here, I reflected, is a journal which makes a significant, wide-ranging contribution to evangelicalism. In fact, I decided it would not be inappropriately *gauche* to share with you the encomium which Mark Noll pays to TSF and the *Bulletin* in his book, *Between Faith and Criticism*, which I discuss at some length in my review-essay. He lauds the leadership of TSF for providing through its publications "more exposure to excellent scholarship and more intense concentration on what it means to pursue that scholarship as an evangelical." With, I hope, a proper degree of modesty may I remark that this issue justifies Noll's praise?

I often affirm that, if a fundamentalist is a Christian who subscribes to the fundamentals of the faith—its core convictions, its essential dogmas—I am sincerely willing to call myself a fundamentalist. Any of us who know the culture of fundamentalism first-hand, especially those who have participated in outdoor meetings on campus, will appreciate Annie Dillard's wryly evocative "Singing With the Fundamentalists" (page 4).

One of the crucial issues which Protestantism faces is its view of scripture. In the second part of his very helpful survey, "From Truth to Authority to Responsibility" (page 10), Douglas Jacobsen traces what he perceives to be pivotal shifts in attitudes towards the Bible among American evangelicals. His interpretive account may be profitably compared with Mark Noll's booklength study of so-called higher criticism and its impact on beliefs about God's revelatory Word.

F.F. Bruce is internationally known and respected as a leading New Testament scholar. "The Theology of Acts" (page 15) is an impressive example of how masterfully he handles the inspired text.

As a septuagenarian and a one-tiime pastor, I appreciated, as I know you will, David Moberg's bibliography on ministry to the geriatric set (page 17). Incidentally, Dr. Moberg and I recently shared in a conference at Claremont College on religion and aging.

Preceding a splendid section of review essays and book notices is an interesting statement issued by participants in another conference which I was privileged to attend. Under the sponsorship of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, the Senior Advisory Council for Leadership '88 met early last December to draft a kind of Pastoral Letter for younger Christians who will be gathering next year, June 27–July 1, in Washington, D.C. While eschewing any claim to apostolic authority, the statement (page 20) sets forth the considered judgment of older evangelical leaders regardingg the problems and needs of the Church in the third millenium.

Now let me make an announcement which I confess fills me with regret. This is the last issue of the *Bulletin*. Inter-Varsity is undertaking an evaluation of all its multiple activities in order to determine which do or do not fulfill its central purpose of evangelizing and discipling college students. Since TSF and the *Bulletin* are tangential to that purpose and, in addition, require an annual subsidy, a decision has reluctantly been reached to terminate this branch of Inter-Varsity's ministry. Details regarding unexpired subscriptions are explained in a letter that I have already mailed out. I think these arrangements are equitable and will prove satisfactory.

In God's providence individuals and agencies are raised up generation after generation to communicate the Gospel. They perform that task with an effectiveness and fidelity which only our sovereign Lord can judge. And only He knows when their usefulness is ended. Thus I take comfort in that old realistic epigram, "God buries His workmen, but His work goes on." So God has written *finis* to the brief history of TSF and its *Bulletin*. But by other witnesses and other means the Gospel will continue to be communicated until history's *denouement* and the Kingdom's inauguration.

In that confidence and with deepest gratitude for all who have helped to make the *Bulletin* a strong testimony to the Christian faith, I bid you godspeed through your future years of life and ministry.

Singing with the Fundamentalists

by Annie Dillard

IT IS EARLY SPRING. I have a temporary office at a state university on the West Coast. The office is on the third floor. It looks down on the Square, the enormous open courtyard at the center of campus. From my desk I see hundreds of people moving between classes. There is a large circular fountain in the Square's center.

Early one morning, on the first day of spring quarter, I hear singing. A pack of students has gathered at the fountain. They are singing something which, at this distance, and through the heavy window, sounds good.

I know who these singing students are: they are the Fundamentalists. This campus has a lot of them. Mornings they sing on the Square; it is their only perceptible activity. What are they singing? Whatever it is, I want to join them, for I like to sing; whatever it is, I want to take my stand with them, for I am drawn to their very absurdity, their innocent indifference to what people think. My colleagues and students here, and my friends everywhere, dislike and fear Christian Fundamentalists. You may never have met such people, but you've heard what they do: they pile up money, vote in blocs, and elect right-wing crazies; they censor books; they carry handguns; they fight fluoride in the drinking water and evolution in the schools; probably they would lynch people if they could get away with it. I'm not sure my friends are correct. I close my pen and join the singers on the Square.

There is a clapping song in progress. I have to concentrate to follow it:

> Come on, rejoice, And let your heart sing, Come on, rejoice, Give praise to the king. Singing alleluia- He is the king of kings; Singing alleluia- He is the king of kings.

Two song leaders are standing on the broad rim of the fountain; the water is splashing just behind them. The boy is short, hard-faced, with a moustache. He bangs his guitar with the back of his fingers. The blonde girl, who leads the clapping, is bouncy; she wears a bit of make-up. Both are wearing blue jeans.

The students beside me are wearing blue jeans too—and athletic jerseys, parkas, football jackets, turtlenecks, and hiking shoes or jogging shoes. They all have canvas or nylon book bags. They look like any random batch of seventy or eighty students at this university. They are grubby or scrubbed, mostly scrubbed; they are tall, fair, or red-headed in large proportions. Their parents are white-collar workers, blue-collar workers, farmers, loggers, orchardists, merchants, fishermen; their names are, I'll bet, Olsen, Jensen, Seversen, Hansen, Klokker, Sigurdsen.

Despite the vigor of the clapping song, no one seems to be giving it much effort. And no one looks at anyone else; there are no sentimental glances and smiles, no glances even of recognition. These kids don't seem to know each other. We stand at the fountain's side, out on the broad, bricked Square in front of the science building, and sing the clapping song through three times.

Annie Dillard is a Pulitzer Prize winning author. This article is being reprinted from Yale Review *and reprinted with the author's permission.*

It is quarter to nine in the morning. Hundreds of people are crossing the Square. These passersby—faculty, staff, students—pay very little attention to us; this morning singing has gone on for years. Most of them look at us directly, then ignore us, for there is nothing to see: no animal sacrifices, no lynchings, no collection plate for Jesse Helms, no seizures, snake handling, healing, or glossolalia. There is barely anything to hear. I suspect the people glance at us to learn if we are really singing: how could so many people make so little sound? My fellow singers, who ignore each other, certainly ignore passersby as well. Within a week, most of them will have their eyes closed anyway.

We move directly to another song, a slower one.

> He is my peace Who has broken down every wall; He is my peace, He is my peace. Cast all your cares on him, For he careth for you—oo—oo He is my peace, He is my peace.

I am paying strict attention to the song leaders, for I am singing at the top of my lungs and I've never heard any of these songs before. They are not the old American low-church Protestant hymns; they are not the old European high-church Protestant hymns. These hymns seem to have been written just yesterday, apparently by the same people who put out lyrical Christian greeting cards and bookmarks.

"Where do these songs come from?" I ask a girl standing next to me. She seems appalled to be addressed at all, and startled by the question. "They're from the praise albums!" she explains, and moves away.

The songs' melodies run dominant, subdominant, dominant, tonic, dominant. The pace is slow, about the pace of "Tell Laura I Love Her," and with that song's quavering, long notes. The lyrics are simple and repetitive; there are very few of them to which a devout Jew or Mohammedan could not give whole-hearted assent. These songs are similar to the things Catholics sing in church these days. I don't know if any studies have been done to correlate the introduction of contemporary songs into Catholic churches with those churches' decline in membership, or with the phenomenon of Catholic converts' applying to enter cloistered monasteries directly, without passing through parish churches.

> I'm set free to worship I'm set free to praise him, I'm set free to dance before the Lord . . .

At nine o'clock sharp we quit and scatter. I hear a few quiet "See you"s. Mostly the students leave quickly, as if they didn't want to be seen. The Square empties.

THE NEXT DAY we show up again, at twenty to nine. The same two leaders stand on the fountain's rim; the fountain is pouring down behind them.

After the first song, the boy with the moustache hollers, "Move on up! Some of you guys aren't paying attention back there! You're talking to each other. I want you to concentrate!" The students laugh, embarassed for him. He sounds like a teacher. No one moves. The girl breaks into the next song, which we join at once:

In my life, Lord, Be glorified, be glorified, be glorified;
In my life, Lord, Be glorified, be glorified, today.

At the end of this singularly monotonous verse, which is straining my tolerance for singing virtually anything, the boy with the moustache startles me by shouting, "Classes!"

At once, without skipping a beat, we sing, "In my classes, Lord, be glorified, be glorified . . ." I give fleet thought to the class I'm teaching this afternoon. We're reading a little "Talk of the Town" piece called "Eggbag," about a cat in a magic store on Eighth Avenue. "Relationships!" the boy calls. The students seem to sing "In my relationships, Lord," more easily than they sang "classes." They seemed embarassed by "classes." In fact, to my fascination, they seem embarassed by almost everything. Why are they here? I will sing with the Fundamentalists every weekday morning all spring; I will decide, tenatively, that they come pretty much for the same reasons I do: each has a private relationship with "the Lord" and will put up with a lot of junk for it.

I HAVE TAUGHT some Fundamentalist students here, and know a bit of what they think. They are college students above all, worried about their love lives, their grades, and finding jobs. Some support moderate Democrats; some support moderate Republicans. Like their classmates, most support nuclear freeze, ERA, and an end to the draft. I believe they are divided on abortion and busing. They are not particularly political. They read *Christianity Today* and *Campus Life* and *Eternity*—moderate, sensible magazines, I think; they read a lot of C.S. Lewis. (One such student, who seemed perfectly tolerant of me and my shoddy Christianity, introduced me to C.S. Lewis's critical book on Charles Williams). They read the Bible. I think they all "believe in" organic evolution. The main thing about them is this: there isn't any "them." Their views vary. They don't know each other.

Their common Christianity puts them, if anywhere, to the left of their classmates. I believe they also tend to be more able than their classmates to think well in the abstract, and also to recognize the complexity of moral issues. But I may be wrong.

IN 1980, the media were certainly wrong about television evangelists. Printed estimates of Jerry Falwell's television audience ranged from 18 million to 30 million people. In fact, according to Arbitron's actual counts, fewer than 1.5 million people were watching Falwell. And, according to an Emory University study, those who did watch television evangelists didn't necessarily vote with them. Emory University sociologist G. Melton Mobley reports, "When that message turns political, they cut it off." Analysis of the 1982 off-year election turned up no Fundamentalist bloc voting. The media were wrong, but no one printed retractions.

The media were wrong, too, in a tendency to identify all fundamentalist Christians with Falwell and his ilk, and to attribute to them, across the board, conservative views.

Someone has sent me two recent issues of *Eternity: The Evangelical Monthly*. One lead article criticizes a television preacher for saying that the United States had never used military might to take land from another nation. The same article censures Newspeak, saying that government rhetoric would have us believe in a "clean bomb," would have us believe that we "defend" America by invading foreign soil, and would have us believe that the dictatorships we support are "democracies." "When the President of the United States says that one reason to support defense spending is because it creates jobs," this lead article says, "a little bit of *1984* begins to surface." Another article criticizes a "heavy-handed" opinion of Jerry Falwell Ministries—in this case a broadside attack on artificial insemination, surrogate motherhood, and lesbian motherhood. Browsing through *Eternity*, I find a double crosstic. I find an intelligent, analytical, and enthusiastic review of the new London Philharmonic recording of Mahler's second symphony—a review which stresses the "glorious truth" of the Jewish composer's magnificent work, and cites its recent performance in Jerusalem to celebrate the recapture of the Western Wall following the Six Day War. Surely, the evangelical Christians who read this magazine are not book-burners. If by chance they vote with the magazine's editors, then it looks to me as if they vote with the American Civil Liberties Union and Americans for Democratic Action.

Every few years some bold and sincere Christian student at this university disagrees with a professor in class—usually about the professor's out-of-hand dismissal of Christianity. Members of the faculty, outraged, repeat the stories of these rare and uneven encounters for years on end, as if to prove that the crazies are everywhere, and gaining ground. The notion is, apparently, that these kids can't think for themselves. Or they wouldn't disagree.

NOW AGAIN the moustached leader asks us to move up. There is no harangue, so we move up. (This will be a theme all spring. The leaders want us closer together. Our instinct is to stand alone). From behind the tall fountain comes a wind; on several gusts we get sprayed. No one seems to notice.

We have time for one more song. The leader, perhaps sensing that no one likes him, blunders on. "I want you to pray this one through," he says. "We have a lot of people here from a lot of different fellowships, but we're all one body. Amen?" They don't like it. He gets a few polite Amens. We sing:

Bind us together, Lord, With a bond that can't be broken;
Bind us together, Lord, With love.

Everyone seems to be in a remarkably foul mood today. We don't like this song. There is no one here under seventeen, and, I think, no one here believes that love is a bond that can't be broken. We sing the song through three times; then it is time to go.

The leader calls after our retreating backs, "Hey, have a good day! Praise Him all day!" The kids around me roll up their eyes privately. Some groan; all flee.

THE NEXT MORNING is very cold. I am here early. Two girls are talking on the fountain's rim; one is part Indian. She says, "I've got all the Old Testament, but I can't get the New. I screw up the New." She takes a breath and rattles off a long list, ending with "Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi." The other girl produces a slow, sarcastic applause. I ask one of the girls to help me with the words to a song. She is agreeable, but says, "I'm sorry, I can't. I just became a Christian this year, so I don't know all the words yet."

The others are coming; we stand and separate. The boy with the moustache is gone, replaced by a big, serious fellow in a green down jacket. The bouncy girl is back with her guitar; she's wearing a skirt and wool knee socks. We begin, without any preamble, by singing a song that has so few words that we actually stretch one syllable over eleven separate notes. Then we sing a song in which the men sing one phrase and the women echo it. Everyone seems to know just what to do. In the context of our vapid songs, the lyrics of this one are extraordinary:

I was nothing before you found me. Heartache! Broken people! Ruined lives Is why you died on Calvary!

The last line rises in a regular series of half-notes. Now at last some people are actually singing; they throw some breath into the business. There is a seriousness and urgency to it: "Heartache! Broken people! Ruined lives . . . I was nothing."

We don't look like nothing. We look like a bunch of students of every stripe, ill-shaven, dressed up or down, but dressed warmly against the cold: jeans and parkas, jeans and heavy sweaters, jeans and scarves and blow-dried hair. We look ordinary. But I think, quite on my own, that we are here because we know this business of nothingness, brokenness, and ruination. We sing this song over and over.

Something catches my eye. Behind us, up in the science building, professors are standing alone at opened windows.

The long brick science building has three upper floors of faculty offices, thirty-two windows. At one window stands a bearded man, about forty; his opening his window is what caught my eye. He stands full in the open window, his hands on his hips his head cocked down toward the fountain. He is drawn to look, as I was drawn to come. Up on the building's top floor, at the far right window, there is another: an Asian-American professor, wearing a white shirt, is sitting with one hip on his desk, looking out and down. In the middle of the row of windows, another one, an old professor in a checked shirt, stands stock-still, his long, old ear to the air. Now another window cranks open, another professor—or maybe a graduate student—leans out, his hands on the sill.

We are all singing, and I am watching these five still men, my colleagues, whose office doors are surely shut—for that is the custom here: five of them alone in their offices in the science building who have opened their windows on this very cold morning, who motionless hear the Fundamentalists sing, utterly unknown to each other.

We sing another four songs, including the clapping song, and on which repeats, "This is the day which the Lord hath made; rejoice and be glad in it." All the professors but one stay by their opened windows, figures in a frieze. When after ten minutes we break off and scatter, each cranks his window shut. Maybe they have nine o'clock classes too.

I MISS a few sessions. One morning of the following week, I rejoin the Fundamentalists on the Square. The wind is blowing from the north; it is sunny and cold. There are several new developments.

Someone has blown up rubber gloves and floated them in the fountain. I saw them yesterday afternoon from my high office window, and couldn't quite make them out: I seemed to see hands in the fountain waving from side to side, like those hands wagging on springs which people stick in the back windows of their cars. I saw these many years ago in Quito and Guayaquil, where they were a great fad long before they showed up here. The cardboard hands said, on their palms, HOLA GENTE, hello people. Some of them just said HOLA, hello, with a little wave to the universe at large, in case anybody happened to be looking. It is like our sending radio signals to planets in other galaxies: HOLA, if anyone is listening. Jolly folk, these Ecuadorians, I thought.

Now, waiting by the fountain for the singing, I see that these particular hands are long surgical gloves, yellow and white, ten of them, tied at the cuff. They float upright and they wave, *hola, hola, hola;* and mill around like a crowd, bobbing under the fountain's spray and back again to the pool's rim, *hola.* It is a good prank. It is far too cold for the university's maintenance crew to retrieve them without turning off the fountain and putting on rubber boots.

From all around the Square, people are gathering for the singing. There is no way I can guess which kids, from among the masses crossing the Square, will veer off to the fountain. When they get here, I never recognize anybody except the leaders.

The singing began without ado as usual, but there is something different about it. The students are growing prayerful, and they show it this morning with a peculiar gesture. I'm glad they weren't like this when I first joined them, or I never would have stayed.

Last night there was an educational television special, part of "Middletown." It was a segment called "Community of Praise," and I watched it because it was about Fundamentalists. It showed a Jesus-loving family in the Midwest; the treatment was good and complex. This family attended the prayer meetings, healing sessions, and church services of an unnamed sect—a very low-church sect, whose doctrine and culture were much more low-church than those of the kids I sing with. When the members of this sect prayed, they held their arms over their heads and raised their palms, as if to feel or receive a blessing or energy from above.

Now today on the Square there is a new serious mood. The leaders are singing with their eyes shut. I am impressed that they can bang their guitars, keep their balance, and not fall into the pool. It is the same bouncy girl and earnest boy. Their eyeballs are rolled back a bit. I look around and see that almost everyone in this crowd of eighty or so has his eyes shut and is apparently praying the words of this song or praying some other prayer.

Now as the chorus rises, as it gets louder and higher and simpler im melody—

I exalt thee, I exalt thee, I exalt thee, Thou art the Lord—

then, at this moment, hands start rising. All around me, hands are going up—that tall girl, that blond boy with his head back, the red-headed boy up front, the girl with the MacDonald's jacket. Their arms rise as if pulled on strings. Some few of them have raised their arms very high over their heads and are tilting back their palms. Many, many more of them, as inconspicuously as possible, have raised their hands to the level of their chins.

What is going on? Why are these students today raising their palms in this gesture, when nobody did it last week? Is it because this gesture always accompanies this song, just as clapping accompanies other songs? Or is it, as I suspect, that these kids watched the widely publicized documentary last night just as I did, and are adopting, or trying out, the gesture?

It is a sunny morning, and the sun is rising behind the leaders and the fountain, so those students have their heads tilted, eyes closed, and palms upraised toward the sun. I glance up at the science building and think my own prayer: thank God no one is watching this.

The leaders cannot move around much on the fountain's rim. The girl has her eyes shut; the boy opens his eyes from time to time, glances at the neck of his guitar, and closes his eyes again.

When the song is over, the hands go down, and there is some desultory chatting in the crowd, as usual: can I borrow your library card? And, as usual, nobody looks at anybody.

All our songs today are serious. There is a feudal theme to them, or feudal analogue:

I will eat from abundance of your household. I will dream beside your streams of righteousness. You are my king. Enter his gates with thanksgiving in your heart; come

before his courts with praise. He is the king of kings. Thou art the lord.

All around me, eyes are closed and hands are raised. There is no social pressure to do this, or anything else. I've never known any group to be less cohesive, imposing fewer controls. Since no one looks at anyone, and since passersby no longer look, everyone out here is inconspicuous and free. Perhaps the palm-raising has begun because the kids realize by now that they are not on display; they're praying in their closets, right out here on the Square. Over the course of the next weeks, I will learn the the palm-raising is here to stay.

The sun is rising higher. We are singing our last song. We are praying. We are alone together.

He is my peace Who has broken down every wall . . .

When the song is over, the hands go down. The heads lower, the eyes open and blink. We stay still a second before we break up. We have been standing in a broad current; now we have stepped aside. We have dismantled the radar cups; we have closed the telescope's vault. Students gather their book bags and go. The two leaders step down from the fountain's rim and pack away their guitars. Everyone scatters. I am in no hurry, so I stay after everyone is gone. It is after nine o'clock, and the Square is deserted. The fountain is playing to an empty house. In the pool the cheerful hands are waving over the water, bobbing under the fountain's veil and out again in the current, *hola*.

American Evangelicalism: *Quo Vadis?*

by Vernon Grounds

I

Long months ago I received a rather flattering invitation. Would I participate in a conference of older evangelical leaders? Older? Yes, indeed, since I was born in 1914. As for being a leader, well, if in the judgment of the conference sponsors I could still so qualify, I as a semi-retiree would be happy to accept the invitation. So I found myself sometime later sharing in the discussions and deliberations of a group which included many individuals who are well-known in Christian circles. Looking back on our experiences, we pondered the probable needs and possible problems of younger Christians who will be leading the Church in the third millennium. It was an interesting experience. Though not endowed with prophetic foresight, we were in effect functioning as spiritual futurologists. A hazardous undertaking! Since God alone knows what will be happening in the years ahead, any attempt at prognosticating the shape of the events after A.D. 2000 runs the risk of presuming to possess a scintilla of omniscience.

I recalled that conference as I was interacting with James Davison Hunter's *Evangelicalism: The Coming Generation* (The University of Chicago Press, 1987). It is one of those books every self-respecting evangelical must read, as well as anyone concerned about religion *per se*. A sociologist who in 1983 published *American Evangelicalism: Contemporary Religion and the Quandary of Modernism*, Hunter is a probing analyst of Protestant orthodoxy, that species of the genus Christianity to which I personally adhere. So does Inter-Varsity as an organization. Hunter gives a report and an interpretation of the data he accumulated from surveys of students in representative evangelical colleges and seminaries. The statistical findings of his research are set forth in charts that even I with my anti-statistical bias could understand (p. 9ff; pp. 240–248). Included too are *verbatim* comments made by interviewees, candid responses to specific inquiries about beliefs and attitudes. All of this, I am sure, Hunter's fellow sociologists will certify as warranting his guarded forecasts regarding the future of evangelicalism.

Let me mention that, in seeking to ascertain the beliefs and attitudes of today's younger evangelicals, Hunter investigates their thinking regarding theology, work, morality, selfhood, family, and politics. Taking for granted the correctness of his statistics and the validity of his extrapolations, we are shut up to his tentative prediction: "The world of the coming generation of Evangelicals may bear little resemblance to the Evangelical world of many previous generations" (p. 15). It *may*. Hunter eschews the role of a dogmatic futurologist, heavily qualifying all his projections from the known of today to the unknown of tomorrow. Thus at the outset of his study, he admits that, "One may well wonder whether an attempt is going to be made to predict the future of Evangelicalism." And he informs us that "The answer is a qualified no." While insisting that prediction is "not the central concern here," he nevertheless acknowledges that "there is, then, a qualified sense in which we can speak of predicting the future of American evangelicalism" (p. 14).

And what does Hunter foresee? "American evangelicalism seems to face an uncertain future, a future as ambivalent as its own present nature" (p. 208). Assuredly—I am assuming that Hunter is sure of this—it will not disappear, but it *may* differ significantly from traditional evangelicalism and suffer a decline numerically. Though consistently refusing to dogmatize, Hunter at any rate ventures to assert that "the prospects are not at all bright" (ibid). Indeed, he even goes so far as to say that there are "reasonable grounds for pessimism" (p. 203). He holds, essentially, that, as an orthodoxy struggling to maintain continuity with its past and fidelity to its heritage, evangelicalism is inescapably subject to the modifying pressures of its social context. Modernity is bearing down inexorably on this paradigmatic form of orthodoxy as it is on all orthodoxies whether Roman Catholic, Jewish, Islamic, or Buddhist (pp. 214–236). The acids of modernity, as Walter Lippman termed them, include "philosophical (or scientific) and functional 'rationality,' intensive sociocultural pluralism, the bureaucratization of public life, the subjectivization of private life" (p. 182) and other corrosive elements summed up under the comprehensive rubric of secularization. Hence evangelicalism is not only "broadening" (p. 163); it is likewise "weakening" (p. 172) and losing its power of "binding address." In other words, it is less and less able "to communicate its ideals . . . in ways that are inwardly motivating or emotionally compelling" (p. 210). Pervaded by "movement and fluctuation, restlessness, fluster, and even turbulence" (p. 157), it is "a theological tradition in disarray" (p. 32). There are, conse-

Vernon Grounds is Editor of TSF Bulletin and president emeritus of Denver Seminary.

quently, "reasonable grounds for pessimism" regarding the future of evangelicalism.

At the same time, referring to the somewhat wistful speculations of "prominent experts in social science and social criticism" like Daniel Bell, Peter Berger, Robert Nisbet, and Alexandr Solzhenitsyn, who wonder about a religious renewal of culture, Hunter discusses such a possibility. He concedes that it is a possibility. Certainly! "Anything is possible," especially if one is willing to hypothesize "that extra-empirical dynamics could be at play." But it is at best a low-order possibility. Reluctantly, therefore, Hunter registers his agnostic opinion: "the likelihood that contemporary Protestantism will be a prominent and autonomous source of cultural renewal and contemporary society is not very high" (pp. 198–292).

II

At the same time that I was interacting with Hunter's analysis I was reading Mark Noll's *Between Faith and Criticism* (Harper and Row, 1986). Since he has already established himself as a sort of shining luminary in the American theological sky, Noll cannot accurately be called a rising star; and this new work, which is simply superb, will greatly enhance his reputation as a creative and critical historian. At my age, I only occasionally encounter a solid, substantial, scholarly book of an evangelical *genre* to which I react with unconditional enthusiasm. This is one of those mind-stretching rarities. Anyone, especially a student, who wants to understand American evangelicalism can do no better than invest as long as it may take to give *Between Faith and Criticism* a careful perusal. It deserves that by all means, not a casual retinizing.

Traditional evangelicals, though by no means in jot-and-tittle agreement on many subsidiary issues, have defended the Bible's supernatural origin and total trustworthiness while endeavoring to function at the same time as responsible and competent scholars. Noll suggests that their defensive scholarship has passed through four stages. First, they were full partners in the critical enterprise from 1880 to 1900. During this period, as Charles Briggs contended, "The great majority of professional Biblical scholars in the various universities and Theological Halls of the world" were demanding "a revision of traditional theories from the Bible on account of the large induction of new facts from the Bible and history" (p. 17). But the evangelicals, particularly members of the faculty at Princeton Theological Seminary, A. A. Hodge, Charles Hodge, Francis Paton, William Henry Green, and Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, felt no compulsion to abandon the traditional theories. Instead, with commanding scholarship they effectively contended for the validity of those theories in the academic arena. Through their efforts and those of other able evangelicals, the major Protestant denominations refused to countenance the new views. Even a moderate advocate of Biblical criticism like Briggs was officially suspended from the ministry and forced out of the Presbyterian communion.

In the second period, however, from 1900 to 1935, as Noll rehearses the story, there was a sad decline in evangelical learning. Radical change occurred in Protestant beliefs about Scripture. The professionalization of Biblical scholarship put into key faculty positions more and more critics who modified or abandoned traditional theories. Liberalism was now in the ascendancy. Evangelical scholars, increasingly estranged from *academia,* turned to a popular audience. *Pari passu, academia* paid less and less attention to their work if it was of high quality as in many cases it indisputably was. To be sure, some evangelical scholars continued to command the attention of their liberal counterparts. Princeton Seminary particularly was a stronghold of traditionalism which not even radical critics could dismiss as obscurant. Yet, Noll points out, "Princeton scholars were becoming increasingly isolated. Because their work was so forthrightly conservative, it no longer had much of a place in the academic world" (p. 47). One exception was J. Gresham Machen whose two major works, *The Origin of Paul's Religion* and *The Virgin Birth of Christ,* did elicit appreciative responses from liberal quarters. But, according to Noll's account, at this point in time Protestant Biblical scholarship had reached its nadir. It had acquired "a reputation for atavism, anti-institutionalism, and even anti-intellectualism" (p. 57).

Noll pauses in rehearsing the development of Biblical criticism among American evangelicals to pay high and deserved tribute to the British scholars who betwen 1860 and 1937 developed a believing criticism which effectively held its own against the onslaughts of a more radical criticism. He applauds the outstanding labors of the great Cambridge trio, Fenton A. J. Hort, B. F. Westcott and J. B. Lightfoot, who demonstrated that the most objective and meticulous scholarship could be employed in the cause of traditionalism. They "provided the most powerful model for critical study of the Bible by evangelicals" (p. 72). Later, through the strategy deliverately adopted by far-sighted leaders of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, evangelicals pursued grduate study at the university level and eventually gained significant academic appointments. All of this, when British theological publications were re-issued in the U.S.A., helped tremendously in the revitalization of American evangelical scholarship.

That revitalization, beginning in the mid-1930s, pushed beyond fundamentalism into a new evangelicalism, a term minted by Harold John Ockenga. Fresh and vigorous voices began to argue the case for Christian orthodoxy. Evangelicals—*neo* if one chooses to so designate them—like Carl Henry, Edward J. Carnell, and Bernard Ramm (these are only three of many more who might be mentioned), once more made Biblical Christianity a live-option academically. Roger Shinn could lampoon "the new generation of brainy fundamentalists who have studied at Harvard in order to learn the arguments they will spend the rest of their lives attacking," but evangelicals who had earned their doctorates at Harvard and other citadels of critical erudition could not be brushed aside with a humorous quip. They were prepared to engage non-evangelicals on their own ground with indisputable expertise. As George Ladd, one of the "Harvard fundamentalists" wrote in 1967, these are scholars "whose theological heritage is the older fundamentalism, who are convinced of the truthfulness of the fundamentals of the Christian faith but who do not reflect the basic defensive, apologetic stance of fundamentalism. They acknowledge their indebtedness to critical scholarship. They believe that if the traditional orthodox interpretation of the Gospel is true, it should be capable of defense, not by the negative technique of attacking other positions, but by expounding its own view in critical but creative interaction with other theologies. These modern successors of fundamentalism, for whom we prefer the term evangelicals, wish, in brief, to take their stand within the contemporary stream of philosophical, theological, and critical thought" (p. 121).

In a chapter which calls to mind Hunter's research, Noll documents statistically "The Recent Achievement" of resurgent evangelicalism, an achievement which even liberals have been constrained to acknowledge and applaud, with reservations of course. Noll affirms that "The emergence of an evangelical believing criticism is certainly one of the most significant developments of the recent history of American Biblical scholarship, quite apart from its importance for the internal history of evangelicalism" (p. 163). But Noll devotes

a long section of that same chapter to warning his fellow-evangelicals about the "perils" which they face: (1) the inescapable tendency, given the nature of their ecclesiastical communities, for academic arguments to become matters of public debate; (2) the "immense diversity, both theologically and academically among evangelicals"; and (3) the danger of reducing believing criticism to "a piously veneered replica of naturalistic scholarship" (pp. 166–173).

Noll also points out that evangelicals by and large lack a theology adequate and comprehensive enough to serve as a solid foundation for their Biblical convictions. They likewise lack a sufficiently sophisticated understanding of hermeneutics. Above all, they lack, in the words of David Wright, "a satisfactory doctrine of Scripture for an era of Biblical criticism." We must, Wright urges his co-believers, "work out what it means to be faithful *at one and the same time both* to a doctrinal approach to Scripture as the Word of God *and* to the historical treatment of Scripture as thee words of men" (p. 178).

What, then, returning now to Hunter's concern in *The Coming Generation*, may we speculate regarding the future of American evangelicalism? Unlike Hunter, Noll focuses on a single issue, that of Biblical scholarship. Evangelical scholars must "(1) speak out against the irresponsible Biblical interpretations to which the evangelical tradition is heir; (2) resist the distinctively American pressure to equate a Protestant doctrine of the priesthood of all believers with democratic individualism; (3) go beyond strife over Biblical inerrancy to create synthetic theology based on the best Biblical resources available; and (4) prosecute scholarship in the wider world without falling prey to the secularism which is so much a part of that world today" (pp. 193–194).

Noll ends his rich, challenging study on an almost Kierkegaardian note. Evangelical scholars need to "move beyond the external examination of Scripture to an integral appropriation of its message" (p. 197).

III

Well, what about the future of American evangelicalism? Having listened to these two perceptive diagnosticians, what can I add? Nothing really, except my own hunches which lack any statistical support. I recall that even Amos explained, "I was neither a prophet or a prophet's son," disclaiming any insight based on foresight and insisting that his predictive ministry was carried on by God's appointment and enablement. Lacking divine calling and enduement as a foreteller of the future, I can do little but evaluate the statistically-supported prognostications of scholars far more insightful than myself and, in addition, make some hesitant guesses. Sadly devoid of prescience, I am utterly devoid of omniscience. Yet that in no way embarrasses me as a finite creature. It reminds me, rather, of that text in the Letter of James, "Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow." In the realm of history which is the realm of human responsibility, unpredictability must characterize the outworking of events and invincible ignorance must characterize my prevision of the days and years still to dawn.

I do not by any means disparage, however, attempts to lift the veil on the future. A book like Howard Snyder and Daniel Runyon's *Foresight* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1986) makes us aware of ten trends which will possibly affect the destiny of evangelicalism. It certainly has value for educators and administrators. David McKenna's *Megatruth* (San Bernadino, California: Here's Life Publishers, 1987) likewise has value in showing how the Church can respond with spiritual effectiveness to John Naisbitt's *Megatrends*. But, appreciative as I am of these concerned attempts as well as those of Hunter and Noll, I gratefully take the GOK position. GOK? Ah, to unfold the significance of those three mysterious letters, I relate again that hackneyed anecdote concerning a world-famous diagnostician. One morning in a teaching hospital leading a group of interns on Grand Rounds, he stopped at a bedside, scrutinized the patient, examined him carefully, stepped back and solemnly said, "Gentlemen, I'm afraid it's a case of GOK." The interns were puzzled. "GOK? GOK?" Probably some rare disease. Noticing their puzzlement, the diagnostician with a slight smile explained, "GOK means God only knows."

And only God knows the future of American evangelicalism, whether it will continue to flourish or whether it will decline. Like all space-time phenomena, its as-yet-unwritten history is humanly unpredictable. It may suffer the fate of once dynamic Christian movements and organizations. Donald MacKay, noted British physicist and neuroscientist, in an address to fellow-believers, warned against an evangelical triumphalism by citing some instances of spiritual declension in modern Christianity. "Consider then the Free Kirk of Scotland in 1842, resounding with the passionate evangelical orthodoxy of Chalmers. Who would have predicted that by 1893 the same Kirk would be riddled with German liberalism? Look at the Evangelical Student Volunteer Movement of last century. Could its founders have foreseen how it would be gradually transformed into the Student Christian Movement (SCM) that extruded Inter Varsity Fellowship (IVF) into independent existence, and how it would latterly repudiate the very concept of Christian mission that gave rise to it? Or ask Dutch evangelicals what has happened to the Gereformeerde Kerk of the stalwart Abraham Kuyper."[1] The same kind of change for the worse may occur in American evangelicalism. GOK.

On the other hand, American evangelicalism, to use a phrase from the King James Version, may "go from strength to strength." GOK. Unpredictably, responding to the Spirit of God, evangelicals may make Biblical Christianity more spiritually and culturally relevant and powerful than it has ever been. GOK. Think of the astonishing renaissance of Christianity in the Soviet Union, a miracle of not just survival but resurgence which has elicited this comment from Malcolm Muggeridge:

> A wonderful sign has been vouchsafed us, one of the great miracles of the story of Christendom. This sign is the amazing renewal of the Christian faith in its purest possible form in, of all places, the countries that have been drastically subjected to the oppression and brainwashing and general influence of the first overtly atheistic and materialistic regime to exist on earth. This is a fact. I should say myself that it is the most extraordinary single fact of the twentieth century. . . . If when I was a young correspondent in Moscow in the early thirties you had said to me that it would be possible for the Soviet regime to continue for sixty years with its policy of doing everything possible to extirpate the Christian faith, to discredit its record and its originator, and that after this there would emerge figures like Solzhenitsyn speaking the authentic language of the Christian, grasping such great Christian truths as the cross, in a way that few people do in our time, I would have said, 'No, it's impossible, it can't be.' But I would have been wrong . . . Recently, we were making a television programme about the anti-God movement in the communist countries and were filming a selection of propaganda posters. The early ones all showed old peasants, old has-been people, but the latest posters showed young people as the ones being

foolishly deluded by religion. So contrary to what might be expected, this fantastic steamroller trying to destroy every trace of Christian faith has failed. All the efforts of the most powerful government that's ever existed in the world, in the sense of taking to itself the most power over the citizenry, has been unable to shape these people into the sort of citizens it wants them to be. Of all the signs of our times, this is the one that should rejoice the heart of any Christian most, and for that matter of anyone who loves the creativity of our mortal existence.[2]

God, I am constrained to think, delights in surprises, forcing finite foretellers—except when He grants them as He did with the Biblical prophets a God's-eye perspective on history—to admit that the future is unpredictable.

But at least three plus consequences flow from our ignorance. First, that ignorance induces a spirit of humility and moderates any claim to predictive pretensions—or ought to do so. Second, our ignorance is actually an antidote against unwarranted gloom and despair. Thus Martin Marty quotes an affirmation which he heard at a conference, "We don't know enough about the future to be absolutely pessimistic." And since we don't, a relative optimism is in order rather than an absolute pessimism. Third, our ignorance inspires us to take seriously our responsibility for cooperating with God in bringing about a future much more substantially fulfills the petition, "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Writing on "Future Directions for American Evangelicals," theologian John Jefferson Davis of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary gives us some guidelines regarding the shape and thrust of our lives and activities as we move towards and into the third millennium if as a Christian entity we are to make an increasing impact. "As American evangelicals we must re-affirm our commitment to the complete truthfulness and authority of Scripture, but with a focus not on the agenda set by the historical-critical method but rather on the coming contest with our world religions—with Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam; that to our knowledge of the Holy Spirit as Illuminator, Regenerator and Sanctifier we have the knowledge of the Spirit as Healer and Liberator and Spirit of praise; and that our missionary agenda be re-oriented toward the needs of the hidden peoples, and especially toward the megacities of the third world." Then with the optimism of a postmillennarian which is his eschatological stance, Davis concludes: "This is indeed an exciting time in which to be a Christian. It is an exciting time to be serving Christ in the ministry. I believe that the time of the greatest expansion of the Christian Church in all of human history is just ahead of us. May God help us, individually and collectively, to be on the cutting edge of Christ's Kingdom as we approach the twenty-first century."[3] Perhaps not too many of us are that optimistic, but why not say with Robert Browning, "The best is yet to be"? Or to resurrect a watchword of an older evangelicalism, "The future is as bright as the promises of God."

Quo vadis, American evangelicalism? GOK.

1. Donald M. Mackay, "The Health of the Evangelical Body," *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation,* Volume 38, Number 4, December 1986, p. 259.
2. Malcolm Muggeridge, *The End of Christendom* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1980), pp. 38–39, 41–42.
3. John Jefferson Davis, "Future Directions For American Evangelicals," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society,* 29/4, December 1986, p. 467.

From Truth to Authority to Responsibility: The Shifting Focus of Evangelical Hermeneutics, 1915-1986 (Part II)

by Douglas Jacobsen

The Post-Classic Evangelical Generation: The Hermeneutics of Responsibility

The third generation of Evangelical hermeneuts I would like to discuss is the Post-Classical generation. The central metaphor of hermeneutics for this generation seems to be the concept of responsibility. Let me emphasize the words "seem to be" in the preceding sentence, and let me do that for three reasons. First, this new generation of Evangelicals is still in the process of congealing and it is hard to photograph this moving target. Second, Post-Classic Evangelicalism, as it is emerging into the form of a community of biblical interpreters, has taken on a multifaceted and pluralistic form; thus, it is more difficult to isolate a center of hermeneutical concern in this generation than it was for earlier more uniform Evangelical movements. And third, Post-Classic Evangelicalism was brought to birth in a different manner than the two other generations already examined. Post-Classical Evangelicalism was pushed into existence as much as it developed as a positive reaction to changes taking place in American society. The rise of Post-Classic Evangelicalism, needs, then to be understood in the context of this dialectical process. Let me begin by discussing the positive roots of the movement—its reaction to the historical experience in the years immediately prior to 1975.

Post-Classic Evangelicalism's hermeneutic of responsibility arose partially as a reaction to the preceding fifteen years of American history. That period had seen the demise of America's authoritative status of "policeman of the world." Overseas America was being defeated by (in typical rhetoric of the period) a "third rate nation" (i.e., Vietnam), and at home the country was divided over issues of war, race, and age. The expansive if troubled optimism of the fifties and early sixties was shattered. Americans were asking what had gone wrong. The world which had once seemed so agreeable to American interests and values now seemed imexplicably truculent. Rather than merely pronouncing answers, many Americans were asking questions—profound questions.

The changes that confronted Evangelicals in the mid-seventies were not limited to the political-cultural realm. Amer-

Douglas Jacobsen is Professor of Theology at Messiah College, Grantham, PA.

ica's religious atmosphere was also changing, and once again these changes confronted Evangelicalism with a challenge. By 1975 Evangelicalism could no longer claim public leadership of conservative Christianity in America. A resurgent Fundamentalism challenged Evangelical leadership from within the ecclesiastical ranks, while a popular wave of conservative religious revival (i.e., the Jesus people, etc.) challenged evangelicalism from outside the realm of institutionalized religion. Compounding these developments was the interdenominational charismatic renewal (again a non-Evangelical conservative religious movement) and the increasing impulse of many mainline conservative Christians to stay in their own denominations and fight to restore the prominence of conservative theological leadership within those denominations. By 1975 Evangelicalism could hardly claim a monopoly on evangelical Christianity in America.

Perhaps even more disturbing to Evangelicals than any of these external developments were changes within the Evangelical community itself. On a superficial level, the question was the degree to which many of the large social questions of the period had penetrated the walls of Evangelicalism and had to come to divide that house against itself—issues of social justice, women's rights, homosexual rights, etc. On a deeper level, however, the question was whether or not the intrusion of these specific issues had opened the door to a wholesale invasion of Evangelicalism by the questioning anti-authoritarian spirit of the age. The wall of separation that Fundamentalism had built and that Classic Evangelicalism had enlarged, modified, and civilized seemed to be crashing down. The boundary line of the acceptable community of interpreters—the boundary line between the believing community and the public to be evangelized—seemed to be unclear and/or full of holes.

For years evangelicals had been defending what they took to be orthodox reading of the Bible to various audiences in various ways. Now all of a sudden from both within and without the ranks came unignorable charges that Evangelicalism's orthodoxy was in numerous ways deficient. Evangelicals were charged by others, and they charged each other, with being hypocritical in social ethics, with being captive to the materialistic spirit of the age, with being insufficiently informed about or concerned with worship, with being woefully ignorant of the larger historical traditions of Christianity, with being prejudiced against all non-white non-male non-Western thought, and with being inferior scholars. The list could be extended. It was not only the Evangelical community in the broad sense that was being asked these questions, individual evangelicals felt the pressure in their own individual souls. No better personal account of this can be found than that of Bernard Ramm in the opening lines of his *After Fundamentalism*:

> I had just finished a lecture on my version of American evangelical theology. When I was asked by a shrewd listener to define American evangelical theology more precisely, I experienced inward panic. Like a drowning man who sees parts of his life pass before him at great speed (an experience I have had), so my theology passed before my eyes. I saw my theology as a series of doctrines picked up here and there, like a rag-bag collection. To stutter out a reply to that question was one of the most difficult things I have ever had to do on a public platform.
>
> The experience set me to reflection. Why was my theology in the shape it was? The answer that kept coming back again and again was that theologically I was a product of the orthodox-liberal debate that has gone on for a century. It is a debate that has warped evangelical theology.[28]

Ramm's experience has been the experience of countless other Evangelicals. None of these individuals, or very few at the most, want to deny any of the old Evangelical orthodoxy, but the old picture just doesn't hang together for them any more. Evangelicalism, at least in its classic form, seems skewed. These people believe it is deficient. Somehow contemporary Evangelicals have to come up with a new model, and many sense it has to be done from scratch. As Ramm expresses well, such a task is not easy, and in the initial stages of such a reconstruction one really can do little but stutter.

While these neophyte Post-Classic Evangelicals were trying to stammer out their first attempts at an answer to the problems they saw, they were quickly confronted by their angry Classic Evangelical older brothers. In the mid-seventies, with the influence of Evangelicalism seemingly waning, the vocal uncertainties and questioning of the emerging Post-Classic generation of Evangelical hermeneuts seemed like nothing so much as treason. Classic Evangelicalism struck back at what they (rightfully in part) saw as an attack on themselves. The most vocal of these defenders of the old way was Harold Lindsell in his *The Battle for the Bible*. That book begins as follows:

> I regard the subject of this book, biblical inerrancy to be the most important theological topic of this age. A great battle rages about it among the people called evangelicals. I did not start the battle and wish it were not essential to discuss it. The only way to avoid it would be to remain silent. And silence on this matter would be a grave sin.[29]

What Lindsell felt forced to break his silence about was the fact that numerous individuals who wanted to claim the name Evangelical no longer looked to him as if they really were Evangelicals. Lindsell, following the typical language of Classic Evangelicalism, made infallibility the verbal rapier of his book, and because of that the book sounds largely like a rehash of earlier debates within Classic Evangelicalism. Beneath that linguistic continuity, however, a new debate was brewing—a debate over hermeneutics.

Lindsell was clear on this point. "Those who advocate inerrancy," he said, "take the Bible in its plain and obvious sense."[30] In contrast to these real Evangelicals, Lindsell argued, a new group of individuals had appeared within "the people called evangelicals" who sought to squirm out from underneath the authority of the Bible through the use of "hermeneutics." Lindsell did not necessarily "un-Christian" these people—in fact, at one point he calls them "earnest and sincere men"[31]—but he doesn't trust their motives. He would gladly allow them to believe what they would, but he was unwilling to grant them any claim to "the badge" (his term) Evangelical. His argument is standard fare Classic Evangelicalism. These new breed Evangelicals may still look Evangelical, but it is only a question of time: Ultimately they or their progeny will fall away from the historic orthodox Christian faith. These contemporary so-called Evangelicals have consciously or unconsciously claimed a critical autonomy over the biblical text through their hermeneutical exercises. Once that move is made, any appeal to authority one might want to make is gone, and Evangelicalism, at least as the Classic generation of Evangelicals defined it, is over.

Before proceeding, two questions need to be asked and answered. In his book Lindsell seems to assume that these

new breed Evangelicals are sneaky people. They seem to want to hide their real opinions behind a label that doesn't fit. Why, he asks, haven't these new-breed Evangelicals announced their agenda clearly and in full public view as preceding generations of evangelicals have? Aren't they really only trying to delude both themselves and others that they are not either heretics or on the slippery slope to heresy?

I think the answer to the first question is implicit in the question itself. This is a "post-classic" generation, living in a post-heroic age. It is not out to storm the world with the Bible. It is merely trying to make sense of both the world and the Bible. To ask Post-Classic Evangelicalism to be clear and complete in its ideas may, at this point in history, simply be a request impossible to meet. I would go even further. I think most Post-Classic Evangelicals harbor a certain jealousy of the self-confident authoritative mood of their Classic Evangelical predecessors. That authoritative mood, however, has simply ceased to be an option for this new generation. To a significant degree, the emergence of Post-Classic Evangelicalism can be described as a fall from relative certitude to relative uncertainty, and uncertainty has never been a good ground from which to launch a major offensive on a still prominent religious tradition.

With regard to the second question—are these new Evangelicals heretics?—the basic answer is simple: No, they are not—even Lindsell admits that. However, Post-Classic Evangelicals have made Classic Evangelicals extremely uneasy, and that uneasiness at times has undoubtedly been strong enough for some Classic Evangelicals for them logically to postulate the necessity of a heretical source. Why are there such frictions between these two evangelical groups? My hunch is this: Post-Classic Evangelicalism's authority hermeneutic is in and of itself the most telling critique anyone can make of the earlier movement. The appeal to authority rests on a certain sense of self-evidency. If that self-evidency evaporates, authority becomes no more than shouting in the wind. And that is exactly what many Evangelicals felt like they were doing anyway during the early and mid-seventies—a time when the influence of "official" Evangelicalism was still on the ebb. The rise of Post-Classic Evangelicalism not only rocked the boat, it hit home.

Seen in this light, Lindsell's book stands simultaneously as a last hurrah for Classic Evangelicalism and as a prodding stick that forced Post-Classic Evangelicals to state their case. And, once flushed into the open—once they had been asked that disturbing question by the shrewd listener and had beginning to be nudged to the door by their Classic Evangelical colleagues—Post-Classic Evangelicals did begin to stammer out their answers. Not all of them said the same thing. But all of them seem to operate with the same basic dictate in mind: The age of authority has passed, and a new age of Evangelical responsibility has dawned.

One of the earliest coherent statements of Post-Classic Evangelicalism's hermeneutic of responsibility is Robert K. Johnston's *Evangelicals at an Impasse*. The content of the book revolves around three particular issues of debate within evangelicalism—"women's role in the church and family, social ethics, and homosexuality"—but the heart of the book is hermeneutics. And, in his concern with hermeneutics, Johnston sets his sights clearly against Classic Evangelicalism's hermeneutic of authority:

> Beyond my desire to address specific theological issues [i.e., those mentioned above] and to suggest directions in which evangelicals might profitably move, I have attempted to give voice to this book to a more basic and persistent concern. That evangelicals, all claiming a common Biblical norm, are reaching contradictory theological formulations on many of the major issues they are addressing suggests the problematic nature of their present understanding of theological interpretation. To argue that the Bible is authoritative, but to be unable to come to anything like agreement on what it says (even with those who share an evangelical commitment), is self-defeating.[32]

Johnston's critique of Classic Evangelicalism sounds hauntingly like Classic Evangelicalism's earlier critique of Fundamentalism. Unable to agree on the truth they possessed, Fundamentalists backed off into their own corners and later came out fighting. The same scenario was now repeating itself among those critics of Fundamentalism, and the divisive issue was authority. Johnston's suggested cure was to replace authority with a new center—one that would unite rather than divide. That center was hermeneutics, and it was hermeneutics done with a pluralistic sense of responsibility. Johnston's intention was not to do away with all talk of authority, but to provide authority with a substantial and real foundation that would make such appeals meaningful. For Johnston, that foundation is seen as residing in the form of a rough, but responsibly arrived at, consensus within the accepted community of interpreters. Johnston pleads:

> . . .surely a commitment to biblical authority is a commitment to take this common task of theological interpretation seriously—more seriously than we are doing at the present time. It is a commitment to hold together with those who share a similar norm, to carry on mature conversations, to affirm a oneness in the gospel while working together on the theological issues that currently divide. Evangelicals need the collective wisdom of the best minds and spirits working together on the theological task of the church. Problems in theological formulations will prove ongoing, but the interpretive project will have a much better chance of success in the clear air of fellowship than in an atmosphere fouled by competition.
>
> The common interpretive task entails risks, but such is a necessary ingredient of a commitment to biblical authority.[33]

For Johnston, this above described sense of comradeship, while necessary in a Post-Classic Evangelical hermeneutic, is not a sufficient criterion of validity in interpretation. We need not only to be responsible to each other, Johnston states, we also need to be responsible to the three "constitutive theological components" that are part of any biblical hermeneutical exercise. These are the Bible, the Christian tradition, and contemporary culture. According to Johnston, it is the renewal of "careful, creative, communal listening to these theological sources" that will provide a fresh start for Evangelical biblical hermeneutics. He explains his ideal as follows:

> The word "hermeneutics" (Greek, hermeneuein), as used in the New Testament, means to expound or to translate. It is particularly in the latter sense of translation, or "bridging the gap" (Berkouwer), that the theologian is indeed a hermeneutician. Theologians must build bridges with their interpretation between the biblical writers, the church fathers, and contemporary Christians. Their interpretations will suceed only if they are based on the sound analysis of their constituative theological components.[34]

Johnston's image of hermeneutics as bridge-building (with

the hermeneutics of responsibility it entails) has recently been echoed by John Stott. In his new book on the art of preaching, entitled *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century*, he states:

> It is because preaching is not exposition only but communication, not just the exegesis of a text but the conveying of a God-given message to living people who need to hear it, that I am going to develop a different metaphor to illustrate the essential nature of preaching. It is non-biblical in the sense that it is not explicitly used in Scripture, but I hope to show that what it lays upon us is a fundamentally biblical task. The metaphor is that of bridge-building.[35]

Stott especially places one more overlay of responsibility on top of the two already outlined by Johnston. Post-Classic Evangelicals needs to be responsible to each other, they need to be responsible to the three theologically constitutive sources of the hermeneutician's work, and (Stott's addition) they need to take upon themselves the responsibility to communicate. Communication in this context takes on a rather pointed meaning, I think. Post-Classic Evangelicals do not see that the message of the Bible actually gets communicated—and communicated not just in a simplified manner (i.e., one which maintains an air of authority by avoiding complexity), but in a manner that takes the full mutlifacetedness of the text and the reader into serious consideration. What Johnston and Stott are both saying is that we can no longer deceive ourselves into believing that we should just read the Bible in a simple and objective manner and then communicate our findings to a passive audience. We are all limited in our perceptions and judgments and because of this we need outside checks on our interpretive conclusions. Rather than always announcing the truth, we need to listen to how our voices echo off the walls of the evangelical community of interpreters with which we have come to align ourselves—of which we find ourselves a part. We need also to listen to other echoes rebounding off those walls. And, we need to enlarge the walls of the house (at least historically speaking) well beyond the narrow confines they currently define.

I think that the picture of hermeneutics presented by Johnston and Stott defines the core of what responsibility is coming to mean in Post-Classic Evangelicalism. There are, however, at least a few other voices that need to be heard if our picture of Post-Classic hermeneutics is to be really well-rounded. Very briefly let me survey just three of these alternative renditions of the hermeneutics of responsibility currently being voiced.

One alternative rendering of Evangelical hermeneutical responsibility comes from evangelical Anabaptism. Perhaps the leading figure in this category is Ron J. Sider, but others could be mentioned (e.g., Donald Dayton, Jim Wallis, John H. Yoder). This version of the Post-Classic Evangelical hermeneutic of responsibility runs roughly as follows: The problem facing Evangelicalism and its difficulty with interpreting the Bible stems primarily from an unwillingness really to do what the Bible says. What we need is not better exegesis or scholarship of any kind, but we need to do what the Bible says. In that doing, the message of the Bible will both become clear and our message will become authoritative. The truth of the Bible is not an abstract academic truth about the world, but truth about human relations—both with each other and with God. One of the first indications that this group represented a significant force within Evangelicalism was the Chicago Declaration of 1973. Since that time the influence of this type of thought has only spread. Currently I think it is safe to say that concerns regarding the responsibility actually to live with our interpretations of the Bible has leavened all of contemporary Evangelicalism—it is no longer just an Anabaptist concern.

A different explication of contemporary Evangelical responsibility hermeneutics come from William J. Abraham. Rather than seeking (like Johnston) to overcome the current disunities within evangelicalism, Abraham suggests the opposite. He calls for making a virtue out of our vice of division. The real problem would be to "seek to heal [our] wounds too quickly." Abraham is very pessimistic about the Classic Evangelical approach to the Bible. That experiment, he says, simply has failed. Evangelicalism currently faces "an internal crises unlikely to be resolved by further tinkering from within." At this point in time, "evangelicals need to turn to radically alternative models of their own heritage."[36]

Not surprisingly Abraham, himself a Wesleyan, turns to John Wesley to find that radical, yet still evangelical, model for restructuring Evangelicalism. His suggestion is that we should set aside uniformity as a goal, recenter our sense of connectedness on the Bible alone, and take a deep breath of Wesley's catholicity of vision. Then within this perspective, we should strive for the fullest and most nuanced and most traditionally distinctive presentations of the full message of the Bible we can muster. We are family, Abraham says. We are kin. Let us then get about the process of presenting, as best we can from our different perspectives within the large evangelical umbrella, the message of the gospel to a world hungry for spiritual renewal. None of our traditions (e.g., Calvinist, Wesleyan, Anabaptist) is identical with the truth of the gospel. Abraham even allows the possibility that evangelicalism as a whole is misconceived. All "evangelicals have a duty to acknowledge the experimental character of their position[s]. All should recognize the contested character of the heritage, revise the present climate of opinion accordingly, and then proceed to provoke one another to love and good works." The sense of hermeneutical responsibility that Abraham envisions is one of theological and academic excellency in the presentation of our alternative views of the Bible combined with the responsibility to be open to, and non-judgmental of, alternative views. It is the responsibility of undefensive scholarship combined with a responsibility to be about the work of the kingdom in love.[37]

A third variant which attempts to outline a hermeneutic of responsibility for Post-Classic Evangelicals is presented by Harvie Conn of Westminster Seminary. Conn is a former missionary and brings to his work all the typical traits one would expect from such an individual. He is open to other cultures

Perhaps the hermeneutic of responsibility runs the risk of relativism, but I don't think that it is a necessary correlate of the position. In due time, the weaknesses of this movement will undoubtedly make themselves known, just as the weaknesses of Fundamentalism and Classic Evangelicalism made themselves evident in the past.

and their insights into the scripture, and he does not think Western modes of thought and theology should be crammed down non-Western spiritual mouths. But Conn goes beyond these typical missionary concerns. Not only do we need to act more politely toward the cultures whose members we seek to evangelize, we need to learn from these Christians—and by learning, Conn does not just mean to be encouraged by these peoples' joyful and zealous piety. He means actually to learn—to garner cognitive input from these non-first-world Christians. Responsibility means, for Conn, the development of "multiperspectivalism [as] a style of life, a hermeneutic, a way of thinking." When Evangelicals adopt this style of hermeneutics theology will become, he says, "more of a dynamic process than one virtually completed in the West."[38]

In many ways Conn's position brings us full circle back to Johnston's from an international perspective. Like Johnston, Conn has a triad that should govern our interpretation of the Bible: the normative position of the Bible, social time and place, and the existential perspective of our humanity as images of God." These three, Conn says, are to be woven together into a "symphonic theology," an artistic creation. Here again Conn's language echoes that of Johnston, or Johnston's echoes Conn's. Whichever came first is no longer the issue, however. Echoes of responsibility in one form or another are currently reverberating off the walls of evangelicalism all around the world. In all these cases there is also the sense that that hermeneutical responsibility must be artistically conceived, skillfully crafted, and workably presented.

Conclusion

It is necessary to ask how this new Post-Classic hermeneutic of responsibility will help Evangelicals function in the contemporary world. At this point this question must be phrased in the future tense, and my speculations will be short. I see primarily four things that this new hermeneutical metaphor might enable Evangelicals to do.

The first relates to international developments. By the end of this decade a majority of the Christians in the world will live in the non-West. If American Evangelicals want to relate in a positive way to this majority of the world Christian population, it will be necessary to divest themselves of even more of their pretensions to biblical hermeneutical objectivity than they have already. The need in the future will be to learn about the Bible from our non-Western brothers and sisters. A hermeneutic of responsibility opens the door to those developments.

A second positive function that this hermeneutic of responsibility might have in the future is to help Evangelicals engage the political questions of the day from a more adequate base than they currently do. If Evangelicals really become willing to pay hermeneutical attention to comtemporary culture, that will provide a point of contact with the larger culture that is presently lacking in much Evangelical political theologizing.

Third, I think the humble admission that hermeneutics is difficult work can only benefit a people that claim to be nothing more than sinners saved by grace. Evangelicalism has always made a better ideology of service than of rule. Claims to posess either absolute truth or absolute authority can so easily be bent in a domineering direction. In an age that has more than its fair share of totalitarian-oriented regimes, an American witness of Evangelical service can certainly do no harm.

Finally, I think that a metaphor of responsibility has opened the doors of communication between evangelicals and non-evangelicals to a degree unprecedented since the turn of the century. This could be either a blessing or a boon, but I think it is an advance nonetheless.

So much for the good. Is there a down side risk in all this? Is there, as the editorial from *Christianity Today* at the start of this article suggested, the potential for cataclysm in these changes? The answer is an obvious yes. But if it is too early to adequately document the strengths of the position, it is too early to delineate its weaknesses. Perhaps the hermeneutic of responsibility runs the risk of relativism, but I don't think that it is a necessary correlate of the position. In due time, the weaknesses of this movement will undoubtedly make themselves known, just as the weaknesses of Fundamentalism and Classic Evangelicalism made themselves evident in the past. For now, however, a new generation of Evangelicals seems content to live with this new hermeneutic and to see where it will gradually lead. After all, the changes taking place do "appear quite imperceptible" when viewed "from day to day." Only "in the span of a generation" will it become apparent where our decisions of today have led us.

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[1] I use the term "evangelical" in at least three ways in this article, let me distinguish these uses in the following manner. When I use the term with a lower case "e," I am referring to that long-standing pattern of American Christian religious piety that emphasizes the need to conserve the received formulations of theology and that stresses the importance of warm-hearted religion and the experience of conversion. Evangelicalism when capitalized refers to that primarily northern coalition of religious groups that came into existence at the end of the nineteenth century in reaction to a perceived growing threat of liberalism within the northern churches. The various other Evangelical movements I identify (Evangelical with an "E" and a preceding adjective) exist primarily as historical sub-groups within Evangelicalism, but at times they reach outside Evangelicalism to recover other aspects of the evangelical tradition.

[2] For John Warwick Montgomery see *Faith Founded on Fact* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1978); for D.A. Carson see his essay "Recent Developments in the Doctrine of Scripture" in D.A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge, editors, *Hermeneutics, Authority, and Canon* (Grand Rapids: Zondervon, Academie Books, 1986); Robert K. Johnston is discussed below, see pp. pp. xx-x.

[3] See J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1946), pp. 6-7.

[4] For this quote and for the best survey of this period as a whole see George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 219.

[5] For a more detailed discussion of these dynamics see Marsden. For special attention to the question of the separation of the Fundamentalist hermeneutical community from that of the liberal and academic communties see Mark Noll, *Between Faith and Criticism* (New York: Harper and Row, 1986).

[6] *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to Truth*, edited by R.A. Torrey, A.C. Dixon, and others (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1972; reprint of the 1917 edition published by the Bible Institute of Los Angeles), p. 11.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 42.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] R.A. Torrey, *The Christ of the Bible* (New York: Geroge H. Doran Company, 1924), p. 12.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. vi.

[13] J. Gresham Machen, *What is Christianity?*, edited by N.B. Stonehouse (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1951), see Chapter One, "What is Christianity?," p. 22.

[14] J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1946; originally published 1923), p. 7.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 6.

[16] See Marsden, p. 216.

[17] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), "Religion as a Cultural System," p. 108.

[18] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 2nd edition (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), p. 263.

[19] See *Evangelical Action: A Report of the Organization of the National Association of Evangelicals for United Action*, compiled and edited by the Executive Committee of the NAE (Boston: United Action Press, 1942). For doctrinal basis of the organization see pp. 102-3.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 38.

[21] See "Reinhold Niebuhr's View of Scripture" in E. J. Carnell, *The Case for Biblical Christianity*, edited by Ronald H. Nash (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1969), pp. 97-110.

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 46.

[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 97-8.

[24] Carl F.H. Henry, *The Protestant Dilemma (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949), pp.* 22-3.

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 38.

[26] Dewey M. Beegle, *The Inspiration of Scripture* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), p. 131.

[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 180-8, passim.

[28] Bernard Ramm, *After Fundamentalism: The Future of Evangelical Theology* (New York: Harper and Row, 1983), p. 1.

[29] Harold Lindsell, *The Battle for the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), p. 13.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 205.

[32] Robert K. Johnston, *Evangelicals at an Impasse* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1979), p. vii.

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 147.

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 151.

[35] John R.W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1982), p. 137.

[36] William J. Abraham, *The Coming Great Revival* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984), pp. 27, 49.

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 98.

[38] Harvie M. Conn, *Eternal Word and Changing Worlds* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), pp. 337-8.

The Theology of Acts

by F.F. Bruce

Some reviewers of the earlier edition of Prof. Bruce's commentary critiqued the lack of attention paid to the theology of Acts. Dr. Bruce writes, "The commentary remains primarily historical and linguistic, but at least some awareness is shown (it is hoped) in the new edition that there is a theological dimension to the work of Luke."

Among the theologians of the NT Luke does not rank with Paul, John or the writer to the Hebrews, but he is a theologian in his own right, bearing witness to the common faith of the church of his day with emphases which are distinguishable from those of the other NT writers.

1. *The doctrine of God.* God is the creator of the universe (Ac. 4:24; 14:15; 17:24), the sustainer of his creatures (14:17; 17:25b), the disposer of time and space (14:16; 17:26 f.), and the judge of all (17:31). He must not be thought of as inhabiting material structures (7:48-50; 17:24b). He manifested his saving power in the history of Israel (13:17-22) and declared his will and purpose through Moses and the prophets (2:17-21, 25-28, 34 f.; 3:21-25; 4:25 f.; 13:33-35, 40 f., 47; 15:15-18; 26:22 f., 27; 28:25-27), and in due course fulfilled both these lines of revelation by sending Jesus (3:26; 13:32 f.).

2. *The doctrine of Christ.* Jesus, the one sent by God, is the expected Messiah of Israel (Ac. 2:36; 3:20; 5:42; 8:5; 17:3b; 18:5), the son of David (2:30 f.; 13:23; cf. Rom. 1:3). He is Lord (Ac. 2:36; 10:36), the Son of God (9:20), the prophet like Moses (3:22 f.; 7:37), the Servant of the Lord (3:13, 26; 4:30; 8:32 f.), and (once) the Son of man (7:52). It is doubtful if we should think of distinct "christologies" associated with these various titles. Some oscillation between one and another was as natural in the apostolic age as in later generations, since these titles, whatever their origin, were all applied now to one and the same historical person.[1] Jesus is also called the holy and righteous one (Ac. 3:14; cf. 7:52; 22:14), the author of life (3:15), leader and savior (5:31). As the Christ, he was destined to suffer (Ac. 3:18; 17:3a; 26:23), a statement dependent on the identification of the Christ with the suffering servant (cf. the quotation of Isa. 53:7 f. in Ac. 8:32 f.). He was rejected by the leaders of his people and handed over to the Gentiles, by whom he was crucified (Ac. 2:23 f.; 3:13-15; 13:28)—is the absence of any mention of Gentiles in 10:39 a tactful omission before an audience consisting of a Roman centurian and his household? He was buried (Ac. 13:29), but raised from death by God and seen by his disciples (Ac. 2:32; 3:15; 10:40 f.; 13:30 f., etc.), and exalted to God's right hand (2:34-36; 5:31; 7:55 f.). The name of Jesus is sometimes given almost hypostatic status (3:16; 4:30; 26:9), like the name of Yahweh in the deuteronomic writings of the OT (e.g. Dt. 12:5, 11), especially when Jesus is represented as still powerfully at work with and through his witnesses: "there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Ac. 4:12). He is to return (Ac. 3:20) as God's agent in the judgment of the loving and the dead (10:42; 17:31a). He is the true object of faith which brings forgiveness and salvation (2:38; 10:43; 13:38 f.; 16:31; 19:4). He is a proper recipient of prayer; cf. 7:59, where the dying Stephen commits his spirit to the "Lord Jesus" in almost the same terms as Jesus used on the cross when he committed his spirit to God his Father (Lk. 23:46, quoting Ps. 31:5).[2]

3. *The doctrine of the Spirit.*[3] The Holy Spirit was promised by God in advance through the prophets (Ac. 2:16-21); hence he is called "the promise of the Father" (1:4). He was promised afresh by Jesus in resurrection (1:4 f., 8; 11:16); he was received by the ascended Jesus to pour out on his followers, who received him accordingly at the first Christian Pentecost (2:4, 33), as also their converts did when they responded to their witness in repentance, faith and baptism (2:38 f.). He was imparted not only to believing Jews but also, in due course, to believing Gentiles (10:44-47; 11:15), purifying both inwardly by faith (15:8 f.) He was variously received at baptism (2:38), at baptism accompanied by the imposition of hands (19:5 f.), by the imposition of apostolic hands some time after baptism (8:17), before baptism, without warning (10:44; 11:15). His reception might be evidenced by speaking in tongues and inspired utterances in praise of God (2:4, 11; 10:46; 19:6).[4] He is the witnessing Spirit, bearing his witness (to the crucified and exalted Christ) with and through the witness of the apostles (5:32; cf. Jn. 15:26 f.). The Spirit in the church speaks through prophets, foretelling the great famine, for example, so that the Christians of Antioch may take timely steps to provide for their brothers and sisters in Jerusalem (Ac. 11:28-30). His is the primary authority invoked in the apostolic decree (Ac. 15:28). He directs the course of missionary activity, selecting Barnabas and Saul for a special work (Ac. 13:2) and prescribing the route to be taken (16:6-10). So completely is the church the organ of his vitality that an attempt to deceive the church is an attempt to deceive the Spirit—in other words, to deceive God himself (Ac. 5:3 f.).[5]

4. *The church and its Ordinances.* The church (*ekklèsia*), as has just been said, is the organ of the Spirit of the world. It is he who animates, empowers and directs this society of the disciplines of Jesus.

At first the church is restricted to Jerusalem: the church of Jerusalem remains "the church" *par excellence* (Ac. 5:11; 18:22, etc.). But after the death of Stephen and the ensuing dispersion it expands "throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria" (Ac. 9:31). Luke does not speak, as Paul does, of "the churches of Christ in Judaea" (Gal. 1:22; cf. 1 Th. 2:14) in the plural. But when the gospel is taken to Antioch on the Orontes and accepted by many of its inhabitants (especially by its Gentile inhabitants), the church of Antioch (Ac. 11:26; 13:1; 14:27; 15:3) is established as a distinct body. When the gospel spread out from Antioch, the "churches" of Syria and Cilicia came into existence (Ac. 15:41). Later, with the evangelization of South Galatia, churches were established in Pisidian, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe (Ac. 14:23, *kat' ekklèsia*), as later still in cities west and east of the Aegean, e.g. Ephesus (20:17, 28).

The *ekklèsia* of a city is also called the *plèthos* (Ac. 6:5;

F.F. Bruce, M.A., D.D., Fellow of the British Academy, is Britain's foremost evangelical scholar, and the Rylands Emeritus Professor of Biblical Criticism, University of Manchester. This article will form part of the Introduction to a new (revised and enlarged) edition to his commentary on the Greek text of Acts (first published 1951), to be issued shortly by Eerdmans of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and InterVarsity Press of Leicester, England.

15:30), or is referred to in terms of its members, the "disciples" (6:1; 9:19, 38; 11:26; 14:22; 18:23, 27; 20:1, etc.), the "believers" (2:44; 4:32), the "brothers" (15:1, 3, 32 f., 36, 40; 16:2, 40, etc.).

The condition for membership of the church is faith in Jesus (as Messiah, Lord or Son of God); entry into it is marked by baptism (in water) in the name of Jesus. The church of Jerusalem was formed at Pentecost of those who repented, were baptized and received the gift of the Holy Spirit (Ac. 2:38, 41). The time relation between being baptized and receiving the Spirit might vary (see p. above). The Gentile Cornelius and his household would probably not have been baptized had they not first manifestly received the Spirit (Ac. 10:44). The belated baptism of the twelve disciples of Ephesus, who previously knew only John's baptism and had not heard of the Holy Spirit, is recorded as an anomaly (Ac. 19:1-7). In baptism the convert, invoking the name of the Lord, had his sins washed away (Ac. 22:16).

The church adhered to the apostolic teaching and fellowship (Ac. 2:42). The apostolic teaching, as maintained at Jerusalem (with the practice which gave expression to it) was the norm to which deviations elsewhere were made to conform, as is shown in the incidents of Apollos (Ac. 18:26) and the twelve disciples of Ephesus (19:1-7).[6] The apostolic fellowship was manifested, *inter alia*, in the breaking of bread, the united prayers, and (in the primitive church of Jerusalem) the community of goods. The breaking of bread was probably a fellowship meal in the course of which the eucharistic or memorial bread might be taken. (It may be accidental that wine is nowhere mentioned in Acts, whether in this context or in any other). In the primitive church of Jerusalem the believers evidently shared such meals in their homes every day (*kath' hèmeran . . . kat' oikon*, 2:46); in the church of Troas, at a later date, they appear to have met for this purpose on the first day of the week (20:7). There may also be a eucharist element in the meal aboard the doomed ship recorded in Ac. 27:33-37 (obviously not in a church context); but it is in the light of passages outside Acts (notably Lk. 22:14-19a) that this suggestion commends itself. No eucharistic doctrine can be inferred from Acts itself.

The administration of the church of Jerusalem was at first in the hands of the apostles (the twelve), then of apostles and elders (Ac. 15:2-16:4), then of elders without apostles (11:30; 21:18), James the Just being *primus inter pares* among those elders (12:17; 21:18). The seven men with Greek names appointed to supervise the distribution of charity from the church's communal fund (6:1-6) do not seem to have functioned in that capacity after the death of Stephen and the dispersal of the Hellenists. Elders are appointed to guide the affairs of Gentile churches—e.g. in South Galatia (14:23) and Ephesus (20:17).[7] "Elders" (*presbuteroi*) is Luke's term for them; in Ac. 20:28 Paul refers to those in the Ephesian church as "guardians" (*episkopoi*), whose main responsibility is to "be shepherds" (*poimainein*) to the "flock" (*poimnion*) of God.

Outside Jerusalem the church comprises Jewish and Gentile believers; the churches outside Judaea are predominantly Gentile in composition. The "decrees" issued by the Council of Jerusalem (15:6-16:4; 21:25;) were designed for acceptance by Gentile believers in order to facilitate regular fellowship (especially table-fellowship) between them and Jewish believers. They are not viewed by Luke as imposing any limitation on the liberty of Gentile Christians but rather as a token of their acceptance as full members of the believing fellowship.[8]

5. *The Gentile mission.* Luke is especially interested in the Gentile mission: naturally so, if he was a Gentile Christian himself.[9]

The Gentile mission is part of the divine purpose for the salvation of the world: it was foretold in prophecy (cf. Ac. 13:47, quoting Isa. 42:6; Ac. 15:16-18, quoting Am. 9:11 f.) and inaugurated in history under the direct guidance and indeed compelling pressure of God (Ac. 10:1-48; cf. Peter's question in 11:17, "who was I that I could withstand God?"). The detail in which Luke narrates and repeats the story of Cornelius (10:1-48; 11:1-18; cf. 15:7-9) reflects the importance which he attaches to this break-through—not only Gentile evangelization in itself but the acceptance of the principle of Gentile evangelization by the apostles.

The gospel was rightly and necessarily presented to the people of Israel first (*hymin prôton*), 3:26; 13:46), and in every place some of them believed it, but in most places the majority refused it, with the result that it was then presented directly to Gentiles (13:46; 18:6; 19:8-10). Rome provides the setting for the definitive instance of this recurring pattern (28:28): henceforth, Luke implies, the gospel is for the Gentiles.

The Gentile mission was adumbrated in the history of Israel, as was indicated in Jesus' inaugural preaching at Nazareth by his references to the widow of Zarephath and Naaman the Syrian (Lk. 4:25-27); it was given effect in the new age by the ministry of Philip (Ac. 8:26-39), Peter (10:1-11:18) and the unnamed disciples of Cyprus and Cyrene who first preached to Gentiles in Antioch (11:19-21), and pre-eminently in the missionary activity of Paul (see pp.).

6. *Biblical theology.* Luke is a biblical theologian: he sees the worldwide extension of the gospel as the fulfillment of God's self-revelation progressively imparted in earlier days through mighty work and prophetic word, as recorded in the Hebrew scriptures. He himself relies on the pre-Christian Greek version of those scriptures commonly called the Septuagint. His understanding of the on-going process and its climax is frequently summed up in the term "salvation history" (Ger. *Heilsgeschichte*).[10]

God's saving purpose was declared to Abraham: "In your posterity shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Ac. 3:25, quoting Gen. 12:3; 22:18; cf. Lk. 1:55). It was not impeded by the migration of Abraham's descendants to Egypt and their bondage there (Ac. 7:9-22); their departure from Egypt supplied the setting for an unprecedented manifestation of God's saving power (Ac. 7:30-38; 13:17), which was further displayed in Israel's ensuing history, especially in the raising of David to the kingship (13:22). The maintenance of the kingship in David's family was confirmed to him by a succession of promises, "the sure mercies of David" (Isa. 55:3), which were fulfilled in the sending of Jesus and in his resurrection and exaltation to be Lord and Messiah (Lk. 1:32 f.; Ac. 2:25-36; 13:23, 34-37). The testimony of the prophets, from Moses onward (Ac. 3:22-24), also pointed forward to the climax of salvation-history in the Christ-event and the acceptance of the gospel in the Gentile world (see above). Over the whole record of gospel progress, in fact, might be written Peter's words at the pentecostal fulfillment of the oracle of Joel 2:28-32, but now with reference to the whole corpus of OT prophecy: "This is what was spoken by the prophet" (Ac. 2:16). Christ is the one to whom "all the prophets bear witness" (Ac. 10:43).

7. *Soteriology.* Salvation (*sôtèria*) is a key-word in Acts. It is the blessing offered by the gospel; it has a variety of aspects, and it is not always said explicitly what the persons who accept it are saved *from*. Since salvation includes forgiveness of sins (Ac. 2:38; 3:19; 10:43; 13:38 f.; 26:18; cf. Lk. 1:77), it implies (*inter alia*) deliverance from the guilt of sin. In Ac. 2:40 Peter's Jewish hearers are urged to save themselves from "this crooked generation"—the implication being that that generation had

shown its perversity by rejecting Jesus, but that by accepting the gospel they could save themselves from the nemesis which such perversity must inevitably incur. The conditions necessary for obtaining salvation are repentance and faith—a forsaking of old attitudes and an embracing of new attitudes: "repentance to God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ac. 20:21). Faith in Jesus as Christ is so essential that "the believers" and "the saved" are interchangeable terms.

Even when the salvation consists mainly of bodily healing, this faith is necessary: it was so with the cripple in the temple court (Ac. 3:16) and with the cripple of Lystra, who had "faith to be made well" (*pistin tou sôthènai*, Ac. 14:9). Whatever form the salvation takes, it depends exclusively on Jesus: "there is salvation in no one else" (Ac. 4:12).

How Jesus has procured this salvation for believers is rarely spelled out in Acts. According to the prophets, whose words were fulfilled in the gospel, it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead (26:23; cf. Lk. 24:46 f.); it is, then, as the crucified and risen Christ that Jesus saves. Passages from the Isaianic Servant Songs are sometimes quoted as gospel *testimonia* (cf. Ac. 3:13), but even when the passage quoted portrays the Servant's suffering (cf. Ac. 8:32 f., quoting Isa. 53:7 f.), the words which bring out the vicarious efficacy of that suffering are not reproduced. Whether such words are deliberately not reproduced—cf. the absence of "to give his life a ransom for many" (Mk. 10:45) from Lk. 22:25-27[11]—or the words actually reproduced carry their vicarious context with them by implication,[12] cannot be affirmed with certainty. The one place where the redemptive power of the *death* of Christ finds clearest expression—the reference to "the church of God, which he has purchased with the blood of his own one" (Ac. 20:28)—comes, significantly enough, in a speech ascribed to Paul, and should be recognized as an authentic representation of Paul's teaching.

8. *Eschatology.* The end of the age does not appear to be imminent in Ac., nor yet in Lk. According to Lk. 21:24, after the Jewish War "Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled"—but there is no indication how long the times of the Gentiles will last. The disciples are simply commanded to keep on the alert, so that they may survive the great distress which precedes the manifestation of the kingdom of God and so "stand before the Son of man" (Lk. 21:36).

In Ac. 1:11 the parousia of Christ will take place as his ascension did (but in the opposite direction)—visibly, in a cloud. It is foretold in Ac. 3:20 f. in terms which probably survive from a more primitive eschatology than Luke's own.

The end of the age will be marked by the resurrection of the just and the unjust (Ac. 24:15) and by the judgment of the living and the dead, to be carried out by Christ as the agent of God (Ac. 10:42; cf. 17:31). But the present age is the age of the Spirit, the gospel age, and there is no suggestion that it has reached its consummation at the end of the book, with Paul's preaching in Rome. If that marks the conclusion of one phase of gospel expansion, it also marks the beginning of a new phase. No eschatological note is struck here, as is struck in Rom. 11:13-16, 25-27, where Paul sees the conversion of Israel, achieved indirectly through his own Gentile apostleship, as the prelude to the parousia. Luke no doubt thinks of the parousia as the goal towards which the gospel age is moving but, as he writes, the gospel age is still going on.

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[1] M. Hengel argues that the crucial phase of christological development coincided with the first five years after the death and resurrection of Christ: "the multiplicity of christological titles does not mean a multiplicity of exclusive 'christologies' but an accumulative glorification of Jesus" (*Between Jesus and Paul*, E.T. [London, 1983], p. 41).

[2] See C.F.D. Moule, "The Christology of Acts," in *Studies in Luke-Acts*, ef. L.E. Keck and J.L. Martyn (Nashville/New York, 1966), pp. 159-185; S.S. Smalley, "The Christology of Acts," *ExT* 73 (1961-62), pp. 358-362, and "The Christology of Acts Again," in *Christ and Spirit in the New Testament*, ed. B. Lindars and S.S. Smalley (Cambridge, 1973), pp. 79-93.

[3] So thoroughly does the Spirit pervade Acts that Chrysostom called this book "the Gospel of the Holy Spirit:" "the Gospels are a history of what Christ did and said; but the Acts, of what that 'other Paraclete' said and did" (*Hom.* 1.5). Cf. the title of A.T. Pierson, *The Acts of the Holy Spirit* (London, ²1913); so also J.A. Bengel, *Gnomon*, on Ac. 1:1.

[4] According to Schuyler Brown, in Lk.-Ac. "the gift of the spirit, and the enthusiastic phenomena which accompany it, are restricted to the apostolic age" (*The Origins of Christianity* [Oxford, 1984], p. 146). This is said to be Luke's attempt to resolve "the conflict between the witness of the Spirit to the individual and the decisions of apostolic authority," but the argument is unconvincing.

[5] See P. Loyd, *The Holy Spirit in the Acts* (London, 1952); G.W. H. Lampe, "The Holy Spirit in the Writings of St. Luke," in *Studies in the Gospels*, ed. D.E. Nineham (Oxford, 1966), pp. 159-201. J.H.E. Hull, *The Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles* (London, 1967).

[6] See A.A. T. Ehrhardt, *The Framework of the NT Stories* (Manchester, 1964), pp. 94 f., 158-160.

[7] Cf. C.K. Barrett, *Church, Ministry and Sacraments in the NT* (Exeter, 1985), pp. 49-53.

[8] See F.J.A. Hort, *The Christian Ecclesia* (London, 1897).

[9] See S.G. Wilson, *The Gentiles and the Gentile Mission in Luke-Acts* (Cambridge, 1973).

[10] See E. Lohse, "Lukas als Theologe der Heilsgeschichte," *EvT* 14 (1954), pp. 256-275; H. Flender: *St. Luke: Theologian of Redemptive History*, E.T. (London/Philadelphia, 1967); O. Cullmann, *Salvation in History*, E.T. (London, 1967).

[11] Cf. H. Conzelmann, *The Theology of Saint Luke*, E.T. (London/New York, 1960), pp. 200 f. Over against J.M. Creed, who denies that there is any *theologia crucis* in Lk.-Ac. (*The Gospel According to St. Luke* [London, 1930], p. lxxii), see C.K. Barrett, "Theologia Crucis—in Acts," in *Theologia Crucis—Signum Crucis: Festschrift für E. Dinkler*, ed. C. Andresen and G. Klein (Tübingen, 1979), pp. 73-84.

[12] Cf. C.H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures* (London, 1952), p. 132 *et passim*, for the "governing intention" in the NT use of testimonia as being "to exploit whole contexts selected as the varying expression of certain fundamental and permanent elements in the biblical revelation."

Bibliography on Aging for Pastors and Other Church Leaders

by David O. Moberg

NOTE: Bibliographical references are found in most of the below resources. They can lead readers to additional publications, organizations, audiovisual materials, and other reference materials. I have not attempted to list the numerous *textbooks in gerontology* which are valuable aids to understanding, serving, and working with the aging even though most of them ignore or minimize the role of religious faith in the lives of older people and the services provided by religious institutions. *Journals* in geriatrics and gerontology also are very useful; these include *Aging and Human Development, Clinical Gerontologist, Generations, Geriatrics, The Gerontologist, Gerontology and Geriatrics Education, Journal of Gerontology, Journal of Gerontological Social Work, Journal of Housing for the Elderly, Journal of Nutrition for the Elderly, Journal of Religion and Aging*, and many other highly specialized publications.

(Some of these are now available only in libraries; they are marked OP [out of print] only if I know they are unavailable from publishers.)

AARP Educational & Service Programs. American Association of Retired Persons, 1909 K Street N.W., Washington, DC 20049.

David O. Moberg, Ph.D., is Professor of Sociology at Marquette University in Milwaukee, WI.

The 1984 edition of this catalog of programs, services, and resources, most of which are useful for church-related programs, has 36 pages.

Bianchi, Eugene C., *Aging As a Spiritual Journey*. New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1984, 285 pp. Reflections by an associate professor of religion (Emory College) on the challenges and potentials of midlife and elderhood; aims at establishment of "a general framework for a spirituality of aging."

Clements, William M., editor, *Ministry With the Aging: Designs, Challenges, Foundations*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981. Sixteen contributions on the biblical basis, precedents in the early church, theological roots, realities of aging in American culture, linkages with worship, ethical challenges, guidelines, and examples for befriending, counseling, educating, and serving the aging and the elderly.

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the older adult are not peripheral but essential parts of the business of the church" (p.109).

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Leadership '88 Conference

Next year, June 27–July 1, the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization will sponsor a conference in Washington, D.C. Leadership '88 *will bring together 2,000 younger Christians from across the United States. Diverse in culture, theology, style, and education, these emerging leaders will be encouraged and equipped to take aggressive action in completing the Great Commission in their generation. Anyone interested in participating is invited to write* Leadership '88 *at P.O. Box 2620, Pasadena, CA 91102.*

Here is the Draft Statement of the Senior Advisory Council for Leadership '88 *which the Council adopted on December 5, 1986.*

Introduction

The Senior Advisory Council for Leadership '88 met to determine how they could best shape the thinking and lives of emerging Christian leaders in the United States. The following is a brief statement of what they as Senior leaders have learned in Christian leadership and how they would define the unfinished task of world evangelization and the expansion of the Kingdom of God.

Underlying this statement by the Senior leaders is their firm conviction in the utter indispensability of evangelism in the mission and calling of the Church.

Challenges and Opportunities in the World and the Church

A sample of our analysis of the contemporary and future scene includes the following opportunities and challenges:

1) A planet with newly emerging nations and aspirations as well as long established nations struggling for effective survival.

2) A time of the greatest harvest in the history of the Church, and a corresponding need to substantially increase the number of practicing Christians throughout the world.

3) Masses of the world's poor outside of the Kingdom of God.

4) Vast inner-city complexes to which rural populations are moving, providing at the same time an occasion for moral erosion and an opportunity for mass evangelism.

5) Tremendous havoc resulting from the uncritical democratization of ideas.

6) The distressing breakdown of monogamous marriage through divorce, battered wives, separation and fornication (adultery), and the overall tenuous plight of the home.

7) The need for evangelistic strategies which take women seriously in the context of their needs, and an appropriate evangelical response to a radical feminist theology.

8) The lack of a consensus, and an effective paradigm, over the relationships of evangelism and social action, which remains obscure for many evangelicals, and the need for instructive models.

9) The stunted faith, hope, and love of the Christian community in its polarizations and divisions, resulting in disunity, disharmony and a lack of communications among believers which have obscured the Lordship of the believing church, their obedience to fulfilling the evangelistic mandate and their ability to stand together in matters of social justice.

10) Opportunities for ministry partnering, especially in urban ministries, and for a new ecumenical cooperation among those who lift up and emulate Jesus Christ, including those within the Catholic community.

11) Impotence of much of contemporary Christianity characterized by a decline in mainline denominations, lack of evangelistic zeal among traditional churches, a failure to minister to the whole person, an unwillingness to empower the laity, and a reluctance of Christians to enter all vocational arenas as legitimate areas of Christian service.

12) The need to learn from effective urban evangelistic churches, to celebrate the charismatic renewal, and to learn from churches in the Third World which are growing through prayer and the supernatural working of God in spite of their great suffering.

Training, Character, and Preparation of Emerging Christian Leaders

We live in an age in which there is tremendous change both in the United States and throughout the world. Any leader or Christian institution that intends to be effective in the future will need the ability to accommodate to change while maintaining an unshakable commitment to Christ. A sampling of our analysis of our Christian institutions which prepare emerging leaders and the inner life and character which sustains them includes the following observations:

Institutions

1) Institutions as well as individual leaders are ordained by God and are essential to the ordering of society and to believers fulfilling their calling.

2) The Old Testament model of Israel in exile in Babylon may be a more fruitful model of the Church in the world than the model of the theocratic nation of Israel.

3) A new vision is needed for new institutions among ethnic Americans and among Christians living in poor communities; in addition, power sharing by minorities is needed in existing insitutions so that these minorities can be in a position to help shape direction.

4) Local churches have an important responsibility to train, prepare and test emerging Chrsitian leaders before they become candidates for seminary education; in addition, seminary graduates must increasingly learn to trust lay people with significant, important biblical ministries in their churches.

5) Ways must be found to help existing Christian leaders to be better servants, thereby following the life and example of Jesus Christ; further, it is important that existing leaders become ardently devoted to emerging leaders, invest their lives

with them, listen to them, and release them into responsible ministries.

6) Several minority and urban Christian leaders have felt that current seminary training, based primarily on academic excellence, has failed to equip them as leaders. They felt ill-prepared to lead, unsure of their gifts, ignorant of the Bible and how to integrate it into life situations, and lacking in personal spiritual development.

7) It is important to affirm both intuitive and managerial leadership of institutions. Both the intuitive visionary who often begins a institution and the manager who wisely organizes work effectively need to be utilized effectively so that institutions can enjoy the fruits of both gifts.

Character & Inner Life

1) The definition of the inner life includes both the private internal life and the private relationships of the leader with his immediate family.

2) The development of a vital inner life includes a close walk with God, transparency in fraternal relationships, intimacy in one's personal family life, and accountability with another individual or group.

3) Honoring the biblical teaching of the Sabbath rest is an important factor in maintaining intimacy with God, with one's family, as well as personal wholeness.

4) Emerging Christian leaders may need to acquire a new sense of the authority of God, particularly because so many leaders in the 30–40 year old age group are an unfathered generation who need authoritative figures to father them (not dominate them).

5) Personal involvement in evangelism and sharing the love of Christ with a non-believer can be an important component in renewing and maintaining our spiritual vitality.

6) Our highest calling is not to be fruitful in ministry, but to love God and to enter into intimate relationship with Him.

7) Spiritual maturity is not instantly achieved and walking with God involves "practicing" the development of spiritual character.

Final Comment

The approach of the twenty first century promises to be as exciting as any time since the prophecy concerning the outpouring of the Spirit of God on all people began to be fulfilled at Pentecost. The great need is for an inter-generational, sex-inclusive, intercultural gift of supernatural power, a new Pentecost, through which all the peoples of the earth can have an opportunity to call on the name of the Lord and thereby be saved. We praise the Lord for all that has been done in decades past, but acknowledge with repentance the Church we have condoned and the society we have allowed. Together, young and old, women and men, we seek to humble ourselves as leaders to dream God's dream for His Church of the 21st century. We commend a new generation to the Lord of the greatest harvest which the Church has ever seen.

The Chronology of the Apostle Paul

by James J.G. Dunn

Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles: Studies in Chronology
by G. Luedemann (Fortress, 1984, 311 pp., $29.95).

This is the English translation of *Paulus, der Heidenapostel Vol. 1*, published by Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, in 1980. Some footnotes have been dropped, but bibliographical references have been updated and some minor adjustments have been made to the text. A six page Postscript lists and responds to some thirteen reviews. So this is in effect a second edition.

It is the first of a projected trilogy on Paul, the second part having already been published by Vandenhoeck under the subtitle *Antipaulismus im frühen Christentum* (1983). For understandable reasons Luedemann feels it desirable to reach a conclusion regarding the chronology relation and interval between Paul's letters, before embarking on an interpretation of his role and theology, since only within a soundly based chronological framework can we resolve such questions as whether there was enough time for Paul to change or modify his views on any subject.

Luedemann starts from the observation that most attempts to reconstruct Pauline chronology have fallen into the trap of attempting in one degree or other to harmonize the chronology of Acts with information gleaned from Paul's letters. A sequence of critical observations, including particularly "contradictions between Luke's chronological information and data from world history" and "the redactional nature of Luke's chronological references," provides "a decisive critique of the use of Acts in such a direct or immediate manner. And thus the way is opened for Luedemann to put forward his primary thesis: that Paul's own witness in his letters must have absolute priority in determining Pauline chronology—"a chronology obtained solely on the basis of the letters" becomes a *leitmotif* running through the whole.

In chapter 2 Luedemann turns first to Gal. 1:6-2:14 as "the central pillar for a chronology of Paul." A form (or rhetorical) critical analysis along the lines of H.D. Betz opens up the possibility that Paul could have abandoned a chronological order in this section. Some detailed exegesis, particularly of Gal. 2:7-9, leads to the conclusion that prior to the Jerusalem conference Paul had already been engaged in an *independent* Gentile mission, Galatia included, with the Antioch incident (Gal. 2:11ff.) also probably falling before the conference. Gal. 2:10 then becomes the jumping-off point for the second major thesis: that the collection agreed in Gal. 2:10 provides a firm criterion of dating, since all references to the collection (1 Cor. 16:1ff, 2 Cor. 8-9, Rom. 15:26) must point back to Gal. 2:10.

The Corinthian and Roman letters and the mission they speak of must therefore fall after the Jerusalem conference and imply a 3-4 year period devoted to organizing the collection. Galatians itself implies the collection had already made some progress, but subsequent silence regarding Galatia must mean that in the interval it had been overthrown in Galatia. Moreover, the absence of any mention of the collection in 1 Thess. and in the founding visits to the Philippian and Corinthian churches implies that Paul's initial visit to these churches must have taken place *before* the Jerusalem conference. That is to say, Paul probably missionized (*sic*) Greece at an early stage in his Gentile mission in the 14 year period between his first and second visit to Jerusalem.

In chapter 3 critical analysis of the Acts traditions leads to the key conclusion that Acts 18:22 was Paul's *second* visit to Jerusalem, with 11:27ff. and 15:1ff. deriving from Luke's redaction (the conference of Acts 15 legitimizing Paul's subsequent world-wide mission), and that Acts 18:1-17 combines reports of two different periods in Corinth, the second related to the Gallio episode and the first to the 41 AD expulsion of the Jews from Rome. These results provide "surprising con-

James D.G. Dunn is a Professor of Divinity at the University of Durham in England.

firmation of the chronology developed solely on the basis of the letters."

The last main chapter analyzes Paul's eschatological statements in 1 Thess. 4:13-18 and 1 Cor. 15:51-52. The former considers the death of Christians before the parousia a rare exception; the latter conversely envisages the proportion of dead Christians as outweighing that of living Christians as the parousia. The likelihood is thus strengthened that 1 Thess. was written early, about 41, well before 1 Cor. (some 8 or 11 years later).

There are full notes, a concluding chronological chart, an extensive bibliography and indices of authors and passages.

This is a thesis—a *tour de force* in order to establish and defend a particular hypothesis. It is not a dispassionate review of alternative chronological schemes with a tentative resolution appended at the end. As such it is an excellent example of the genre. Those not prepared for full-blooded argument should look elsewhere. The clarity and tenacity of the argument make it easy to follow and a pleasure to read.

It must also be said that the two primary assertions must be given considerable weight. It is wholly right as a methodological principle to attempt to make sense of Paul on his terms *before* looking to Acts, lest we miss some of the Pauline distinctives by superimposing the relative blandness of the Acts' Paul on them. And the collection was undoubtedly of great importance for Paul (even though we would never know it from Acts) and does provide something of a key to the chronological relationships of at least some of the letters.

That being said, however, I find myself far from convinced by a good number of Luedemann's conclusions.

1. For all that he recognizes the central importance of Gal. 1:6-2:14 his exegesis of it is surprisingly selective. He has ignored the point already made by B. Holmberg, *Paul and Power*, Con. Bib., Gleerup: Lund, 1978 (and developed by myself—*NTS* 28, 1982, 461-78) that this passage cannot be understood without taking account of the tension within it between acknowledging Jerusalem's authority up to the Jerusalem conference, but had since then distanced himself much more clearly from Jerusalem. In particular, the suggestion that Paul discussed his gospel with Peter on his first visit to Jerusalem pays no attention to the dispute over *historèsai Kèphan* and runs counter to the clear implication of Gal. 2:2. And the argument that Gal. 2:9 reads as if it was an undoing of church relations in already existing mixed congregations (p. 73) is highly tendentious. Paul's own language in Gal. 1 and 2 is therefore at odds with one of the central assertions of Luedemann's reconstruction—viz. that Paul was already an independent and world-wide missionary before the Jerusalem conference.

2. If exegesis of Paul's own letters is, quite properly, to have the primary say in such questions, then we must not only take into account *all* that Paul said which is of relevance, but we must also recognize the *limits* of exegesis, the unavoidable ambiguity of Paul's language. Despite his carefulness, Luedemann, like his fellow chronologist Jewett, falls into the trap of pressing a particular plausible exegesis of one or two key texts into a firm datum from which he then draws wide ranging conclusions. Where the evidence does not quite fit his reconstruction he is willing to recognize exegetical ambiguity (as in pp. 135 n.185 and 180 n.48). Whereas, in order to substantiate his thesis, he has to insist that Phil. 4:15 cannot refer to the beginning of Paul's whole missionary endeavor—thus rendering the thesis of a Pauline mission in Greece *before* the Jerusalem conference "certain" (pp. 105, 199)!

3. It is clear that Gal. 2:10 must refer to the collection itself and must mean that thereafter the collection was such a dominant concern for Paul that he could not write to one of his congregations without mentioning it. I think not. Galatians itself is an embarrassment on that score, since it says nothing about the collection in Galatia; Gal. 2:10 can hardly be ranked with the explicit instructions and exhortations of Rom. and Cor. Conversely, the failure of Rom. 15:26 to mention Galatia among those contributing to the collection is simply explained by the fact that Macedonia and Achaia were within Rome's horizon and so could serve as a powerful example to the Romans, whereas Galatia was a much more distant territory. But if treatment of the collection is not such a definitive characteristic of Paul's post-conference epistolary concern, another of Luedemann's central pillars is undermined.

4. Space permits only a brief mention of a few other points. (a) Does 1 Thess. 4 mean that only a short time had passed between the first Easter and Paul's initial visit to Thessalonica (p. 238), or that only a short time had elapsed between the initial visit and the letter? (b) The refusal to allow plausible speculation seeking to make sense of the Acts evidence as "historicizing" (e.g. pp. 159-60) is an unwelcome form of methodological fundamentalism. (c) On the Key issue of whether there was one expulsion of Jews from Rome (AD 41) or two (41 *and* 49), Luedemann's response to Hübner's criticism that Luedemann had failed to use E. Smallwood's *The Jews Under Roman Rule* is hardly to the point (p. 290). Hübner's point was that Smallwood's careful consideration of the evidence leads to the conclusion that there were *two* expulsions. Simply to note that he (Luedemann) had referred to Smallwood (but not to the passage in question!) hardly answers the point.

In short Luedemann's first volume shows all the strengths of a *tour de force*—but also the weaknesses. When a civil engineer is determined to push his road through along a certain line it is hardly surprising if he is unable to observe all the contours of the territory traversed.

Reading the New Testament as a Canonical Text

by Scot McKnight

The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction
by B. S. Childs (Fortress, 1985, 572 pp., $22.95).

One could list only a handful of scholars in the world who would not only attempt to discuss the whole barrage of issues in both Testaments but who could also acomplish the feat. Professor Childs is a world-renowned scholar for his insightful analyses in Old Testament studies; this book will now earn him respect in the field of New Testament studies.

Scot McKnight is Instructor of Greek Exegesis at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

In reading it I was humbled by the amazing grasp Childs has, not only of the literature pertaining to the NT, but also of the exegetical issues involved at each juncture.

Let me begin by stating what this *Introduction* is not. Childs has not written yet another standard introduction to the New Testament, merely to re-examine issues such as authorship, date, addressees, etc. Though Childs regularly raises one or more of these typical issues, his interest is of a different order and he offers for his readers a groundbreaking introduction to reading the NT *as a canonical text and the hermeneutical approach one must have if one takes the NT as canon.* In short, Childs is doing battle on the hermeneutical front, not the historical, proposing, in contrast to the normal historicist approach, that the NT must be interpreted at the final layer if one is to discern the true role the Bible has in the life of the believing Church.

Each chapter functions, if I may use the label, as a sort of "pronouncement story": first, we have a salient description of the context of scholarship in both its conservative and liberal forms, usually unable to resolve its own difficulties created by its desire to find historical referentiality; secondly, Childs offers a *via media* which seeks to exploit the best of both worlds, a hermeneutical stance called "canonical exegesis." The last part of the chapter is usually a short, pithy section which functions as more than a casual reminder that the NT scholarly world needs to

press on to interpret the final form of the text. After offering an introduction on the role of the canon, Childs applies his approach to each book of the NT and includes a discussion of the canonical problem of the Four Gospels and a lengthy, canonical approach to the issue of harmonizing the Gospels. He concludes with four stimulating excurses: the impact of a canonical approach on NT textual criticism (one of the most provocative features of the book) and on parable interpretation (here he steers away from Jeremias and the modern literary approaches), as well as a response to G.A. Lindbeck's new model for doing theology. Finally, he offers his suggestions for commentaries on the NT for pastor and teacher, books which he would suggest for those who want to pursue his hermeneutical angle. His suggestions, if heeded, will bring great benefits to the expositor.

It is needful to state here what Childs is criticizing. Continuing the lines he has already developed in his Old Testament studies, the author argues trenchantly against much of the current mode of scholarship: the attempt to discern the intention of the author in his own particular (reconstructed) historical context, an approach regularly called "historicism" (cf. pp. 35-7). As Childs and others have seriously queried, if one can never reconstruct that original context, can one ever really understand the text? In other words, as a good many are arguing today, meaning does not reside solely in referentiality, and the question after all for exegesis is that of meaning. A good example of this, one which is carefully criticized by Childs, is the recent view on the Johannine corpus of R. E. Brown who argues that there was a secession and that the Johannine letters are to be interpreted against this background. In the author's view, "what purports to be an historical investigation is actually an exercise in creative imagination with very few historical controls . . . and the text is interpreted in direct relation to Brown's reconstructed referent regardless of the level of clarity" (p. 483). Instead, Childs proposes that interpretation and meaning are concerned with the particular canonical construal of various traditions as found in their final shape.

Childs has successfully and brilliantly accomplished a grand exposure of the consistent failure in this regard for the bulk of NT scholarship, and each chapter is a painful reminder of the fact. This demonstration is the major success of the book; Childs is not attempting to discard historical-critical scholarship but, instead, is reminding its practitioners, especially those within the Church, that the historical-critical enterprise is an unfinished task if it does not climax in the interpretation of the text as it has been received by the Church and seek to understand the kerygmatic theology of the canonical text (cf. pp. 48-53). And so, Childs' proposal is one of a both/and rather than an either/or; the interpreter is to utilize the tools of the historical-critical method but his task is not finished until the present shape of the text is discussed.

Contrary to most scholars, Childs is not attempting to discern the intention of the author as made known in his original setting or text; instead his pursuit is the meaning of the canonical text, and this text has often been modified in many ways. In fact, Childs, along with many NT scholars today, would argue that few books of the NT are presently substantially the text of the original author. Regarding 1 Peter, for instance, Childs states the following: "It is of crucial hermeneutical significance to understand exactly what is being suggested. This canonical function [rendering 1 Peter as a letter of the apostle by its canonical attribution] is not to be confused with recovering an author's original intention, nor proving historical continuity. Rather, it is a function of canon to establish an intertextuality between the parts as the context for its theological appropriation" (p. 461). One could cite many such examples, including his treatment of 2 Thessalonians, Jude, 2 Peter and Revelation. Loosing exegesis from the moorings of the author's historical intention is an unwelcomed departure and for most it will be seen as putting one's interpretation into the sea of relativity, though Childs has some comments on this as well (cf. pp. 542-6).

A noteworthy feature of this volume is that Childs calls attention to the need to take the canon seriously, not only as a collection, but as a hermeneutical device for interpreting the individual books. I will offer a criticism below on whether the author is consistent in this regard, but let it be said here that Childs proposes a bold reminder that a decision in favor of the canon may well imply some hermeneutical restrictions. For instance, Childs demonstrates that though Jude does not specify the theological content of the gospel to be defended, the book in its canonical shape exhorts the Church to preserve what is written in the rest of her Bible (p. 493). An historicist reading of Jude would not detect this. Similarly, he argues that Revelation, though he thinks the apostle was not the author, in its canonical shape (having John as the author) is to be read "in conjunction with the large Johannine corpus" and "that there is a larger canonical unity to the church's scriptures which is an important guideline to its correct theological understanding" (p. 517). Of course, the most fruitful book for canonical exegesis is James, and Childs demonstrates carefully that a canonical rendering of James makes it a balancing of Paul's understanding of the relationship of faith and works. This is argued quite apart from any historical relationship of James to Paul; instead, the canonical order forces one to think of Paul's views and to incorporate the views into one whole (pp. 436, 438-43). For the evangelical, anyone who takes seriously the desire to incorporate the NT texts into one whole is welcome (cf. p. 30). I must admit that I found this motif in his book the most challenging, and it has caused me to re-think some of my approach to exegesis. If one accepts the canon, then certainly this will have an impact upon one's exegetical method, but the critical factor here is precisely how one is to utilize the canon for the hermeneutical process.

We mentioned above that Childs argues that a canonical reading of the NT will have an impact on how one does textual criticism and he offers guidelines on the matter. In contrast to most text critics, Childs argues that the *purpose* of the enterprise is not to discover the original text (the success of which he doubts as feasible) but instead to find the text "which best reflects the true apostolic witness found in the church's scripture" (p. 527) which he calls "the best received text" (p. 525). Thus, the critic is to begin with the *textus receptus* (but Childs is not to be aligned with those who want to align themselves with the Majority text) and distill from this inclusive text, in an ongoing process, "that text which best reflects the church's judgment as to its truth" (p. 528). In effect, this suggestion seems to require that one know the theological content of the apostolic faith of the Church before one determines her text. Can this be done? Childs, however, sees this sifting to be a discernment between various qualities (p. 528) and he obviously accepts the normal methods for this determination. What at first seemed to be radical is not as radical as I had thought; nevertheless, his proposal of beginning with the inclusive text and proceeding by way of restriction is fully commensurate with his canonical approach, and his goal is certainly not the traditional one.

Let me now offer my reservations with the book. Though Childs does offer some rationale for a canonical reading of the NT (pp. 34-47), I am not satisfied that he has demonstrated that his view is the *true* approach. Yes, there are antecedents within the texts themselves for this approach (pp. 23-4); but how can the reader know that the canon is in fact what it claims to be—the authoritative books for the Church? Again, we do indeed have a canon; but, is the canon justified? Childs anchors this decision totally in the decision of the Church. Those who accuse Childs of a fideism (p. 37) are not without some justification.

Childs anticipates my second criticism (p. 543). I find it difficult to render the meaning of a text apart from its factuality or historical reference. For Childs the issue is one of a theological construal, but the nagging question of truth, to me, remains unanswered, and I think that one cannot opt for a theological construal which renders the historical fact relative. I quote his treatment of 1 Peter as an example of his view: "Still the point must be emphasized that in its canonical shape the letter of I Peter is attributed to the apostle, and its kerygmatic function is made a derivative of his authority. The effect of the historical-critical approach has been to force a distinction between the historical problem of authorship and the theological function of rendering the material according to a peculiar canonical fashion" (p. 461). Is one being intellectually honest, can one base one's faith upon a theological construal which, in fact, may be historically inaccurate? Is there not an intense concern with the texts themselves with description of the past (a referentiality)? Is not the nature of gospel genre an indicator of concern with past reference?

What is the precise meaning of canonical? Though Childs utilizes "canon" in an amaz-

ingly plastic fashion (cf. p. 41), when it comes to the treatments of the NT books, by and large it means the present shape of the text. But, in my view, one must speak to the issue of intertextuality if one is to call one's method canonical and Childs does this, say, in Jude, James and the Pastorals, but he does not always do this in the Synoptics (pp. 86, 92, 104, etc.). Instead, what he often calls "canonical" is nothing other than the final, redactional layer, or the authorial intent. Thus, I think a distinction needs to be made between redactional and canonical exegesis. It goes to the credit of Childs that he has shown that redactional studies need to press forward to study the canonical shape of the text, but canonical exegesis, in my view, implies a larger context. And a disappointing feature of the book for me was his consistent reduction of the meaning of a NT book to its basic theological meaning (cf. his studies of the Pauline epistles). One wonders if this can work except at the broadest level of exegesis.

In spite of his concern with the canonical text and how the editors of the canon sought to free the texts from their historical occasion, there still remains a great deal of historical particularity in these texts and few will be satisfied with his brief statements which address this (pp. 23-4) or with a hermeneutic which "typifies" these historical particulars. Thus, when he discusses Paul's cloak in 2 Timothy 4:13, he sees this illustrating "the single-hearted devotion of the apostle to his ministry who ended his life not even possessing a coat" (p. 394).

I might criticize his *method* of demonstrating, for each book of the NT, the lack of consensus of interpretation by playing off conservatives and liberals. The fact is that there is a much greater consensus if one recognizes that the two poles are incompatible; within each framework there is often a considerable consensus. Instead, Childs should recognize that a consensus can only be reached on the basis of some *a prioris* and previously established conclusions. One could wish that Childs would explore a little more deeply into the realm of what factors led to each polarity.

Finally, for the evangelical there will be a grave disappointment in the fact that Childs does not relate canon to inspiration. Traditional orthodoxy has always posited canon as a direct and natural effect of inspiration. For Childs, the Bible is canon seemingly because of decisions of the Church. For the evangelical the question will always be: what if the Church was wrong?

This book has been one of the most challenging I have ever read. Though I disagree with the historical moorings of Childs' proposal, I agree wholeheartedly with the need to interpret the finished product and his interest in understanding the theological meaning of a NT book in light of its relationship to other NT books.

Childs Responds to McKnight

Dear Prof. McKnight:

It was very kind and thoughtful of you to send me a copy of your review which I have studied with interest and profit. You have read the book with more care and insight than anyone up to now and for that I am grateful.

I think that your review is both fair and incisive. As you correctly saw, the book did not attempt to engage in a detailed analysis of all the problems surrounding the NT, but rather to propose some broad lines of a different approach in an effort to reverse the dominant trend within the field. I am happy that you felt the book raised some fresh questions. I doubt very much whether many within the scholarly guild will be convinced, but I felt the need to present another theological alternative. When I was in seminary, I was always exceedingly grateful for the minority voice of scholars such as J. Denney, M. Kaehler, and A. Schlatter, among others.

You pose some reservations which, I am sure, are high on the priority of most evangelicals. Let me offer a few brief responses:

1) I have purposefully not dealt directly with the question of inspiration. The reason is not because I regard the issue as unimportant. Rather, the present theological climate is such that it is difficult to formulate a fresh position. I think that other issues will first have to be understood before there can be a meaningful return to a restatement.

For a very long time there has been an impasse between a position such as that of Warfield and the numerous followers of Schleiermacher. In my judgment, both these giants were children of the 19th century. Time is, of course, too short to discuss in detail such questions as whether Warfield has narrowed the doctrinal scope even of 17th century Reformed dogmatics. My present concern is that he has defined inspiration in terms of a philosophical theory of truth—namely, 18th century Scottish realism—as correspondence to historical referentiality (inerrancy), and author intentionality. In contrast, I find in Calvin a far greater emphasis on the Holy Spirit's role in rendering the Word truthfully to its recipient, and thus not pulling text and believer apart in the same way. Obviously, Calvin and Schleiermacher are in great opposition respecting the role of the Spirit which in the latter is simply a form of human consciousness.

In my opinion, the place to begin in reformulating a modern theology of inspiration—and it is only a beginning—is with the Early Church Fathers before Word and tradition, text and Spirit were split apart in the controversies of the 16th century. My appropriation of the concept of *regula fidei* from Irenaeus and Tertullian is my initial attempt at a formulation of the issue. I fear that most evangelicals will not even recognize the attempt.

2) In regard to the question of historicity and historical moorings, it is again difficult to formulate the issue with enough theological precision. In my opinion, most of the modern evangelical formulations reflect a type of natural theology which I do not share. Carl Henry is a grievous example. I do not, for example, believe that one can establish scientifically and in a neutral fashion the factuality of the biblical accounts nor can such an attempt provide a criterion for testing the truth of the Gospel. There is no means outside the Gospel to test its truth. It is sui generis. Of course, the OT and NT make constant reference to external reality (I Cor. 15:14), but often to a reality which has entered time and space but is only perceived in faith. Indeed, at times an appeal is made to God's action which can be confirmed by public knowledge (e.g., the fall of Jerusalem) cf. the prophets. The point is that the level of public perception (factuality) varies greatly within the biblical witness. Historicity as a perception apart from faith cannot be made a criterion of divine truth, certainly not as an overarching theological axiom. Conversely, one cannot argue as does Bultmann that historicity is never an issue. In my opinion, both these theological stances are skewed, and both are very much a product of the Enlightenment. Often the most concrete entry of God into human affairs is registered in the Bible in such a way as utterly to confound the litmus paper test of critical appraisal, whether liberal or conservative. The appeal to historical criticism both from the left and right as a correction of Docetism appears to me badly misconstrued and a serious confusion of categories. In sum, it remains difficult to address the problem of historicity in a meaningful way before the basic problems of natural theology are first addressed. In this respect, most evangelicals—Bromiley is an exception—have simply misunderstood what K. Barth was after.

3) Finally regarding the problem of canon as church decision, I have tried to make the point, fully consonant with Calvin, that the church never "created" its canon, but responded to the authority of certain books which were received through use as normative for faith and practice.

But you raise the question: "What if the church was wrong?" Is this not a response of unbelief which does not take seriously the power and promise of God? We confess: "I

Concerning "Sexuality, Hierarchy and Evangelicalism"

Editor's Note: The following disclaimer was submitted between the typesetting and printing stages of the production of this issue of the Bulletin. The unusual format of including a single page insert is due to the fact that, with this issue of the Bulletin, we will cease publication. Therefore, the only time this disclaimer could be included is with the issue.

Fuller Theological Seminary has been linked to the article "Sexuality, Hierarchy and Evangelicalism," by Kathleen E. Corley and Karen J. Torjesen, which appeared in the March/April 1987 issue of the *TSF Bulletin*. The content and spirit of the article in no way reflects Fuller Theological Seminary's position and perspective on sexual standards. We have a carefully developed *Statement on Sexual Standards* which is normative for faculty, students, staff and board members, all of whom participated in its formulation. The statement printed below clearly indicates the Seminary's distance from the positions suggested by the article.**–David Allan Hubbard, President, Fuller Theological Seminary**

Fuller Theological Seminary Statement on Sexual Standards

Men and women of God are suited for Christian service by moral character as well as by academic achievement and spiritual gifts. They are qualified by compassion for individual persons, by sensitivity to the needs of the communities of which they are a part, by a burden that the whole of God's will will be obeyed on earth, by personal integrity, and by readiness to accept correction and a desire for moral growth. Candidates for a degree from Fuller are expected to exhibit these moral characteristics.

The ethical standards of Fuller Theological Seminary are guided by our understanding of Scripture and our commitment to its authority regarding all matters of Christian faith and living. The Seminary community also desires to honor and respect the moral traditions of the churches for whose students we seek to provide training. These moral standards encompass every area of life, but the confusion about this specific topic demands that the community speak clearly regarding sexual ethics.

Our understanding of a Christian sexual ethic reserves heterosexual union for marriage and insists on continence for the unmarried. We believe premarital, extramarital and homosexual forms of explicit sexual conduct to be inconsistent with the teaching of Scripture.

Consequently, we expect all members of the Seminary community—trustees, faculty members, students, administrators, and classified staff members—to abstain from what we hold to be unbiblical sexual practices.

If any member of the administration, faculty, trustees, classified staff, or student body is charged with failure to abide by this Statement of Sexual Standards, the Seminary will invoke the procedures for investigation and, where necessary, discipline outlined in the Faculty, Staff, or Student Handbooks.

believe in God, the Father, Maker of Heaven and Earth; I believe in Jesus Christ . . . ; I believe in the Holy Catholic Church . . . and the resurrection from the dead . . ." But what if the Church was wrong in believing in God the Father as Creator, and in Jesus Christ as Redeemer? Is this not a very false way to pose the issue and utterly without warrant in the NT?

We confess that God has made himself known in Jesus Christ and in the same way that His Spirit has brought into existence a people of God, his Church. We have the promise of His continuous presence and guidance which is daily confirmed. Our confession in the reality of the Church as bearer of the Gospel proclamation is equally strong as in Christology. The Church's designation of an authoritative canon was simply a derivative of its Christology. This is not to claim "inerrancy" for the canon, but rather to stake out the parameters of the Christian faith and to provide a point of standing in the belief that God is faithful and will not abandon his people to confusion in spite of their sin. Just as there is no "objective criterion" by which to prove that Jesus Christ is God's elect Son, the Church cannot *prove* from a neutral position shared with unbelief that its canon is from God. No degree of historical inerrancy can confirm this testimony, but only the Spirit. Thus, the Church has confessed from the beginning of its inception that the Holy Spirit continues to instruct, edify, and admonish God's people through the apostolic witness to Jesus Christ.

But enough of this. You can see that your review has stimulated further reflection and thought.

Taking Mennonite History Seriously

by Dennis D. Martin

Maintaining the Right Fellowship: A Narrative Account of Life in the Oldest Mennonite Community in North America **by John L. Ruth (Herald Press, 1984, 616 pp., $24.95).**
Land, Piety, Peoplehood: The Establishment of Mennonite Communities in America, 1683-1790, **Mennonite Experience in America, Vol. 1 by Richard K. MacMaster (Herald Press, 1985, 340 pp., $12.00).**

In 1937 a recent graduate of Westminster Theological Seminary named J.C. Wenger published a history of eastern Pennsylvania's Franconia Conference of the Mennonite Church. Fifty years later J.C. Wenger is emeritus professor of historical theology at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries and a respected storytelling guardian of the Swiss-Pennsylvania Mennonite heritage. John L. Ruth, a former teacher of literature and present freelance filmmaker and storytelling interpreter of the Mennonite heritage, has now given us a history of the Franconia Conference and its counterpart, the Eastern District of the General Conference Mennonite Church. It is not a typical regional denominational history, i.e., it is not merely a collection of biographies, congregational historical sketches and desultory photographs of high schools and retirement homes.

It is rare that a local denominational study merits attention beyond its own constituency. Ruth's book merits attention because it is a fine piece of regional history told with considerable narrative power. Coinciding with the three-hundredth anniversary of the initial Quaker-Mennonite immigration to Germantown, Pennsylvania, Ruth's book carries the story of a people through three centuries of emigration, immigration and acculturation, following the thread of their effort to maintain identity through a disciplined church life.

Maintaining the Right Fellowship is a story of Quaker-Mennonite tensions and commonalities in Germany's Rhine Valley and of Dutch Mennonite aid to and exasperation at Swiss Mennonite refugees over a century of emigration. It is the story of Mennonite peoplehood in the midst of Pennsylvania's varied peoples: Lutheran and Reformed, Pietist, Dunkers, Schwenkfelders, Quakers. It is the story of Mennonite divisions in response to the American revolt against the king of England and in response to a nineteenth century American enthusiasm for education, evangelism, and organization. Ruth's treatment of two main schisms in the 1770s and 1840s would be profitable reading for Christians of any tradition as case studies in church discipline, leadership styles, and decision making by consensus or by "parliamentary democracy."

Ruth uses family records and tales to document and interpret many of the events he chronicles. At times the detailed narration of family interconnections will swamp the outside reader to the same degree that it will fascinate eastern Pennsylvania Mennonites: Ruth traces migrations to Ohio, Indiana and Ontario, following eastern Pennsylvania natives who assumed denominational leadership roles.

The first two or three chapters of *Maintaining the Right Fellowship* could serve as an alternate introduction for a study of American church history, contrasting with the familiar story of Puritan immigration and settlement. The fifth chapter, on the Pennsylvania Mennonite experience of the Revolution (cf. Ruth's booklength treatment of the same materials in *'Twas Seeding Time* [Herald Press, 1976]), could be used in survey courses as a reminder that there were two sides to the war for independence. Few Mennonites and even fewer non-Mennonites are aware of Mennonite involvement in the early Christian and Missionary Alliance (p. 370). (Members of the Church of the Brethren [Dunkers] and related groups were also involved in the early CMA. See *Brethren Encyclopedia* [1983], p. 259).

Maintaining the Right Fellowship is, however, a denominational regional history and, despite Ruth's narrative skill, reveals its origins: the list of donors at the back of the book, the use of the in-house Mennonite codewords "unordained" and "ethnic" on the dedication page, occasional untranslated German ("zersplittert" on p. 303), and chains of family-transmitted anecdotes (pp. 172ff). Most blemishes are editorial: The book has excellent maps for Mennonite origins in Europe but a good map for colonial eastern Pennsylvania would have been a great help to readers plowing their way through the intricate interconnections of families and villages. The modern map of the area on p. 479 is inadequate for that purpose. Cross-referencing in footnotes is outstanding; the index is thorough, especially for names.

At times Ruth's colloquial story-telling style and his tendency to tell what the future held for an individual, family, or congregation under discussion becomes distracting (e.g., p. 213 bottom, p. 284 top). Colloquial language, as in the case of references to two congregations that "had gotten stone meetinghouses" and to another that "seems also

Dennis D. Martin is the Assistant Editor of the Mennonite Encyclopedia and Assistant Professor of Church History at the Associated Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Indiana.

to have gotten one about this time" (pp. 139-40) might work orally but seem questionable in print. Strings of (partly parenthetical) modifiers abound: "This musical (like his mother Magdalena Hunsberger), conscientious, Bible-steeped pastor was an overpowering orator" (p. 347). The term "squaw" on p. 165 will be disconcerting to some readers.

The second book under review here also picks up where J.C. Wenger left off. Twenty years ago Wenger edited *The Mennonite Church in America* (Herald, 1966), a survey that was not really intended to be a definitive reference work, certainly not for all Mennonite groups in the United States. Scholarship on North American Mennonites has lagged far behind scholarship on sixteenth-century Anabaptism. Frank H. Epp's still unfinished multivolume history of *Mennonites in Canada* (1974, 1982) and the projected four-volume Mennonite Experience in America (MEA) series seek to remedy that situation. The first volume in the MEA series, Richard MacMaster's *Land, Piety, Peoplehood* is a promising downpayment on the endeavor. It belongs in the library of every university or seminary that is committed to the study of American religious history.

MacMaster, like the authors at work on subsequent volumes in the series, is a professional historian. In MacMaster's case this involves an interest in settlement patterns and tax and land records. After several generations of Mennonite historical scholarship led by theologian-pastor-historians (Harold Bender, J.C. Wenger, S. F. Pannabecker, J.B. Toews, John A. Toews), a growing pool of historians, aided by a network of several dozen Mennonite archives and historical libraries (e.g., Lancaster, Pa.; Fresno, Cal.; Winnipeg; Newton, Kans.; Goshen, Ind.), is hard at work on a variety of local and regional studies.

Whereas John Ruth's history of eastern Pennsylvania Mennonites narrates rather expansively the immigration process, MacMaster covers both immigration to Pennsylvania and migration to surrounding areas during the eighteenth century concisely. Rather than family connections and anecdotes, the connecting thread for MacMaster's study is provided by the economic and social forces that pushed and pulled Mennonites from Europe to eastern Pennsylvania and onward to Lancaster County, to Maryland and Virginia, and to western Pennsylvania. Determined to put the lie to the filiopietistic Mennonite image of a devout people migrating primarily for religious reasons and settling in compact, closed, Mennonite communities, he repeatedly points to ways in which Mennonites were stimulated by land prices and commerce and emphasizes their interaction with Dunker, Pietist, Lutheran, Reformed, and English neighbors. At times he overdoes the debunking. I find unconvincing his cautiously nonseparatist, nonsectarian explanation for the American republication of the Mennonite martyrology in the 1740s (143-45). Geographical intermingling does not necessarily preclude sectarian separateness (138-51). On the other hand, his careful work with tax lists and land ownership records amply documents the variations of wealth and poverty within supposedly tidy Mennonite communities.

Thus, the corrective emphasis on variety within the Mennonite world and on Mennonite interaction with non-Mennonites is needed and welcome. Yet the story of Mennonite separateness and religious subculture should not be completely abandoned in the colonial period or in later centuries. MacMaster occasionally shows caution. He rightly points out that Mennonite communities became more compact over time as land prices rose and wealthier Mennonites bought up surrounding land to establish their children in farming. It will remain for subsequent volumes of the Mennonite Experience in America series to explain the degree to which a self-conscious subcultural separatism does or does not characterize the Mennonite story in the 19th and 20th centuries. MacMaster's chapters on colonial and Revolutionary politics and Mennonite pacifism begin the explanation: the seeds of a Mennonite isolationist subculture may have sprouted during that trial by fire.

MacMaster's study of the impact of Pietism and revivalism (ch. 6, 8) are also insightful. With Robert Friedmann (*Mennonite Piety through the Centuries*[1949]), MacMaster points to differing shades of meaning for key terms like *Gelassenheit* (yieldedness) in sixteenth-century Anabaptism and eighteenth-century Pietism. Yet MacMaster lacks Friedman's polemical tone and finds much that is positive in the Pietist impact on Anabaptism, pointing to the schoolmaster Christopher Dock as an example of the way in which Pietism provided connections between Mennonites and the general Pennsylvania-German world. MacMaster's descriptions of congregational life and preaching in chs. 6-7 are well worth reading as cross-sections of the colonial Mennonite experience.

Editorial problems are few: the map of "European Rhinelands" might have been better placed in chapter 1; some effort to provide modern equivalents for the frequent references to colonial and European currencies, despite the perils that accompany any such attempt, might have been in order; the reference to American Indians as "friendly reds" on p. 242 will offend some readers.

Apart from hagiographical chronicles and martyrologies and except for the 18th- and 19th-century Dutch Mennonite historians, Mennonite history-writing began only about one hundred years ago in Germany, Russia, and North America. Fifty to seventy-five years ago, C. Henry Smith and Harold Bender began an apostolate aimed at telling the Anabaptist story to the larger church and world. These efforts succeeded in rehabilitating sixteenth-century Anabaptism so that by the 1950s and 1960s, it was a major branch of Reformation studies that was no longer exclusively carried on by Mennonites. (This historiography is reviewed by James M. Stayer in *Reformation Europe: A Guide to Research* ed. Steven E. Ozment [1982] pp. 135-39 and by several authors in *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, [1956] II: 751-69).

During the last fifty years Mennonites have increasingly entered the North American mainstream culturally and socially. From a base in the education and health-care professions (1900ff), they have entered a wide variety of professions and the business world. It is unlikely that non-Mennonites will take up the study of post-sixteenth-century Mennonite history in the same way that Anabaptist studies have expanded. In-house Mennonite scholarship is only the beginning to work over the four centuries of Mennonite history since the formative decades, 1525-75. From genealogical studies and personal reminiscences by the remaining eyewitnesses of the Mennonite exodus from the Soviet Union sixty years ago to numerous regional, institutional, topical, and denominational histories by professional historians it is evident that the last two centuries are receiving the greatest attention. (A partial list would include the following: Theron F. Schlabach, *Gospel versus Gospel* [1980]; James Juhnke, *A People of Mission* [1979] and *A People of Two Kingdoms* [1975]; Richard K. MacMaster and others, *Conscience in Crises* [1979]; John B. Toews, *Czars, Soviets, and Mennonites* [1982]; Carlton O. Wittlinger, *Quest for Piety and Obedience [1978]; Paul Toews, ed., Pilgrims and Strangers* [1977]; and James O. Lehman's excellent histories of congregations and Mennonite communities). The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries remain the stepchildren of Anabaptist-Mennonite history.

Future research will be aided by the two-volume *Mennonite Bibliography, 1631-1961*, compiled by Nelson P. Springer and A.J. Klassen. Significant sociological studies are also emerging (John A. Hostetler, *Amish Society* [1963, 1968, 1980] and *Hutterite Society* [1974]; Leland Harder and J. Howard Kaufman, *Anabaptists Four Centuries Later* [1975]; numerous articles in sociological journals and *Mennonite Quarterly Review*). The Institute of Mennonite Studies at Elkhart, the Chair of Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg, and two journals (*Journal of Mennonite Studies*, Winnipeg and *Conrad Grebel Review*, Waterloo, Ontario) have taken the lead in stimulating biblical, theologial and literary research and dialogue. No longer is history the sole focus for Mennonite scholarship in the humanities.

Yet historical studies remain an important part of the Mennonite scene and the books by Ruth and MacMaster represent some of the best efforts to synthesize the present state of American Mennonite historiography. They should serve a dual purpose: to remind Mennonites of their past in an era when Mennonites are rapidly leaving behind their distinctive subculture and experiencing in the process a significant identity crisis and to call on the members of mainstream Christian traditions in North America and Europe to take Mennonite history as seriously as they have begun to take Anabaptist history. The third stage—when Mennonites sufficiently resolve their identity transformation in their post-sectarian epoch—will, this reviewer hopes, find Mennonites taking the mainstream Christian traditions equally seriously.

Early Christians in the Roman Empire

by Christopher Haas

***The Christians as the Romans Saw Them* by Robert W. Wilken (Yale University, 1984, 214 pp., $17.95). *Pagan Rome and the Early Christians* by Stephen Benko (Indiana University Press, 1984, 180 pp., $20.00). *Christianizing the Roman Empire* by Ramsay MacMullen (Yale University Press, 1984, 183 pp., $18.00).**

"Thus we two faced each other across the trench in solemn colloquy." (Homer *Odyssey* 11:81-82)

"... between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us." (Luke 16:26)

For many years, classicists and students of the New Testament and early church have gazed at each other across a broad chasm which has traditionally separated their disciplines. Surprisingly, they both tend to go about their business on either side of this canyon in a strikingly similar fashion, employing a methodology which is concerned primarily with textual matters or with questions internal to their chosen literary works. On occasion, a few bold academic engineers have painstakingly constructed interdisciplinary bridges which have spanned the gap. Indeed, during the last years of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of this century these bridges carried a veritable flood of traffic between the disciplines. However, most of this traffic was one-way, as many New Testament scholars crowded onto what came to be a rather unreliable bridge, across which they "discovered" the pagan mystery cults and their similarities to Christianity. Other interdisciplinary work proved to be built more solidly, especially that of A.D. Nock (1902-1963) and F.J. Dölger (1879-1940). Generally though, after the Second World War communication between the two fields of inquiry slowed to a trickle, with the migration of F.F. Bruce from Classics to New Testament studies being a noted exception.

Within the last ten to fifteen years, however, there has been increased activity in both camps, as scholars have become more interested in the socio-cultural settings of their beloved texts. The field of Roman social history has witnessed tremendous advances during this period, owing to the work of scholars such as Claude Nicolet, Moses Finley, Keith Hopkins, and Ramsay MacMullen. Likewise, studies concerned with the social setting of the New Testament and early church have blossomed during these same years, pioneered by Gerd Theissen, E.A. Judge, R.M. Grant, and Abraham Malherbe. The phenomenal success of Wayne Meeks' *The First Urban Christians* attests to this new interest in sociological questions. Perhaps more remarkable is that the recent developments in both disciplines have been carried out, for the most part, independently of one another, and they have since resulted in renewed exchange between the worlds of *Antike und Christentum*.

This interdisciplinary interest is best exemplified by Robert Wilken's *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*, Stephen Benko's *Pagan Rome and the Early Christians*, and Ramsay MacMullen's *Christianizing the Roman Empire*. Their almost simultaneous publication in 1984 indicates how strong these new currents are in interdisciplinary research, and they represent both the strengths and the limitations of this new trend. Although Wilken and Benko approach their subject from the *Christentum* side and MacMullen brings to bear a classicist's perspective, all three strive to present a pagan's-eye view of Christianity. Moreover, they set forth those elements in early Christianity that made the new religion an object of scorn and persecution as well as a force that attracted increasing numbers of converts throughout the Roman world.

In many respects, Robert Wilken's book is the most accessible of the three being reviewed, partly because his aims are modest ones: "By focusing on the comments of Roman and Greek writers on Christianity, I show how pagans thought about religion and philosophy and the society in which they lived, while at the same time shedding light on early Christianity" (p. xv). The success of Wilken's book is also due to his ability to keep his intended audience in focus, the general reader as well as "students of Christian history and theology." Only twice does technical verbiage raise its formidable head in the text: *lares* (Roman domestic deities) appear on p. 26 with no accompanying definition, and the Greekless general reader comes face to face with *thiasarchès* on p. 45. My only other suggestion along these lines would be to include a map to orient the reader in locating Wilken's colorful pagan spokesmen.

It is these spokesmen who receive pride of place in Wilken's book, and he does an admirable job of allowing them to speak clearly to us across the centuries. Wilken has not simply collated all of the references to Christianity in pagan literature, a sort of updated version of P. de Labriolle's *La Réaction païenne* (1934). Rather, he has carefully chosen the most articulate critics of Christianity from the pagan literary and philosophical elite: Pliny the Younger, Galen, Celsus, Porphyry, and the apostate emperor, Julian II. Wilken begins with Pliny and his much-discussed exchange of letters with the emperor Trajan, and uses these letters as the springboard for a two chapter digression on Christianity as a *collegium* and Christianity as a *superstitio*. The *collegia* were Greco-Roman societies formed as craft guilds, burial societies, or cult organizations. Much of Wilken's discussion here is patterned after his able survey, "Collegia, Philosophical Schools and Theology" in S. Benko and J.J. O'Rourke, eds., *The Catacombs and the Colosseum* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1971), pp. 268-291. He points out the intriguing parallels between the *collegia* and the organization of the church, but skirts the oft-debated issue whether these similarities affected the legal status of the church during this early period. His discussion of the widespread characterization of Christianity as a *superstitio* includes observations by Plutarch, Tacitus, and Suetonius, providing us with a concise account of Roman religious scruples and the ways in which ancient society was permeated by religious concerns.

Important as this is, it serves as no more than stage dressing for the last four chapters, each setting forth in detail the views of Christianity's most eloquent critics. These chapters constitute one of the best surveys in English of the criticisms offered by Galen, Celsus, Porphyry and Julian. Wilken demonstrates how these attacks were grounded in Greek philosophical concepts, and how the pagans, in effect, set the agenda for early Christian theology by assailing emerging doctrines which required more defensible intellectual underpinnings: creation *ex nihilo*, the incarnation, the resurrection of the body, the role of Christ in a monotheistic religion, and the relationship between Christianity and Judaism. Especially on this last point, Wilken exhibits great sensitivity to the pagan arguments, no doubt the fruit of several years of research best exemplified by his recent *John Chrysostom and the Jews* (1983).

While Wilken's book serves as an admirable introduction to pagan views of Christianity, it should be pointed out that these are the opinions of only a tiny fraction of the empire's inhabitants. Perhaps the book should be better titled, "The Christians as Selected Members of the Pagan Literary Elite Saw Them." This narrow focus is not necessarily to be faulted; in part, it is determined by the survival of scanty source material. Even Porphyry's literary output is extant largely in fragments. Nevertheless, an exclusive concern with the educated literary elite ignores the seemingly inarticulate mass of the pagan population, whose religious views we can only discern from material remains and from humble inscriptions—including some tens of thousands of funerary inscriptions and domestic altars. Exploiting such sources, however, is a daunting task and even some of the most well-received surveys of Roman reli-

Christopher Haas is a doctoral candidate in Roman History at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

gion, such as J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz's *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion* (1979), confine their analysis to the views of certain literary spokesmen. Upon closer observation, it may turn out that the pagan man in the street has more in common with his unsophisticated Christian neighbor than with Neoplatonic philosophers of the likes of Porphyry and Julian.

Early on in his introduction, Wilken sets forth another line of analysis which he pursues throughout the book: that the pagan criticisms of the church "tell us something significant about the character of the early Christian movement" (xiv). Arguing from the premise, "How something is perceived is an aspect of what it is," he concludes that the "attitudes of others, and the roles assigned by society to individuals or groups, define and shape identity" (pp. xiv, 31). This is an intriguing thesis, with great potential for revising conventional interpretations of the early church. Patricia Crone has raised a storm of controversy in Islamic studies by arguing in a similar fashion, that the best sources for the early history of Islam are the criticisms and observations of contemporary Byzantine writers, (see her *Hagarism*, 1977, co-authored with Michael Cook; and the Introduction to her *Slaves on Horses*, 1980). Wilken gives us glimpses of how such a line of reasoning can prove useful in his discussions of anti-intellectualism in the church (pp. 78-79), and of pre-Nicene conceptions of Christ (p. 107). Unfortunately, he hesitates to follow this argumentation vigorously, for example, when he dismisses as a cross-cultural *interpretatio* Tertullian's description of the church as a *collegium* in his *Apology* (pp. 45-46). Just as Wilken has clearly shown early Christian theology to develop as a response to pagan criticism, could not the organization and liturgy of the church (its inner "social world") evolve as a response to the social expectations of its first observers and recently-converted members?

Stephen Benko has sought to address these issues in his *Pagan Rome and the Early Christians*, a little book which is sure to both fascinate and enlighten students of early Christianity. He limits his discussion to the second century, a formative period which set the course for Christian/pagan interaction before Constantine. Taking Wilken's methodology a step farther, Benko states, "The Premise of this book is to give the pagans the benefit of the doubt and to assume that they have been right" (ix). Such an assumption gives rise to the book's most provocative chapters in which Benko assesses pagan accusations that the Christians were promiscuous, engaged in ritual murder and cannibalism, and also practiced magical arts.

Before analyzing these various charges, Benko (like Wilken) begins with a discussion of Pliny's encounter with Christians in Bithynia/Pontus. Benko does an outstanding job of helping his readers appreciate the concerns and presuppositions of a conscientious Roman administrator. The *carmen* which the Christians sing to Christ may be a simple hymn, but a *carmen* could also be a magical incantation. The *sacramentum* which binds them together might be the initiation rite into a mystery cult, or it might be the oath which joins them in a political conspiracy. We follow Pliny during the course of his investigations and discover that, to many of his contemporaries such as Tacitus and Suetonius, the very name of Christian implied "certain antisocial and criminal activities" (p. 9). The only drawback to Benko's analysis of these Roman suspicions regarding Christianity is the exaggerated importance he assigns to the Bacchanalian scandal of 186 B.C. and the Catilinarian conspiracy of 63 B.C. as providing parallels for a suspected Christian cabal. While not discounting the importance of these events in Roman history, it is difficult to gauge their impact on Roman ways of thinking some 150 to 300 years later. Here again, we see how easy it is to be held captive by our literary sources, in this case Livy and Cicero. Pliny had other precedents closer at hand: the conspiracy of Caepio and Murena against Augustus, that of Sejanus in A.D. 31, the successful plot against Caligula in A.D. 41, and most importantly the Jewish insurrections in Palestine and Egypt.

After a generally weak chapter on Lucian's biography of Peregrinus (due to less-than-recent notes and an imprecise conception of Cynicism), Benko comes to the heart of his book, the three fascinating chapters on Christian immorality and cannibalism, the holy kiss, and Christian magical practices. Benko does not take the easy route of either rejecting out of hand the pagan charges of Christian licentiousness and cannibalism, or claiming that the pagans simply misunderstood Christian terminology—as in "eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man." Instead, he concludes that some of these accusations were grounded in truth, and reflected practices "found in certain Gnostic-Christian groups that advocated some exceedingly bizarre and repellent practices" (p. 63). Benko's analysis is based on extensive previous research concerning a deviant analysis is based on extensive previous research concerning a deviant Gnostic sect known as the Phibionites, and he makes clear the inner logic and consistency of their theology—albeit a theology which led to abhorrent practices. Thus, the deeds of certain fringe groups were attributed to the entire church, and the early Christians found themselves in a situation that reminds one of many Anabaptists in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to whom were unjustly ascribed the excesses of John of Leiden and his colleagues at Münster in 1533-35.

In the chapters concerned with the holy kiss and magic in early Christianity, Benko broadens his field of analysis to include the entire church, not just fringe sects. He finds that the kiss employed in liturgical settings owed its use partly to a long-held Mediterranean notion that the religious kiss somehow effected "a relationship with the divine for the purpose of attaining life" (p. 98). In his discussion of magical practices in early Christianity, we see the Christians inhabitating a common thought-world with their pagan neighbors, employing methods of controlling divine powers that appear similar to those of popular paganism. It is in this context that Benko places exorcism, glossolalia, miracles effected by powerful names and signs, (although he ignores "the laying on of hands"), as well as participation in sacred meals. This may sound curiously reminiscent of a *Golden Bough* type approach to ritual and cult, but Benko is careful to "distinguish between the appearance of magic and that which was truly magic" (p. 131). It is this sort of judicious analysis which characterizes Benko's books as a whole, and makes it one of the most insightful interdisciplinary studies to appear in recent years.

With the exception of an unnecessary final chapter outlining high-brow criticisms of the early church, Benko confines his discussion to popular images of Christianity, images which could so repel the pagan observer as to incite persecution. Ramsay MacMullen, in his *Christianizing the Roman Empire*, looks at the other side of this pagan/Christian encounter to determine the forces of attraction which prompted pagans to embrace Christianity. MacMullen's book can best be understood as a companion volume to his highly-regarded *Paganism in the Roman Empire* (1981), in which he colorfully depicts, not a monolithic religion known as paganism, but a mosaic of sects and religious systems, as well as a great variation in individual religious commitment and practice. In the book here reviewed, MacMullen finds this same variation in both pagans and Christians, and offers the friendly *caveat* that modern scholars frequently are "misled about the proportions of piety and indifference within the empire's population" (p. 6).

Clearly, the most important contribution MacMullen makes to the field of early Christianity studies consists of his methodological observations regarding "conversion" in the ancient world. He takes issue with the prevailing view that conversion, to be counted as such, must be "intense and consuming." Moreover, he helps his readers set aside the modern Western assumption that religion should be equated with doctrine and belief. In the ancient world, actions flowing from a quite-often simple allegiance counted for far more, and he concludes, "It would be arbitrary to insist on a stricter definition of 'Christian' than did the church itself" (p. 52). How does one classify a tribe of desert bedouins whom the church chroniclers depict converting *en masse* to Christianity?

While only a third of the book deals with the period before Constantine, some of MacMullen's most intriguing observations regard the "points of contact and modes of persuasion" before A.D. 312. Here, he details ideas first adumbrated in *Paganism* . . . (pp. 96, 135) and later developed in his article, "Two Types of Conversion to Early Christianity," *Vigiliae Christianae* 37 (1983): 174-192. On the examination of the sources he finds that a demonstration of supernatural power, particularly "the manhandling of demons," was "the chief instrument of conversion" during this period (pp. 27-28). This is even more surprising, considering that most of these acts of wonder-working were essentially private, not public, since the Christians

found it prudent to avoid public attention by the early second century. Indeed, MacMullen goes so far as to assert that "after St. Paul, the church had no mission, it made no organized or official approach to unbelievers; rather it left everything to individuals" (pp. 33-34). While this may be overstating the case, one can see how there would be many opportunities for individual proselytizing in the teeming urban centers so vividly described by MacMullen in his *Roman Social Relations*, (1974). The only other type of conversion he sees is that of the convinced intellectual, such as Justin Martyr or later Augustine, but he argues that these celebrated conversions have received attention disproportionate to their real historical significance. Edward Gibbon and his later disciples might reply that the siphoning off of intellectual talent to the church in the fourth century ensured the downfall of the Western empire, a fact of more than passing significance.

This, of course, carries the discussion past Constantine who made all the difference in the fortunes of the early church. MacMullen recounts the familiar story of imperial patronage and increasing coercion throughout the fourth century, a combination of forces which he labels "flattery and battery." He also describes the ways in which Christianity both transformed and was in turn shaped by its surrounding culture, exploring the vague "shared territory" existing between Christianity and paganism—from amulets to emperor worship.

This is not an easy book. Although it will certainly appeal to specialists, large portions of MacMullen's book should also be mandatory reading for those interested in the history of conversion, evangelization strategies, and the contextualization of the Christian message in various cultures. Strengths such as these demonstrate the utility of bridging the gap between *Antike und Christentum*.

BOOK REVIEWS

The End of the Ages Has Come: An Early Interpretation of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus

by Dale C. Allison, Jr. (Fortress, 1985, 194 pp.) Reviewed by Joel B. Green, Ph.D., Acting Dean and Assistant Professor of New Testament, New College for Advanced Christian Studies, Berkeley, CA.

Based on a 1982 Ph.D. thesis at Duke University, this study argues for a pointedly eschatological interpretation of Jesus' death and resurrection from the very beginning of the Christian movement: "The eschatological prophecies of Jesus were believed to have met their initial fulfillment in the Messiah's death and resurrection. Thus had dawned the great Day of the Lord."

Allison is clearly indebted to C.H. Dodd, H.W. Bartsch, and A. Strobel—each of whom emphasized "realized eschatology" ("The end of the ages has come!") in his own way. He argues, however, that none of these scholars has either adequately accounted for the presence in the early church of a realized eschatology or properly nuanced this aspect of the NT message. Moreover, against G.B. Caird and others, he maintains that the language of realized eschatology is not the language of metaphor: to claim that the Messiah had come was to claim that the eschatological promises had been fulfilled, and this claim must be taken at face value. The why and how of this claim constitute the point of departure for Allison's study.

The first part of Allison's study is largely given over to discussions of the NT evidence for an eschatological interpretation of the death of Jesus. Allison discovers in the passion narratives of Mark, Matthew, and John, as well as in Paul and Revelation, the view that Jesus' death marked the beginning of the fulfillment of eschatological expectations—that the passion partakes of the messianic woes and the vindication of Jesus belongs to the onset of the general resurrection. Particularly in the chapters of this section devoted to the Gospels, Allison engages in careful critical work, for he is interested in establishing the presence of this theme not only at the level of the NT writings but indeed from the very beginning of the Christian faith. Compared to this more technical work Allison's chapter on Luke-Acts is much less satisfying; here, in a rather cursory treatment, Allison finds no additional traces of the attempt to portray the end of Jesus as the eschatological turning point.

Having established the presence of a realized eschatology in earliest Christianity, Allison then devotes a second section of his work to explaining the rise of this phenomenon. In chapters of "Jesus and the Kingdom of God," "The Death of Jesus and the Great Tribulation," and "Correlations: From Expectation to Interpretation," he suggests that Jesus himself understood his ministry and end in eschatological categories; hence, at Jesus' vindication, his disciples understood that his expectation had in part come to fulfillment. This led to an interpretation of the passion and resurrection in eschatological categories and constituted the genesis of realized eschatology. This eschatology was not "realized" in the classical sense of the word, however; Allison prefers "inaugurated eschatology" as a label, for this focuses more on the *initial* fulfillment of eschatological expectations while leaving room for the further, forward-looking expectations also characteristic of the earliest church. Making use of insights from social psychology, Allison further demonstrates how natural it was that those first Christians maintained their inaugurated eschatology in spite of the fact that the kingdom of God had not arrived as hoped.

Throughout his book Allison is to be commended for his attention to technical detail, theological awareness, and for his remarkable comprehensiveness in synthesizing a huge body of data, both biblical and extrabiblical. His excurses on "Belief in the Resurrection of Jesus" and epilogue on "Theological Reflections" build helpful bridges from his sometimes arcane study to the wider concerns of theologians and the larger church. Apart from matters of detail here and there, most questions raised in an attempt to interact with his work stem from the very narrow focus of its argument. It would be interesting, therefore, to see Allison discuss other, perhaps competing, very early interpretations of Jesus' end. While the Gospels' passion narratives do contain the sort of interpretation with which he credits them, and while Allison is right to argue for the pre-canonical character of this interpretation, are there not other interpretations with an equal claim to antiquity? Can the Lukan evidence, which also utilizes early material, be swept aside so easily? What of the salvific interpretation of Jesus' death in pre-Pauline formulae? And so on. In the end, however, Allison has accomplished what he set out to do—i.e. he has demonstrated the genesis of realized eschatology in Jesus' own expectations, death, and resurrection. He thus accounts for this important interpretation of Jesus' work and shows the continuity between pre- and post-Easter thinking.

Church, Kingdom, World

edited by Gennadios Limouris. Faith and Order Paper No. 130 (Geneva, World Council of Churches, 1986, 209 pp., $8.95). Reviewed by Jeffrey Gros, Director, Commission on Faith and Order, National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA.

In exploring the biblical understanding of Christ's work with the disciples and God's saving will for humankind, one of the most fascinating and difficult doctrines of the Christian world is the nature of God's Church. This book represents a discussion of the biblical understanding of the Church and its mission in the world from a number of perspectives around the world. The book is the record of a conference, sponsored by the World Council of Churches, asking how Christians can speak of the unity of the Church and its relationship to the renewal of human community from their biblical understanding.

The volume includes six major essays from Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox traditions, four serious responses to these essays, and a number of discussion summaries and reports. The themes of Church and Kingdom, Church as Sign, Instrument and Sacrament, the Church and Human Community and the Challenge of Christian Witness all provide avenues for probing biblical, historical and theological reflection on God's will for the Christian community in history. For the Protestant student, the biblical essays from non-Protestant sources will provide clear and succinct insights into the faith of the majority of evangelical Christians in the world. The care given to outline the history and the biblical bases of the positions presented makes the book a valuable collection, though at times difficult reading because of the diversity of cultures and traditions represented.

A very helpful integration of scientific thinking and Christian eschatology is outlined in a Roman Catholic essay by a French scientist. While the point of view is undoubt-

edly controversial and more helpful than many modern Christian thinkers, the issues raised are crucial in the Church's confrontation with secularism in the modern world. While pre and postmillenial discussions are at the center of much U.S. Protestant theology, this is not the case in Catholic, Orthodox and European Protestant thought. The dialogue engendered with these two papers is particularly helpful in the contemporary spiritual climate.

A paper on the Church and the World in the light of the Kingdom of God by Jan Lochman, Karl Barth's successor at Basel, skillfully lays out the tension experienced in Protestant theologies and practice of Church, between the secularist temptation on the one hand and the otherworldly temptation of pietism on the other. We have both the difficulties of trying to remove ourselves, as Christians, from the flow and responsibility of history as well as of allowing the secular world to set the agenda for the Church. While setting out a theology of Church, continually open to reform, Lochman delineates a Protestant understanding that allows neither reduction to pietistic sectarianism or triumphal activism.

Orthodox and Catholic papers helpfully lay out understandings of Church rooted in the biblical understanding of communion, worship—especially Eucharistic worship of Word and Sacrament—and mystery. While these theologies are sometimes remote from common Protestant understandings, particularly in the U.S., their careful grounding in the Scripture points to their importance for the understanding of world-wide Christianity. The fact that the understanding of the Church's relation to the world is so carefully and firmly rooted in the Church's understanding of its own relationship to the trinity makes clear the complexity of this particular doctrinal discussion.

While the book is somewhat challenging reading, it brings together the quality of theological reflection that can enrich both the understanding and the practice of late 20th century Church life.

Human Medicine (rev. ed.)
by James B. Nelson and Jo Anne Smith Rohricht (Augsburg, 1984, 224 pp., $10.95). Reviewed by John Kilner, Assistant Professor of Social Ethics, Asbury Theological Seminary and Adjunct Professor of Medical Ethics, University of Kentucky.

The wait for a solidly biblical-Christian text on the gamut of issues in medical ethics is not over. However, the revised edition of *Human Medicine* by James B. Nelson and Jo Anne Smith Rohricht makes valuable reading while we are waiting. Eight important issues—caring, abortion, human experimentation, reproductive technologies, genetics, dying, organ transplantation, and resource allocation—receive about 25 pages of analysis each, beginning with one or more brief, engaging case studies. While there is unfortunately neither an index nor a bibliography, many helpful notes accompany each chapter.

The book disavows either a deontological ("rights and duties") or a teleological ("goals and consequences") ethical orientation, preferring instead an "ethics of responsibility" which consistently seeks to enhance the "normatively human." This effort is to be applauded, but requires a more careful definition and use of terms than the authors provide. They make much of the distinction between (merely) "human" and "personal" life (p. 21 and throughout, especially when the beginning and ending of life are in view). Yet, they generally elect to use the word "human" to refer to both "for economy of expression" (p. 24). One might have hoped for a little splurging with regard to the key ethical term in the book's title.

Much of the content of the book is quite good. Less familiar topics such as reproductive technologies and genetics receive excellent treatment from a social, psychological, legal, and historical—as well as ethical and, to a lesser extent, theological perspective. The authors also generally do a good job of identifying and responding to views with which they disagree, the discussion of euthanasia being a prime example. The most outstanding contribution of the book is its exploration of caring—an often neglected element of medical care. In references throughout the book as well as in more extended discussions (pp. 28-30, 154-155, 171-175), Nelson and Rohricht sensitively remind us of the larger caring relationship within which attempts at curing, when legitimate expressions of caring, may be pursued.

In light of this sensitivity the chapter on abortion is suprisingly weak and unbalanced, except for the excellent legal history of the problem included there. Rather than identifying the two main contemporary camps fairly, according to the value each emphasizes (pro-life and pro-choice) the authors give one group a negative cast ("anti-abortion"). Whereas "anti-abortion" laws are simply noted at the outset of the chapter, liberalized abortion laws are accompanied by a lengthy list of reasons undergirding them (pp. 32-33). Later, reasons given by supporters of permissive laws are simply stated, while opposing restrictive rationales are accompanied by negative criticism (pp. 41-43). The authors go so far in their neglect of much conservative scholarship as to assert without further comment that "scholars of the Bible and Talmud generally concur that only when the fetus comes into the world is it a 'person'" (p. 47). Needless to say, the authors lean strongly pro-choice (p. 57). This position is consistent with their views that personhood develops over time and is not necessarily a part of genetically human life (p. 20), and that active euthanasia even of adults is justifiable in certain circumstances (pp. 159-164).

One other questionable aspect of the book is its theological perspective. The book assumes that there are no absolute moral values which should direct our actions: "Think not to settle down forever in any truth" (pp. 12, 59, 138). The relative lack of biblical material throughout is no coincidence, nor is the naturalistic perspective that death is "a normal part of God's creation" (p. 144). Where Jesus is mentioned, his emphasis upon the heart's intention is given a "situation-ethics" interpretation (a la Joseph Fletcher, pp. 108-9) according to which truly moral action not only fulfills and goes beyond but may even contradict the moral law of the Old Testament. At the same time, the authors are quite perceptive in criticizing the body-Spirit dualism in much of contemporary Christianity (pp. 15-17), analyzing the notions of human rights and limitations from a theological perspective (pp. 211-12), and recognizing that human(e) existence "is both a gift and an achievement" (p. 216). All in all, then, despite some shortcomings, this book stands as one of the best among the few medical ethics texts written from a Christian perspective.

The Humiliation of the Word
by Jacques Ellul (Eerdmans, 1985, 285 pp., $14.95). Reviewed by Jack Balswick, Professor of Sociology and Family Development, Fuller Theological Seminary.

In *The Humiliation of the Word* Ellul continues his analysis of life in the technological society. His major thesis is that image and sight have replaced written and spoken language as a basis for arriving at the truth. There has been an "invasion of images into every area of contemporary life"—the classroom, where professors prefer to teach a subject which could be reduced in its entirety to visual symbols; the roadways, where signs and billboards of every color, form, and design give us a picture of the product and the good life it can bring; exhibitions and museums, where the development of our image-oriented society is viewed through photos, prototypes, drawings, sketches, diagrams, and slides; and finally in the more obvious visual media of films, television, newspapers, magazines, comic books, and photographs. Ellul concludes that images are indispensable for the construction of the technological society, and critical reflection is not possible without them.

The person living in the image-oriented society becomes a consumer of images, relying upon what is depicted as reality itself, instead of as a mere selected and contructed reality. But, as harmful as this unreflective acceptance of a false reality is, an even more harmful effect is that the image-oriented person also comes to rely upon the consumption of images in arriving at *truth*. Ellul is quite firm in his insistence that "the word belongs to the order of truth and sight to the order of reality" (p. 102).

The person who attempts to read this book too hurriedly will falsely assume that Ellul is holding the word up as being good and pure, and putting sight down as being bad and impure. Ellul's message is rather that both sight and the word are designed by God to form a unity, but in the technological society the runaway glorification of sight has caused "the humiliation of the word."

As with most of Ellul's works, this book is full of rich sociological insights. Even more, however, his concluding chapter, "Reconciliation," demontrates how the unity between

the word and sight can be restored. Ellul uses the apostle John's discussion of Jesus as the "word" and the "light" to illustrate that the radical message of the gospel can move the technological society beyond the unreflective acceptance of a false reality to a genuine searching for truth.

The Sermon on the Mount: Utopia or Program for Action?
by Pinchas Lapide (Orbis, 1986, 148 pp., $9.95). Reviewed by Joel B. Green, Ph.D., Acting Dean and Assistant Professor of New Testament, New College for Advanced Christian Studies, Berkeley, CA.

Is the Sermon on the Mount a vision of utopia or a program for action? Lapide's confident answer is the latter. But, considering the content of his study, Lapide could have more aptly subtitled his book, "Was Jesus a Jew?" Almost the whole of this volume is given to answering this question in the affirmative. Indeed, according to Lapide, in this sermon Jesus ("Rabbi Yeshua") was saying nothing more, nothing less than one might expect of a first-century Jewish teacher.

Lapide, himself an Orthodox Jew residing in Frankfurt, West Germany, initiates his study by pinpointing eight *mis*interpretations of the Sermon on the Mount and proceeds to comment on Matthew 5 section by section. Along the way he makes numerous comparisons between Jesus' teaching and that of the rabbi's, and suggests not a few interesting (if not always convincing) interpretations. The notion he develops is that Jesus, like his peers, was concerned to build a hedge around the Torah; hence, the so-called "antitheses" of the Sermon become "supertheses"—which deepen, intensify, and radicalize the biblical commandments. There is much to learn from Lapide, especially among contemporary Christians reared on an all too pessimistic and simplistic view of the Judaism of Jesus' day.

On the other hand, Lapide's views are not presented without cost. He fails to justify this attempt to evaluate Jesus' teaching against later rabbinic interpretation. Modern Christian scholarship in the Sermon on the Mount is largely bypassed. On numerous occasions he charges Matthew with mistranslating Jesus' sayings, sometimes insisting that the thought of Matthew and that of Jesus were fundamentally at odds with one another. For example, we are told Jesus "certainly" would never have quoted Lev. 19:18 ("Love your neighbor") without the phrases "as yourself" and "I am (God) the Lord" (as in Matt. 5:43-44), but Matthew has done so in order that the unbiblical hatred of enemies could be inserted as an anti-Jewish innuendo (p. 78). Surprisingly, this and other attempts at rewriting and re-translating the Sermon on the Mount come after Lapide's brief defense of the basic historicity of the text.

Moreover, Lapide insists that on the question of the law Jesus and early Christians opposed one another: "Thus what Jesus said of the eternal validity of the Torah was, within thirty years, turned into its opposite: Jesus became the 'end of the law' (Rom. 10:4)" (p. 19). Unfortunately for his case, Lapide's argument seems to be circular: The Sermon on the Mount must be read this way because as a good Jew Jesus could never have intended any other reading. Nor does he explain the events of Jesus' life and the development of early Christian thought in a way suited to support his thesis. What was Jesus' offense? Must we disallow *every* record of conflict between Jesus and the Jews in the Gospels? If Lapide is correct how do we explain the position of numerous New Testament witnesses vis-a-vis the law? Finally, at several points the question of Jesus' uniqueness is raised at least implicitly, but is neither recognized nor developed by Lapide.

Here, then, is a recent attempt to reclaim the Jewishness of Jesus which suggests many interesting parallels with rabbinic thought and makes the Christian reader look at a familiar text in an unfamiliar way. In the end, however, it is disappointing in the depth of its ethical analysis and ultimately unconvincing in its attempt to drive a wedge between Jesus and early Christianity.

Election and Predestination
by Paul K. Jewett (Eerdmans, 1985, 147 pp., $8.95). Reviewed by Clark H. Pinnock, Professor of Theology, McMaster Divinity College.

Paul Jewett has proved himself to be a profound evangelical systematic theologian over the years, and the back cover of this book informs us: "For accuracy, clarity, and competancy, this is the best modern discussion of the subject that I (Osterhaven) know." Therefore, one approaches the book with hope and expectation.

Typical of Jewett, the order of topics is a little unusual: first a historical overview, then the biblical data in five pages, then corporate election focussing on the Jews, and finally one hundred pages devoted to individual election and the "horrible decree" (Calvin). But such idiosyncrasies do not conceal Jewett's first rate theological mind and one does not go away dissatisfied.

The thesis of the book is the old Augustinian belief in election/reprobation. God has eternally decreed to save some sinners, and also not to save others, a plan of salvation Jewett tells us ought to lead us to worship and admire God. Although he admits that Scripture is less than clear in these matters, he accepts Augustine's construction of the doctrine even as Luther and Calvin did before him. The larger part of the book is then devoted to explaining and defending this apparently repugnant belief.

Occasionally in the course of his exposition the reviewer was given some hope of relief, as when Jewett introduces Barth's wonderful revision of the whole concept of election as the claim God has made upon the whole human race, but alas, Jewett rejects it. Another happened when he raised the nature of election as a corporate category, leading me to wish that he might dismiss Augustine's orientation to the election of a certain number of individuals in favour of it, but no such luck. And again when Jewett backs off supralapsarian Calvinism, finding it morally distasteful to think of God planning to damn people from the beginning, but then accepting its twin sister version which improves things hardly at all. In the end there is no relief for this post-Calvinist—Jewett wants to defend the awful package of election/reprobation even in 1986.

In his own closing ruminations, Jewett drags the issue of time and eternity across the subject in the hope the doctrine will appear more convincing. But nothing is changed by this move; God still must accept the responsibility of refusing to provide salvation to people no less qualified or unqualified for it. He also mentions the importance of human choice in conversion, but leaves us in no doubt about the sovereign of grace (read, coercive power) which lurks behind every such choice. He recognizes texts which speak of Christ's work on behalf of all sinners, and seems for a moment to want to accept them, but in the end he refuses to admit that God desires all to be saved.

It is impossible for me to read or review this book dispassionately. God, if he is as Jewett describes him, is simply not a good God. He does not deserve our worship, nor will he receive it. We are dealing in doctrinal tragedy. Not that Jewett himself is to blame. Most of our great "evangelical" seminaries are dominated by people who defend the same views. Like a small voice in the wilderness I want to say, Stop! Our suffering world needs to hear better news than this. I hope this phase of Augustinian theology is just about over, so that our theologians can begin to support the church's faithful witnesses who are out there telling people "God so loved *the world*." How I wish our theologians would learn to be goodnews theologians instead of badnews bears.

Maybe this is the best book there is on this subject. But if this is the final word on the topic, we are in bad shape.

The Galileo Connection: Resolving Conflicts Between Science and the Bible
by Charles E. Hummel (InterVarsity Press, 1986, 293 pp., $8.95). Reviewed by Richard H. Bube, Dept. of Materials Science & Engineering, Stanford University.

Over the last 20 years there have been a number of different books treating the topic of the interaction between science and the Christian faith, many with particular reference to the creation vs. evolution debate. Some have done this from a primarily philosophical perspective, analyzing the nature of science and considering its interaction with theology. Others have done this from a biblical perspective, inquiring as to how the Bible should be interpreted in order to be consistent with its intrinsic nature and purpose. In this book, Hummel enriches the picture by essentially giving an historical overview of the developments in science and the interaction with theology from Aristotle to Ein-

stein, with particular emphasis on the lives and testmonies of Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo and Newton, with an epilog on Pascal. Three-fifths of the book is devoted to this historical treatment, followed by equal portions of space devoted to the interpretation of the Bible, particularly the first chapters of Genesis, and to the creation-science controversy of the past few years.

Hummel, who has advanced degrees in both science and biblical literature, has served as president of Barrington College, and is currently director of faculty ministries for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, is admirably prepared for the task he has chosen. Without enumerating all of the points, it is fair to say that Hummel stands squarely in the center of the informed evangelical position that seeks to do justice both to authentic science and to authentic biblical theology. It is perhaps trivial but unfortunate anachronism that the publisher has chosen the subtitle with the phrase, "conflicts between science and the Bible," in spite of the fact that Hummel argues strongly for the position that both science and theology are human endeavors, and that it is possible for conflicts to arise only between these two human activities; i.e., there is a category confusion implicit in speaking of conflicts between science and the Bible that ought no longer appear in informed Christian literature.

Hummel is consistently faithful in avoiding the semantic pitfalls that so often characterize discussions of this type. He recognizes that one must understand the nature of scientific description, hypothesis, law, and theory, and he avoids the historical mistakes in relating God's activities to the physical universe: "According to the Bible, God does not 'intervene' in a semi-independent order of nature; nor is he a God-of-the-gaps working only in cracks and crevices of the universe." Similarly he recognizes the necessity to observe the intrinsic characteristics of the biblical revelation: "Once for all we need to get rid of the deep-seated feeling that figurative speech is inferior to literal language . . . we must give up the false antithesis that prose is fact while poetry is fiction. . . . The *historical-cultural* approach avoids those problems by explaining the creation days in light of the author's purpose, the literary genre of his message and what it meant to Israel at Mount Sinai."

This book deserves to be read widely. For the non-Christian it will help clear up some of the conceptual and historical caricatures that often obscure this subject, and for the Christian it will provide a balanced view on the nature of scientific and theological inquiry.

Christian Morality: Biblical Foundations
by Raymond F. Collins (Notre Dame Press, 1986, 258 pp., $22.95). Reviewed by Robert W. Wall, Th.D., Professor of Biblical Studies, Seattle Pacific University.

In this series of essays, Roman Catholic Bible scholar Raymond F. Collins, Professor of New Testament Studies at the Catholic University of Louvain, attempts to examine basic elements of the Christian's existence as envisaged by the biblical (and especially the New Testament) material. By doing so, Professor Collins takes up the challenge of the "Decree on Priestly Formation," issued as part of Vatican II. In that document, the leadership of the Council encouraged special attention be given to a moral theology which was thoroughly nourished by "scriptural teaching." The very same concern had already been expressed within Protestant Christianity by James Gustafson, who claimed the greatest in Protestant ethical formulations was the gulf between ethical thought and biblical studies.

After attending to the propriety of allowing Scripture to "speak" to the Church's moral concerns (chapter 1), Collins sets forth his general approach to biblical ethics. His discussion is noteworthy for two reasons: first, he is largely (although not exclusively) dependent upon Protestant scholarship in defending the point that Scripture is a critical resource for the Church's reflection upon moral concerns; and second, his discussion is ecumenical not only in scope but also in purpose since Protestants too are in need of hearing that Scripture is a moral authority. Protestants are often guilty of emphasizing "orthodoxy" over "orthopraxy" so that ethical concerns are often demoted, while Roman Catholics are so inclined to elevate the authority of the Church that the Bible's moral and theological authority is often denied. Collins' point, then, is a necessary one for *all* believers to hear: the Bible constitutes a moral authority of primary importance for the Christian community.

In subsequent chapters, Collins develops his programme. He grounds his moral advice in the Old Testament Decalogue (and especially its "second table") as it is worked out through the biblical tradition (consistent with the Reformed tradition as well as with the natural law tradition of Roman Catholicism). He posits his understanding of the Decalogue (chapter 2) within the theological framework of the "new covenant" (chapter 3): divine commandments are obeyed as covenantal obligations. The point is nicely illustrated by a discussion of "honor father and mother" (chapter 4). This more general introduction is followed by specific discussions of the love command (chapters 5-6), human sexuality (chapters 7-8), and the particularity of the New Testament's ethic/ethos (chapters 9-11).

I found Collins' work quite helpful as a readable introduction to Roman Catholic biblical ethics; indeed, he asks Roman Catholic questions, even though he sometimes answers them with the fruit of Protestant scholarship! He is at his best when discussing more practical, less programmatical concerns. His discussion of familial love (including care of aged parents) is superb. Other discussions are for insiders to the debates between Roman Catholic ethicists (e.g., "proportionalism" in chapter 11). However, his discussion on "Christian Personalism and the Sermon on the Mount" is quite helpful as a corrective for those evangelical Protestants whose values enshrine the modern philosophy of "personalism" rather than biblical teaching.

For all that is commendable and useful about this work, I do have two major criticisms. The first is an overall impression of Collins' scholarship: it tends to be imprecise. On a number of occasions, he assumes a position as obvious or as emboding a consensus when in fact it is contested between or has been rejected by current scholarship. On other occasions he is rather too optimistic about the conclusions of critical scholarship: what is "obvious" to Collins is sometimes but a historicist speculation of one (usually German) school of critical thought.

A more decisive criticism is *hermeneutical.* One is never certain what Collins actually thinks about the theological ground of Scripture's moral authority. As a result, he does not pay enough attention to how or why one "moves" from the moral dilemma to the Bible for advice (the metaethical and methodological concerns). It is as though good exegesis is sufficient, when clearly this does not help us bring the Bible together with the moral concerns of the Church during the current age in a coherent way. More specifically, Collins does not know what to do with the Bible's own diverse moral advice. For example, he very nicely develops the Johannine idea of "loving one another," using the best of redactional critical methods to discern that John's "new commandment" bids the disciple to love "brothers" in distinctively "Christian" ways in order to form a distinctively Christian community. Yet, he does not see that the Synoptic idea of "loving *enemies*" is not the same; nor does he see that this inspired diversity is somehow *useful* in the development of a distinctively Christian lifestyle. With other redaction critics, he is content to leave such differences alone rather than bring them into mutually-informing, canonical conversations.

I would still recommend this book, even though it is not as solid as Allen Verhey's *The Great Reversal* or Stephen Charles Mott's *Biblical Ethics and Social Change* as a primer for biblical ethics. In particular, it is a book most suitable for those who are interested in a Roman Catholic's view of how Scripture informs ethical judgments.

A Crack in the Jar: What Ancient Jewish Documents Tell Us About the New Testament
by Neil S. Fujita (Paulist Press, 1986, 312 PP., $9.95). Reviewed by J. Julius Scott, Jr., Professor of Biblical and Historical Studies, Wheaton College Graduate School.

The Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered some 40 years ago. Yet, to many laypersons their nature, content, and significance are still generally unknown. So too the existence and contribution of other recently discovered Jewish documents from the periods just before, after, and during the New Testament era.

Neil Fujita, associate professor of Religious Studies at Iona College, New Rochelle,

N.Y., presents a survey of ancient Judaean writings which have bearing on the New Testament and the scholarly assessment of them. His audience is "interested laypersons" (p. 1), but this is not a book for raw beginners. It is simply and clearly written with excellent summaries, but Fujita assumes at least minimal familiarity with his subject. It is suitable for an "advanced beginner" or "intermediate" student.

The first chapter surveys the documents. The Dead Sea Scrolls, both biblical and sectarian, receive the major emphasis. There are other discoveries. The manuscripts found at Masada come from the period of First Jewish Revolt, AD 66-73, while those from Wadi Murabá at and the region between En-Gedi and Masada provide evidence of the Second Revolt, AD 132-135; finds from the Judean foothills date from both revolts and the intervening periods. Caves in Wadi ed-Daliyeh, north of Jericho, yield glimpses into life of a group of refugees from Samaria (possibly fleeing from Alexander the Great) during the fourth century BC. Khirbet Mird, near Jerusalem, was occupied by Hasmoneans, Herod the Great, Medieval and Modern Christians; its written materials are no earlier than the fifth century AD but include parts of the New Testament and other Christian literature.

Chapter Two describes the historical setting of the documents and what they have contributed to our understanding of Jewish history. The summary of data related to the Second Revolt (pp. 64-73) provides one of the better brief summaries of that event; it also shows just how great is our debt to these recent discoveries for our knowledge of this part of Jewish history.

The Old Testament is the single most important part of the background for the New Testament. Chapter Three summarizes the bearing of recent Judean literary discoveries for Old Testament studies in general (such as textual criticism). Fujita then does an excellent job of indicating specific passages and issues of particular relevance for the New Testament student. The brief, but knowledgeable survey of "The Language of Palestine" (pp. 102-108) is a valuable contribution for a study of the knotty problem of the languages of Jesus and the early Christians.

We might have expected a fairly detailed discussion of specific contributions of the Judaean documents to numerous New Testament issues and texts. Instead we find a consideration of the relation of the Dead Sea Scrolls to (1) John the Baptist and Christians, (2) Use of Scripture, (3) Temple Theology and (4) an excursus discussing the Qumran communal meal and the Last Supper. The second topic, a discussion of Jewish and New Testament hermeneutical methods, packs a great deal of material into a little space (pp. 118-140). The discussion of "Temple Theology" (pp. 140-150) is thought-provoking and points toward potentially exciting areas for further study.

The final chapter introduces the reader to the complicated, confusing, and often ignored world of Jewish Mysticism and the equally difficult, but much discussed, subject of gnosticism. Fujita provides excellent brief descriptions of the various elements of Jewish and Christian thought and experience in these areas. His simplifications do no violence to the complexity involved. His discussions of relevant literature is clear and helpful. I am appreciative of the way Fujita shows the interrelationships between various mystical, wisdom, and gnostic strains of both Judaism and Christianity. I wish I had had this kind of help when beginning to attempt to understand it all.

Any discussion of the relation between the Jewish documents and the New Testament must contend with often radical (and sometimes heated) differences of opinion within the scholarly community over interpretations of the data. Where necessary Fujita summarizes the competing positions. When appropriate, he states his own opinion yet stays above much of the controversy. He never permits either the debates nor his own conclusions to divert him from his goal.

Fujita says the Bedouin's rock which caused "A crack in the jar [holding one of the Dead Sea Scrolls] unexpectedly opened up a vast new treasure of information with regard to the Bible, Jewish political, cultural and religious history around the time of Jesus, and Christian origins" (p. 1). His book helps shine light into the crack. It brings a vast amount of information in a way that provides important information for the student or layman interested in this field; once read it should remain on the shelf as a helpful reference source.

The Puritan Conversion Narrative
by Patricia Caldwell (Cambridge University Press, 1983, 210 pp.). Reviewed by Roger Lundin, Associate Professor of English, Wheaton College.

This is an intelligent and exhaustively researched contribution to the study of early American culture. Caldwell's work seeks to take its place in a venerable tradition of scholarship, alongside the works of such figures as Perry Miller, Edmund Morgan, and David Hall. Its particular focus is the "conversion narrative," a form of testimony which served, on both sides of the Atlantic, as a test of prospective Church members.

Concentrating on the only significant extant body of "confessions" (a group of 51 transcribed between 1637 and 1645 at the church of Thomas Shepard in Cambridge, Massachusetts), Caldwell compares American stories with English-Irish narratives of the same period. She does so in an attempt to "locate some of the first faint murmurings of a truly American voice," the voice of "little-known, ordinary people" who were "struggling to express in an unfamiliar public arena their most vital and private religious concerns" (41).

Caldwell quotes Edmund Morgan's summary of the Puritan "morphology of conversion:" "knowledge, conviction, faith, combat, and true, imperfect assurance." She finds in American conversion narratives, however, a marked tendency to veer from the path established by the formula. "What is notable in a majority of New England conversion stories," she writes, "is the sense of strain, the meagerness of genuine, fulfilling relief" (121). The New World narratives repeatedly trace this poverty of spirit to its roots: to "the specific shift to America, in the 'motion to New England,' one 'was left a more flat condition than before'" (122). Instead of testifying to the infusion of saving grace, many of the New England narratives dwell upon the journey "to America, where disorientation and guilt paint the whole world gray, and where in their confusion they keep bumping into their own sinful selves" (168).

This dialectic of expectation and disenchantment, which Caldwell documents in the narratives from the 1630s and 1640s, has indeed been a constant of the American political, literary, and religious experience. One can find it in the very earliest Puritan experiences—contrast the visionary hope of John Winthrop in the sermon he preached aboard the Arbella as it sailed towards Massachusetts Bay in 1630 with the somber description William Bradford (in *Of Plymouth Plantation*) gives of the breakup of the community at Plymouth in 1632. And one can find it in many of the great novels, poems, and plays produced by Americans. In showing some of the earliest manifestations of this distinctively American voice, Professor Caldwell has performed a valuable service.

The Sinai Strategy
by Gary North (Institute for Christian Economics, 1986, 338 pp., $12.50). Reviewed by Dr. Thomas E. Van Dahm, Ph.D., Professor of Economics, Carthage College, Kenosha, WI.

Subtitled "Economics and the Ten Commandments," *The Sinai Strategy* is intended as "a detailed look at the ten commandments and their social, political, and especially, economic implications" (back cover). Why "The Sinai Strategy?" As explained by North: "What the ten commandments provides is . . . a *dominion strategy*. It is a strategy for *not staying poor*, either individually or socially" (p. 223, italics in the original).

Reading this book without a prior acquaintance with other works by North or other publications of the Institute for Christian Economics (ICE) would be like reading a trilogy beginning with the third volume. So it would be advisable to begin this review with a brief introduction to the author and the ICE.

Dr. North founded, and is the president of, the ICE. Previously he was on the staff of R.J. Rushdoony's Chalcedon Foundation. This volume is the sixteenth book written or edited by North, who has also published innumerable articles in journals and ICE newsletters.

As to the ICE, in the words of its founder, it "is devoted to research and publishing in the field of Christian ethics. The perspective of those associated with the ICE is straight-

orwardly conservative and pro-free market" (363). In fact, the free market seems to stand on a par with the Trinity, the divinity of Jesus Christ, and other orthodox Christian doctrines: "*the Bible categorically affirms legal, moral, and economic principles that lay the foundations of a free market economic system*" (11; italics in the original). Not only do all ICE writings express belief in the free-market system but they also vigorously condemn, in the name of Christ, virtually all deviations from it.

This being the case, the reader, recalling the subtitle of the book, will not be surprised to learn that North finds "the foundational principles of a free market economy" in all of the commandments (15). In fact, so tight is the association between the two that "observance of the basic principles of the ten commandments is both *necessary and sufficient* for the creation of a capitalist economy" (211-12; italics in the orginal).

North's ability to find the free-market system taught throughout the Bible inevitably calls to mind the case of the person who, taking a Rorschach (ink-blot) test, found sexual themes in nearly all of the "pictures." When the administrator of the test commented that he seemed to be obsessed with sex, the subject responded: "Well, what did you expect me to say when you showed me all those dirty pictures!"

North and the other ICE writers demonstrate the highest respect for the authority of the Bible in matters of ethics—not as merely pointing to certain ethical principles for Christian decision-making, however. North *et. al.* go far beyond this position by insisting that the Bible, especially the Old Testament, contains the basis for specific rules which clearly spell out God's will for every conceivable decision-situation. Bible study, then, is mainly a matter of looking for and identifying all of the Scripture passages which record or imply God's instructions to individuals or groups (e.g., Israel) and which tell of God's dealings with particular persons or groups in a way that seems to show His approval or disapproval of specific actions or patterns of behavior. Regardless of the historical-cultural context in which the recorded events occured, all of these rules, stated or deduced, are considering binding on us today.

Only one class of exceptions is allowed by North:

> There should be a specific injunction [in the New Testament] that a particular law, or a particular class of laws, is no longer binding in New Testament times because Jesus' work of redemption has fulfilled it *and also annulled it.* If the New Testament does not reveal this, then the law must still be in force (4; italics in the original).

North is quite consistent in his adherence to this "case-law" approach, even when it yields conclusions which seem strange. For example: "The eldest son is entitled to a double portion of the estate (Deut. 21:15-17)" (97). Or: "When people curse their parents, it unquestionably is a capital crime (Ex. 21:17)" (59), as are adultery and a number of other deeds (56-57). The prescribed biblical means of execution, says North, is stoning; and he finds no fewer than five arguments in support of this method (122-125).

In its structure, the book contains no surprises: introductory chapter, a chapter on each of the commandments, appendices, and indices. North's treatment of most of the commandments contains insights which reflect the author's background in economics. For example, he correctly points out in several places how adherence to the commandments tends to foster the economic growth of a nation, an outcome which seems extremely important to him.

North appears to be well-read in a number of areas and has sprinkled the pages liberally with footnotes (422 in 338 pages). However, the book should be accessible to the average educated person: there is a minimum of technical jargon, and the style is not ponderous.

One's evaluation of *The Sinai Strategy* will depend in part on whether he or she is comfortable with the two premises on which much of the discussion is based: (1) the free-market system is the only economic system acceptable to God, and (2) nearly all Old Testament laws, stated and implied, are binding on Christians today. But even those who accept them may find objectionable certain other characteristics of North's writing.

One such characteristic is the argumentative tone of much of the book, especially in the numerous passages in which he inveighs against the State or "radical Christians" who criticize aspects of the free-market system. Furthermore, many of North's "conclusions" do not seem to be supported by close reasoning, and in some cases are little more than assertions. It is true that he has discussed a number of these topics in other writings; but the reader has no way of assessing the validity of supporting arguments presented elsewhere.

The Sinai Strategy will undoubtedly reinforce the convictions of ICE adherents. To those whose interest in the ICE has been stimulated, I would recommend North's *An Introduction to Christian Economics* (Craig Press, 1973), rather than the book under review, as a suitable means of making an acquaintance with this approach to the Bible and Christian ethics.

Unmasking the Powers: The Invisible Powers That Determine Human Existence **by Walter Wink (Fortress, 1986, 227 pp.). Reviewed by John H. Yoder, Department of Theology, University of Notre Dame.**

Walter Wink began his research into the cosmology of the New Testament world with the expectation that it could be "demythologized" into social science categories. His first volume, describing the New Testament language on its own terms (*Naming the Powers*, 1984, cf. *Bulletin* Sept.-Oct. 1986, p. 251), already pointed beyond itself toward the challenge of interpretation which the second volume faces head-on. Renouncing the "demythologizing" project in the face of the facts of the present, as well as the witness of Scripture, Wink now finds himself speaking realistically of angels, demons, gods, "sailing off the map of our two-dimensional universe, *into a universe that is alive*" (170).

Instead of affirming merely that the cosmology within which the New Testament witness was communicated can be understood, or that the witness thus stated can be retrieved, Wink has been drawn into projecting an update, moving not back to the repetition of the first century world view but "forward with the Bible" to a reappropriation especially of those elements which had been shifted out of our scientistic world view.

By the nature of the case there can be no standard ground rules for such a necessary but unprecedented project. Should it be considered a prolongation of the literary-historical study of the scriptures, facing the challenges of validation by argument based on the text, or should it be a pendulum-swing away from the "scientific" models in the direction of esoteric and poetic modes of apprehension? Should it deepen the disenchanting impact of JHWH's messengers upon the spookiness of the pagan world, penetrating even into the realm of the invisible with the word of Jesus Christ's Lordship, or should it revalidate the eerie edges of reality, as enrichment, or even as corrective, for a vision narrowed too much by Jesus and his Jewishness? Should it place greater trust in the nonrationalistic cosmologies of our contemporaries (Jung, neopagan esotericism) which leapfrog over the world of sciences, or in the rational case which can be made within those disciplines, in their own languages, against the limits of reductionist determinism? Should we be guided more by the vision of a globally satisfying new cosmology which would be a convincing description of the way things are, more descriptively adequate and more lively than two-dimensional materialism, convincing with or without Jesus, or by the christologically centered proclamation of the Powers' disenthronement at the cross?

At each of these points, Wink's choice fails to convince. His confession of Jesus' normativeness is clear, but not central to this work. The work's major thesis is the greater adequacy of a neo-classical cosmology, with a universe that is alive with real gods and angels, to make sense of reality. He finds Jung and Findhorn to be more help toward this end than the physical or social sciences. On one hand Wink easily grants, repeatedly, that as a unity the ancient cosmology cannot and should not be resuscitated. In that sense modern understandings of reality are accepted. But on the other hand he uses terms like "real" and "inner" without any semantic accountability, without our knowing what might count as their validation. We are on the razor's edge between authentic apostolic *gnosis* and gnosticism, where the church in Colossae was balancing. The specific terms most used in the apostolic passages directly on the themes of Christ and the powers

("principalities," "powers," "thrones," "dominions") receive less attention than "gods," "demons," "angels," "elements," terms more current in general speculative cosmologies whether ancient or contemporary. The concrete debatable matters of pastoral concern being considered in the Pauline passages (food restrictions and holidays in *Colossians*, the Law in *Galatians*, Roman authorities in *Romans*) are less interesting for Wink's redefinition than extrabiblical themes like the angel in a sunset or the saving of a nation.

All of Wink's work is worthy of careful reading. He has amassed an enormous bulk of authentic erudition around his reconstruction. His declaration of the bankruptcy of two-dimensional scientism and his readiness to denounce the Powers' apostasy (to be spelled out further in the third volume) are right, though thinly argued. My above-stated misgivings about the weighting of the several factors of the needed reconstruction do not make his work less strategic. He has worthily broken open a debate which needs to go deeper.

The Meaning of Creation: Genesis and Modern Science
by Conrad Hyers (John Knox Press, 1984, 203 pp., $11.95). Reviewed by Richard H. Bube, Department of Materials Science and Engineering, Stanford University.

Conrad Hyers, Professor and Chairperson of Religion at Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota, has provided in this book a major contribution to the creation/evolution debate of recent years. He continues a growing trend toward considering the proper interpretation of the Genesis account in its own integrity, rather than focusing on whether or not these accounts can be in fact harmonized with modern science. Believing that the "real" meaning of these texts has been understandable in part from the beginning, and that this "real" meaning has not been waiting until the present generation to be perceived by today's scientific descriptions, Hyers delves into the purpose and meaning of these sections of Scripture in their own context. He critiques the practice of many conservative Christians in recent years who have been so enamored with the findings of science that they have paid little attention to the biblical text itself and even less to the original meaning and purpose of the text in its historical setting.

The book is organized into eight chapters. The first two chapters discuss general issues in treating the revelation of Genesis, the second two focus on the interpretation of Genesis 1, the fifth deals with the types of literature in Genesis and explores the meaning of "myth" rightly understood, the sixth and seventh chapters deal with the interpretation of Genesis 2 and 3, and the eighth chapter is a kind of appendix in which Hyers integrates revelational perspectives in terms of the order vs. chance debates of current years.

Hyers is as critical of scientific misreadings of Genesis as he is of theological misreadings. He finds linguistic confusion, failure to appreciate the nature of the literature being interpreted, as a recurrent source of the misunderstanding and conflict in the creation/evolution debate. He makes clear the fallacy of the "Bible science" position that makes the truth, validity and relevance of the Genesis passages depend on whether or not they conform to today's notion of what is an acceptable scientific description. He points out that "quite ironically, those who would dismiss the Bible as contradicting science and those who would defend it as true science find themselves in agreement that these biblical texts are to be interpreted 'literally'" (pp. 12, 20). Indifference to the religious roots of the Genesis accounts makes authentic interpretation impossible.

> Even if evolution is only a scientific theory of interpretation posing as scientific fact, as the creationists argue, creationism is only a religious theory of biblical interpretation posing as biblical fact. . . . It is, therefore, essentially *modernistic* even though claiming to be truly conservative (p. 27).

Only by recognizing what these scriptural documents actually are, can we hope to understand God's revelation for us in them.

Hyers gives a detailed and persuasive interpretation of the two creation accounts in Genesis 1 and Genesis 2, and clarifies many nuances, far too numerous to be included in this review. His appreciation for the different styles of the two creation accounts makes it possible to see them as essentially complementary, with Genesis 1 stressing the role of order in creation, and Genesis 2 ff. stressing the fundamental virtues of pastoral simplicity in contrast to the effects of civilization, urbanization and technology. In appropriate contexts he points out not only the shortcomings of Bible science (which he terms an oxymoron), but also those of anti-religious scientism, progressive creationism, and views that necessitate a God-of-the-gaps.

Hyers' elaboration of the meaning and use of "myth" is one of the clearest available. Always readable and attention-holding, his writing at times breaks out into pure prose/poetry, as in the passage on mystery:

> . . .mystery in its ultimate sense . . . is not resolvable, for the greater the knowledge and understanding, the greater the awareness of mystery. Rather than being the absence of knowledge, mystery in this sense surrounds even the most commonplace, obvious, taken-for-granted, and therefore presumably well-known areas of experience. Such a sense of mystery looms not only where knowledge and thought are exhausted and where science has not yet broken through the latest barrier, but also where even the small child understands perfectly well. It comes where there is clear light as well as seemingly impenetrable darkness. It comes at the moment when the oddness of the most familiar object overwhelms us. Then even the ephemeral presence of a snowflake confronts us with those primordial questions that are at the heart of myth and religion: the mysteries of life and death, of being and nothing, of origins and destinies, of mind and matter and time, and of the very existence of creatures capable of asking these questions (p. 111).

He points out that historically science has not superseded religion, but rather science has superseded magic and magical practices. He argues that one need not "demythologize" the Bible to get rid of mythical concepts no longer acceptable to modern man and then to reconstruct the biblical message in categories acceptable to modern man (following the path of Bultmann, for example), nor need one "demythologize" the Bible by taking its statements literally and restating them in terms of modern science and historiography (following the path of Christian fundamentalists, for example). Both of these are forms of modernism. Instead the appropriate approach relative to both these misuses is to "*deliteralize* and *re*mythologize the text to preserve its religious character and richness of meaning" (p. 106).

In view of these extremely timely, relevant and helpful insights, it is unfortunate that Hyers has adopted, essentially without argument or justification, the hypothesis that Genesis 1 is the product of a "Priestly" author while Genesis 2 is the product of a "Yahwist" author, both authors writing in fact considerably after the time of Moses. He speaks of the "Yahwist" account as having been written in the 10th century BC in the time of Solomon, when Imperial splendor called for the reminder of mankind's humble beginning in the dust of the earth, and for a warning against the subtle evils of civilization. He speaks of the "Priestly" account as having been written in the 6th century BC in the time of the Exile when Solomon's kingdom had been divided and conquered, and when the author reminds his readers of the intrinsic dignity of human beings and their origin as created in the image of God. It is true that the use of these historical contexts makes an understanding of some of the nuances of these two accounts surprisingly possible, but their introduction as obvious, true and established will automatically lead many evangelical readers to reject the whole of Hyer's valuable contributions out of hand. It is high time for this question to be dealt with carefully and thoroughly by scholars committed both to a high view of inspiration and the integrity of the Bible, and to a willingness to face whatever facts are really there. In this book Hyers offers only the statement, "If the seven-day account was written in the context of the dark period of exile following the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem and the deportation of Jews to Babylonia, *as most scholars concur*, . . ." (italics added, p. 51). Surely the dating of these certain accounts, if possible at all, should be undertaken with as much care as possible; it is not a question that can be settled either by dogmatic traditionalism on the one hand or appeal to the consensus of specialists with unknown per-

sonal commitments on the other. A very large fraction of the points that Hyers makes are independent of the specific truth or error of these dating assignments. Readers who disagree with Hyers should not take the easy way out of casting suspicion on his major conclusions via his acceptance of datings not universally agreed on in the conservative Christian community.

This is a book of first-rate quality. Its contribution to the Christian community's perception of the creation/evolution debate is sizable. No future discussion of these issues will be complete if the insights given us by Hyers are not considered and included.

Jesus in European Protestant Thought, 1778-1860
by Colin Brown (Labyrinth, 1985, 359 pp., $35.00). Reviewed by John G. Stackhouse, Jr., Ph.D. candidate in the History of Christianity at the University of Chicago Divinity School and Visiting Instructor at Wheaton College, Illinois.

While Colin Brown's title is "Professor of Systematic Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary," it is gratifying to us historical types to see that he got his start as an historian. Previous books of his have ranged over several theological disciplines as they have discussed Karl Barth (contemporary theology), miracles (philosophy of religion), and New Testament studies. Indeed, the book that brought him to the attention of the evangelical reading public critiqued Western philosophy since Thomas Aquinas from an evangelical viewpoint (*Philosophy and the Christian Faith* [InterVarsity Press, 1969]). But the present work shows us that Colin Brown, titles and books notwithstanding, got his grounding in historical theology, for it is in fact a reworking of his doctoral thesis.

The book slices the rich pie of modern theology in a new and helpful way. It centers upon the conception of Jesus, but serves up more than simply another version of the so-called "search for the historical Jesus" (Schweitzer) or a discussion of Christology as an epiphenomenon of the problems in New Testament studies themselves (Kümmel, Neill). On the other hand, it goes more deeply into its subject than most surveys of modern theology-in-general (Mackintosh, Welch). Instead, Brown draws discussions of historians and biblical scholars together with others of philosophers and theologians to present a comprehensive picture of the rise of modern ideas about Jesus from Reimarus to—well, not to Wrede, but to Strauss at least (Would Dr. Brown consider taking up the story again?).

In some respects this book reads like the dissertation it once was: it speaks carefully, it draws extensively on primary sources, and it provides full and frequent footnotes. But it also bears the marks of revision since its 1969 submission, revision which, I suspect, has made it even more useful. For instance, it refers to books published quite recently (I noticed one as recent as 1984). Much more significantly, comparison with Brown's earlier *Philosophy and the Christian Faith*—published the year this dissertation was completed—seems to indicate that he has changed his mind about a few things—most importantly, his estimation of the orthodoxy and importance of Soren Kierkegaard.

The main disappointment, however, also seems to stem from the book's earlier life as a dissertation. Brown admits in his introduction that the book makes no general conclusions. Dissertations often remain this modest. Brown does advance a few theses which are significant and interesting, but these get little support from the book which follows. In particular, he puts forward Kierkegaard as the one who "may yet present the twentieth century with better conceptual tools for approaching theology than any other thinker of his age" (xxi). Now this statement, coming from the author of a book which surveys such thinkers as Kant, Hegel, and Schleiermacher, is provocative to say the least. But Brown's later discussion of Kierkegaard, while thorough on its own terms, does not discuss this thesis.

A different disappointment is yet related to this restraint in forming general conclusions. As an evangelical well-positioned to make this sort of judgment, we might wish Brown had commented much more on the relatively poor show most orthodox theologians made throughout his period. I asked a professor of mine once why Schleiermacher felt (as it were!) he faced the alternatives of warm-hearted Pietism or intellectually-responsible heterodoxy. Why didn't Schleiermacher embrace orthodoxy? Brown discusses orthodoxy around in this book and substantiates my professor's answer: the kinds of orthodoxy around in those days weren't particularly attractive. But why weren't they? Brown, I suspect, might be able to teach significant lessons from the nineteenth century to those of us concerned for orthodoxy in the twentieth.

These few disappointments notwithstanding, Brown's study should aid students in a number of fields: biblical studies, theology, philosophy, and European intellectual history. It rests on wide reading, exposits ideas clearly, and works hard to show relationships between figures, ideas, and historical contexts. It deals fairly with its subjects, however far their ideas might be from Brown's own. In addition, the Labyrinth Press deserves commendation for a solidly-bound and well-presented text. In all of this, the book sets a high standard for evangelical scholarship.

Christian Theology: An Eschatological Approach, Vol. 1
by Thomas N. Finger (Thomas Nelson, 1985, 367 pp., $18.95). Reviewed by Donald G. Bloesch, Professor of Theology, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary.

In this innovative study, Thomas Finger presents a systematic theology within an eschatological framework. He begins not with the doctrine of God but with the dawning of the new age in Jesus Christ. His point of departure is not the attributes of God nor the decision of God in eternity but the effects of God in nature and experience.

Finger describes his position as "kerygmatic," but this is so only in a qualified sense. Unlike Luther, Calvin and Barth, Finger begins not from the kergyma, the biblical story of salvation, nor from the human context, but from the point where kerygma and context are interwoven. He speaks not only of theology's kerygmatic norm but also of its contextual norm, since "the extent to which theology is intelligible within the experience and thought-world of its context is also a standard by which its adequacy may be measured." While he insists that the kerygma remains the norm for truth, he is convinced that the expression of truth is irremediably conditioned by the cultural and philosophical milieu in which the gospel is proclaimed. Because "the kerygma in Scripture is continually entering and transforming new contexts, it must be translated into new words and actions."

His method is from the experience of humanity as it is encountered by divinity to the traditional themes of biblical theology. He agrees with Gordon Kaufman that it is a mistake for theology in the preliminary stage of its reflection to focus on transcendental concepts, such as God or Christ; at the same time, he rejects Kaufman's belief that the concept of God is a mere product of general cultural processes. He also endorses Bultmann's search for a "point of contact" between the gospel and secular goals and values but takes issue with Bultmann's subjectivizing of the faith. While acknowledging that most kerygmatic theologies are characterized by a Christology from above, he allies himself with a Christology from below.

Interestingly, Finger affirms the "total propositional truthfulness" of Scripture. He upholds the way of adduction, finding models in Scripture that relate to current experience, rather than induction, inferring universals from particulars, and deduction, arriving at conclusions from first principles available in Scripture. He also defends the concept of biblical inerrancy, but tries to hold this in tension with a consciousness of the cultural matrix in which Scripture is written. One implication of biblical inerrancy "is that no biblical proposition should ever be interpreted as in flat contradiction to a true proposition from any other field of knowledge." In the discussion on the truthfulness of Scripture, he fails to relate the truth of Scripture to the action of the Spirit, instead basing his case on the requirements of coherence and consistency. When he argues that the truth of Scripture consists "in the veracity of its propositions," a case could be made that he here diverges from the Reformers who located the truth of Scripture in the correlation of Word and Spirit. In the Reformation understanding, the truth of Scripture resides in the Lord of Scripture, Jesus Christ, and the prophetic and apostolic witness to this Lord reflects the truth which he embodies. Truth is not a property of Scripture as such but a property of the Spirit who uses Scripture as an agency in the commu-

nication of the truth of Jesus Christ.

Finger prefers the Christus Victor theory of the atonement over that of substitutionary atonement. He tries to make a place for the objective reality of the devil, refusing to reduce the exorcisms of Jesus to psychosomatic phenomena. He also affirms conditional immortality in which he envisions a gradual annihilation to the wicked.

Finger's theology represents a kind of evangelical rationalism that tries to take seriously the theological revolution inaugurated by Karl Barth and the theology of crises. Yet it is debatable whether Finger has learned from Barth that culture can only be the field and never the norm or source for theological thinking. Barth would probably accuse Finger of continuing the grandiose attempt of Neo-Protestantism to build a bridge between the message of faith and the wisdom of the culture, although Finger is intent on maintaining the uniqueness of biblical revelation. It should be noted in passing that he wrongly accuses Barth of universalism and of denying any revelation of God in nature.

This book is an important contribution to the ongoing search of evangelicals for a new theological method. Finger's writing is characterized by both lucidity and erudition. I appreciated his insightful critique of liberation theology, but it seems that he is opening the door to a new form of cultural Christianity.

The Reconstruction of the Christian Revelation Claim
by Stuart C. Hackett (Baker Book House, 1984, 349 pp., $19.95). Reviewed by Robert A.H. Larmer, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Philosophy, University of New Brunswick.

This book has many strengths. One of these is that Hackett moves comfortably and competently over a broad subject area. Another is his humility. The strident tone which marked his earlier work, *The Resurrection of Theism*, has vanished and he is very careful throughout the book not to claim more than his arguments warrant.

Hackett begins with an exploration of epistemological issues. He develops and defends a position he calls moderate *apriorism*. On his view, we possess *a priori* interpretive principles and knowledge is the result of our properly applying these principles to experiental data. Establishing his epistemology, he moves on to stake out his metaphysical claim. He defends theism as the most plausible ontology and argues that many of the standard objections to theism are based upon an inadequate epistemology.

He goes on to defend the claims that Jesus is God incarnate and that the Bible is an indefective, authoritative revelation of God. He recognizes that other views of Jesus and the Bible are often held, but argues that they do not account for the phenomena they purport to explain. His general strategy is to develop balance-of-probabilities arguments designed not to demonstrate that rival views are without merit, but to establish the superior scope, adequacy and plausibility of the orthodox view of Jesus and Scripture.

One flaw does bear mentioning, however. The book suffers from a lack of documentation. I respect Hackett's desire to avoid the excesses of technical paraphernalia, but at least some footnotes would have been appropriate. I agree with his stated aim of writing "for that common man who is deeply and profoundly concerned about the meaning of existence and about the truth-claims of those developed perspectives which aim to enshrine that meaning." It is this common man, however, who stands to benefit the most from a judicious use of footnotes, since it is by this means that he is given resources to pursue the discussion further should he so desire.

Belonging: Our Need for Community in Church and Family
by Stan D. Gaede (Zondervan Academie Books, 1985, 277 pp., $9.95). Reviewed by David O. Moberg, Professor of Sociology, Marquette University.

In our evangelical subculture that stresses individualistic aspects of Christian faith and life, this is a refreshing corrective. Gordon College sociologist Gaede has given us an excellent analysis of "Our Need for Community in Church and Family," to use the publisher's subtitle. Although he suggests that his "most peculiar treatise" (p. 7) is neither a study in sociology nor a discourse in theology, in many ways it is both, although it does lie more in the applied than the theoretical domain of either.

At first glance, this appears to be an elementary book for popular consumption only. Yet the seventeen smoothly written chapters reveal and underscore significant insights valuable for even the wisest of professional scholars. His main thesis is "that we live in a world that radically undermines precisely the community it so desperately needs" (p. 25). Modernization has made "happiness values" the basis for moral decisions (p. 238), forced religious organizations into the task of "selling their authority on the open market of religiosity" (p. 67), "turned religion into a matter of private discretion" (p. 57), and made the family a "perfect breeding ground for rampant insecurity" (p. 109). Among its accompaniments are individualistic autonomy, mobility, the search for relevance, and the elevation of self-fulfillment. Individual choice is considered far more important than the well-being of community, defined as "an unremitting coterie of relationships set within the context of specific traditions and rooted in a transcendent vision" (p. 46).

The family is overburdened as a result, for people huddle in it as a refuge against "the pullage of modernity" (p. 113). They are set up for failure when it thus is laden with undue responsibilities. Other social institutions are undermined as well. Modernity mass produces unrealistic dreams and images and gives people the illusion of being in control. It widens the gap between knowing and doing by bombarding us with knowledge for which there is no immediate application.

Although Gaede points to the functional impact of tradition upon individuals, organizations, and society, he also points to its limitations. Traditions are "keepers of the past" (p. 265), constraining unattainable visions and keeping them from undermining the dreamer. Wholesome traditions are a gift from God for the benefit of humanity, yet poor traditions can become barriers to good works, promote pride, and mask a sinful heart. Among the fascinating discussions are the picture of the Sunday morning church service as showmanship with the pastor as the ringleader, the self-defeating nature of the goal of relevance, why it usually is wise to remain in a deficient church congregation, and how to cope with the temptation to switch churches.

The influence of Peter Berger's theoretical work is clearly evident in this valuable study, but the values brought to bear upon the subject are clearly biblical. Liberationists who have overvalued individual freedom without recognizing the corresponding need for social responsibility need to study this book. They will find that Gaede values personal autonomy, but he recognizes that if it is to endure, it must draw upon covenantal relationships and tradition in an intimate community. Excellent sociological insights presented in a language and style that any reader can understand blended with sound Christian values make this an unusually significant book. If, however, one seeks bibliographical references for further study or an index to locate significant themes and passages, one will be disappointed, for such trappings of scholarship are completely missing. As a corrective to misguided assumptions in much contemporary sociology and as an insightful stimulus to work at the important task of building and expressing faithful and intimate Christian community in a society dominated by modernity, this is a very significant book.

BOOK COMMENTS

Clark Speaks From The Grave
by Gordon H. Clark (The Trinity Foundation, Jefferson, Maryland, 1986, 77 pp., $3.95).

This is a bizarre book, and I do not recommend it. The author is not in fact Gordon H. Clark but rather his devoted disciple John Robbins who speaks for the late author against his critics in this nasty little diatribe, called a "post-humous" lecture. Underlying the book (really a booklet) is an incredible admiration for Clark as one of the great, if not the greatest, Christian philosopher-theologians of all time. Supremely confident and pretentious, this "voice" from beyond cuts down all the wicked critics of Clark's ideas, mostly denizens with him of the sectarian Presbyterian sub-culture in America. Obviously we have not heard the last of Gordon Clark, since a foundation has been established to publish and republish his work. I am a little disappointed, because I had hoped that with his

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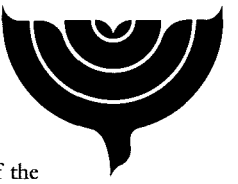

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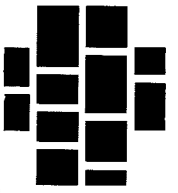

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death this Clark would have rested in peace, and we too would have some relief from his weird combination of pure rationalism dark predestinarian ruminations. No such luck!

—Clark H. Pinnock

Worldly Saints: The Puritans As They Really Were
by Leland Ryken, foreword by J.I. Packer (Zondervan, 1986, 281 pp., $14.95).

No one who cherishes stereotypes should pick up this book. One after another Ryken remorselessly punctures the myths held so tenaciously by otherwise "right-thinking" people, especially the one that perceives Puritans as sober-sided fanatics who trembled at the thought that someone, somewhere might be happy. Puritans, Ryken shows us through diligent marshaling of the sources, actually laughed a little (and at themselves). They really did enjoy the "coupling together of two persons into one flesh, according to the ordinance of God" (44). They were sensible about work and money. They spent time making worship beautiful and fitting to audiences. They felt education should help people from all social ranks. They reveled (there is no other word) in the goodness of the physical world. Many of them, it seems, dared to treat life as a supreme gift from God and to live, in grateful response, for his glory.

Worldy Saints makes its case through a wealth of quotations from the Puritans themselves. Many of these are memorable—not just as pithy statements, but as pointers to a quality of godliness rarely found today. Ryken also includes a section on the faults of the Puritans (e.g., "Too Many Rules," "Too Many Words"); but lovers of bad history will be hard pressed to resurrect the malevolent stereotype from this one chapter. The book is not a technical study for the initiated, but a marvelous introduction for all with minds not completely closed. Its picture of the Puritans' world-embracing piety offers special encouragement to those today who would love God with heart, soul, strength, and mind.

—Mark A. Noll

The Atonement of the Death of Christ: In Faith, Revelation and History
by H.D. McDonald (Baker Book House, 1985, 371 pp., $19.95).

It has been a number of years since a full-scale history of the doctrine of the atonement has been published. Now we have a new one that is up-to-date and encyclopedic in scope. McDonald deals with more than 85 theologians from the early church to contemporary people touching on all varieties of people along the way. The three foci of the book are the meaning of the atonement for faith, its Scriptural bases and its expression in the history of Christian thought.

Since there are so many views about the atonement, it is difficult to find categories to group them. McDonald succeeds in doing this yet is also sensitive to the nuances of a position that make it unique in itself.

This is a most valuable reference volume with McDonald not afraid to point to what he sees as inadequacies in various formulations. But the book also gives us a wide window on the amazing diversities of atonement doctrines and thus shows how fully and richly the church has perceived what the death of Jesus Christ means.

—Donald K. McKim

What Are They Saying About Euthanasia?
by Richard M. Gula (Paulist Press, 1986, 179 pp.).

This book is a clear and fair introduction to the complex and difficult topic of euthanasia through exposure to a variety of positions. The author first describes philosophical, theological, medical and legal dimensions

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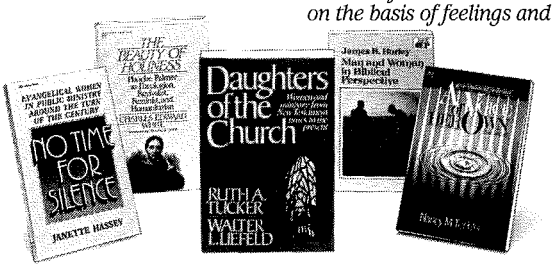

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of the question of determining death. He then discusses four moral issues at stake: the principle of sanctity of life; the extent of dominion over life and death; the difference between the killing and allowing to die; and the distinction between ordinary and extraordinary means of treatment to sustain life. Three types of moral positions are taken on euthanasia: strict consequentialist views, mixed consequentialist views, and deontological views. Ethical considerations related to caring or the dying are stated: Who should decide whether life-prolonging treatments should be used? Should the dying person be told the truth about his or her condition? What is hospice and how does it fit within the larger discussion of euthanasia? The concluding chapter identifies four convictions which dispose us to act in certain ways: life is not an absolute good; the patient's choice is necessary; treatments that cannot reverse terminal illness are not morally required; treatments that cannot reverse terminal illness are not morally required; and decisions to withhold or withdraw treatment should intensify efforts to comfort.

—Millard J. Erickson

The Authority of the Bible
by Robert Gnuse (Paulist Press, 1985, 153 pp., $6.95).

The author sets out in this book to review five models for understanding the authority of Scripture. The first, the *inspiration model*, postulates that authority resides in God's act of breathing into the bibical writers the divine message. Under this category Gnuse examines four options, from strict inerrancy (Schaeffer, Lindsell) to the theory of partial infallibility (Beegle, Davis). Second, the *salvation history model* affirms that biblical authority derives from the saving events to which Scripture testifies (Cullmann, Bright) or from uniform world history as revelation (Pannenberg, Motlmann). Third, the *existentialist model* maintains that authority is rooted in the individual's encounter with and response to the proclaimed word (Barth, Brunner, Bultmann). Fourth, the *Christocentric model* claims that authority is rooted in the Bible's witness either to the historical Jesus (Ritschl, Harnack) or to the divine Christ (Luther, Forsyth). And fifth, out of preference for other sources of truth (lived experience, science, etc.), *models of limited authority* severely restrict the authority of the Bible (Herder, Fosdick).

Discussion of the canon reveals the author's personal commitment: Scripture arose via a horizontal process from the life and traditions of the communtiy of faith, i.e., "Human Life Situation—Traditions—Corpus of Literature—Sacred Texts—Canon" (110). Here the author reveals his indebtedness to critical contemporary scholars such as James Barr and David Kelsey. The author's bottom line is that it is impossible to articulate any coherent theory of biblical authority. "The Scriptures are authoritative because the Church has chosen to use them for 2,000 years" (123).

Gnuse's work is useful for rounding out one's understanding of modern Protestant and Roman Catholic theories of inspiration, biblical authority, and the canon. But this reviewer concludes that the author, apparently indebted to modern, enlightened skepticisms, fails to do justice to the historic Christian position, which most ordinary believers (and not a few scholars) understand to be the position of the Bible itself: *Sola Scriptura!*

—Bruce Demarest

Francis A. Schaeffer: Portraits of the Man and His Work
by Lane T. Dennis, ed. (Crossway Books, 1986, 237 pp., $7.95).

These twelve portraits are provided by individuals who have been significantly affected by Schaeffer's life and work. They are tributes to his personal, theological or social influence. Each focuses on particular aspects of Schaeffer's thought or ministry which personally touched the writer, but several recurring themes are noticeable. They include: Schaeffer's focus on the unity of truth, his interdisciplinary methodology, his belief in a biblical world view and his use of world view criticism, his Christian critique of culture, his deep love for people and belief in prayer, and his overriding confidence that because Christ is the Lord of all of life, Christian faith speaks to the whole of human life.

Writing for a general audience, the authors attempt to combine a tribute to Schaeffer's work with insights from their own experience or academic discipline, resulting in an odd and not entirely satisfactory mixture. The portraits sometimes show as much of the painter as the subject and occasionally contain rather lengthy digressions. Others are fine glimpses into the life, work and influence of a man whose desire was to show forth the existence and character of God. Though offering some criticism of Schaeffer's work, the authors are far more critical of his critics. A few of the writers make bold assertions about Schaeffer's contribution to modern thought.

The essays vary significantly in style and value. Several are helpful in pointing out some of Schaeffer's less commonly recognized contributions to contemporary Christian thought and action. Others are interesting in their demonstration of how Schaeffer's seminal work has blossomed in a new generation of Christian thinkers.

—Christine D. Pohl

The Theory and Practice of Virtue
by Gilbert C. Meilaender (University of Notre Dame Press, 1984, 191 pp., $16.95).

Meilaender's third book is a collection of essays which, taken together, analyze the recent flourishing of interest in the virtues, character, moral education, and values clarification. He welcomes this turn in Christian ethics but would have his readers consider it in relation to the culture's passion for self-actualization. Do such inward concerns reflect an undue preoccupation with the self? Do they lead to moralistic understandings of Christianity? Both are possibilities. Meilaender's remedy is to ground any ethic of virtue in God and in service to others. He argues this point and charts a distinctly Protestant course through the literature on the virtues by a chapter discussion with figures ranging from Plato and Aristotle to Luther and John Henry Newman to Josef Pieper and C.S. Lewis to Alasdair MacIntyre and Lawrence Kohlberg. In the process he considers the necessity for an ethic of virtue, the unity of the virtues, whether and how virtue can be taught, the kind of community context necessary for the teaching of virtue, and the relation between sin, grace and moralism. The final two chapters consider the virtues of curiosity and gratitude. While the book is not as systematic a presentation as the title suggests, Meilaender succeeds in introducing the theories and practices of virtue and does so with a clear and concise writing style. The book is highly recommended to teachers of ethics and others who struggle to include an ethical dimension to what they teach.

—Stephen Charles Mott

The Abusing Family
by Blair and Rita Justice (Human Sciences Press, 1986, 288 pp., $14.95).
The Broken Taboo: Sex in the Family
by Blair and Rita Justice (Human Sciences Press, 1979, 304 pp., $14.95).

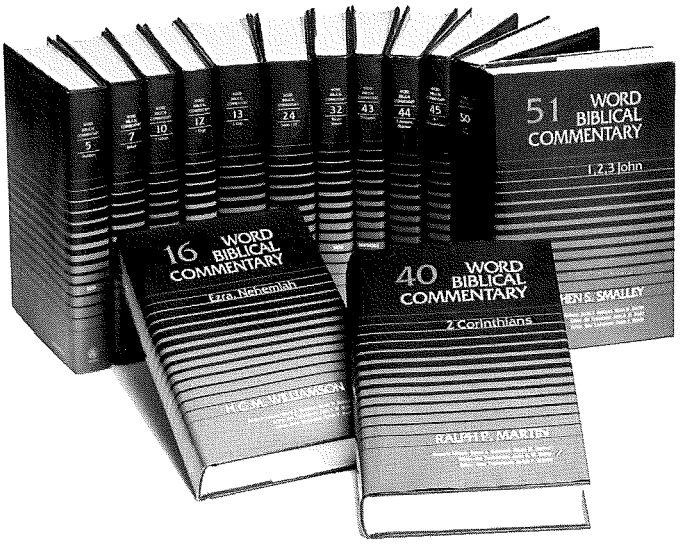
Every effective pastor who truly serves his or her parishioners will, at one time or another, be confronted with abusing parents or incestuous relation in a family in his or her parish. The question is not, "will he/she" but "how well will he or she help them become loving and caring parents, find forgiveness for their cruelty, then redirection (sublimation) for their rage toward their offspring(s) or a more psychological and spiritual love for family members?" The Justices' books will help the pastoral healer be a healing influence rather than a shocked and counter-hostile enemy to the abusing parents or sexually involved person.

Don't look for theology or a place for pastoral counseling by name in these volumes, for there isn't any, but there is a lot of solid psychological and sociological direction which every seminary student should be conversant with before going out to minister to hurting, hostile, sinful and sexual abusing persons in their community.

As with most social/behavioral scientific approaches to social problems, sin and the place of evil in human life is depicted in psychological language but the serious seminary student may make his or her own insight into the ultimate sources of these kinds of antisocial and humanly degrading abuse of family members.

Certainly these ancient sins and evils are not unknown to the Bible student; read 2 Sam. 13:1 where Amnon, the son of David, lusted after his sister Tamar and committed incest with her, or the daughters of Lot, Gen. 19:34, who were both pregnant by their father, seduced while intoxicated.

THE WORD BIBLICAL COMMENTARY



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The Justices do accuse "physicians, clergy, relatives and neighbors" who close their eyes to incest and child abuse in their families seen in their practice, parish, family or neighborhood of contributing to the suffering of the victims and the increase in incest from one in a million in 1940 to one in 100 in 1950 to one in 20 in 1970 , and ? in ? in 1980.

Many of us who see victims and their abusers in psychotherapy believe that pastors, more than any professional group in society, have the effective answers to both child abuse and incest—in the Gospel of forgiveness and ethical living and personal holiness.

—John M. Vayhinger

Towards A Christian Poetics
by Michael Edwards (Eerdmans, 1984, 246 pp., $13.95).

When I come across a difficult book (and this is a difficult book), I introspect on a series of questions: 1) Is this difficult because of the complexity of ideas?; 2) Is this difficult because the writer prefers obfuscation to clarity?; or, 3) Is this difficult because I am too stupid or unlearned to keep pace? With Edwards' book, though, I can guess which position he would choose, I'm torn between all three. Although his poetic is profound at times, rigorously defended, and rich with examples from Racine to Boccaccio to Shakespeare and Dickens, Edwards is also, often, convoluted and unnecessarily thick.

Edwards' thesis is that literature and language exist in their experienced forms because of the reality of the creation, fall, and redemption. Since we are created and have a vision of the redeemed paradise, we strive to understand and express *grandeur*. Since we are fallen and remain constrained by sin this side of perfection, we are condemned to understand and express *misère*. This dialectic between *grandeur* and *misère* explains the nature of literature (with special attention devoted to tragedy, comedy, story and translation), as well as painting and music.

Extending these parallels to language itself, Edwards contends that the very structure of language and composition betrays the dialectic, ultimately resting in the Spirit's recognition of our "groaning" inadequacy and pointing toward the redemption of speech in the Word Himself. In a special chapter, T.S. Eliot is revealed as a model of the thoroughly intentional Christian writer.

Not for the casual reader of intense treatments of aesthetics.

—Gregory H. Spencer

That You May Believe: Miracles and Faith Then and Now
by Colin Brown (Eerdmans, 1985, 232 pp., $7.95).

Colin Brown is Professor of Systematic Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary. This book is a popular sequel to his *Miracles and the Critical Mind* (1982). The book is divided into three parts dealing with philosophical, biblical and pastoral theology.

Part One is a historical sketch, from New Testament times to today, of topics concerning the nature of miracle, how it relates to faith, and whether rational people can believe it. This is basically a popularized version of his previous book.

Part Two looks at the miracle stories surrounding Jesus, and concludes that they can be historical, and need not be rejected as inventions of the church. He looks at the theology of Jesus' miracles in each Gospel. Part Three is an examination and rejection of the doctrine that miraculous healing is the "right" of every true believer.

Brown has written an important book, not least because he writes for the general reader. His analysis of philosophy, history of ideas, and Scripture is accurate and easy to read. He has set error to flight; granted his readers a wealth of information for a modest sum; and filled those who may be lead astray with a fund of Christian wisdom regarding healing and exorcism. I highly recommend this book.

—Alan Padgett

Clinical Handbook of Pastoral Counseling
edited by R.J. Wicks, R.D. Parsons and D.E. Capps (Paulist Press, 1985, 579 pp., $14.95).

Well written, this volume is a classic, a basic that every seminary student should read through and should be used as text in classes in Pastoral Care and Counseling. Long needed, it fills a unique place in the basic over-all view of the current and historic philosophy and theology of pastoral counseling.

It suffers from the common problems of all edited books (31 chapters by 34 authors) of overlapping information sometimes, but less than most books of its type. Many of the historic leaders of the field are missing, i.e., Wayne Oates, Edgar Jackson, Paul Johnson, Seward Hiltner, Carroll A. Wise, etc., but this lack is evidence that the field is passing to younger leaders with the death of most of those named.

What the volume does do is open with a broad introduction to the history of pastoral counseling by two experts most equipped to do so, Don Browning and Orlo Strunk, then selects specific foci and centers in on them.

Two physicians, Edgar Draper, B.D. & M.D. and Bevan Steadman discuss Assessment in pastoral care; Bernard Tyrrell on Christotherapy; Bob Wicks on Countertransference and Burnout; Sr. Madonna Cunningham, O.S.F. on Consultation, Collaboration and Referral; Ralph Underwood in the Parish and Gerald Fath, O.P. in the Hospital, Sharon Parks in the University, Ross Trower in the Military and Clark Power in the school setting describe the counseling environment.

A third focus is dealt with dynamically in chapters by Bob Neale on Loneliness; David Augsburger on Anger and Aggression (rev. I would have thought Depression); James Royce, S.J., Alcohol; Coval MacDonald on Loss and Bereavement; Ken Byrne on Sexual Dysfunction; Bascue and Lewis on Marital and Family Therapy.

And finally, Lowell G. Colston (since deceased) on the Handicapped; Emma Justes on Women; Ed Wimberly with Minorities; Fames Lapsley on the Aging; Carole Rayburn on Prison Counseling, and so on and so on.

Strunk's description of the Clinical Pastoral Education and American Assn. of Pastoral Counselors' history is both heartening and informative as to the place of both in pastoral education and accreditation and clinical training, but also warns of the dangers of psychologizing our theology and becoming "just only" therapists. The reader is also warned against overvaluing the psychiatric/psychological healing theories of Freud, Skinner and Rogers, giving them more validity then they deserve.

Styles of the chapter authors vary widely, as would be expected; some use case method, some historical, some lecture, some theoretical forms, some expository, and so on.

Had this been published earlier I would certainly have used it as a text in my nearly 30 years as a seminary professor. What better praise!

—John M. Vayhinger

Women, Authority and the Bible
edited by Alvera Mickelsen (InterVarsity Press, 1986, 304 pp., $9.95).

In October of 1984, thirty six leading evangelical scholars gathered in Illinois for a colloquium on the biblical and hermeneutical issues involved in the question of women's role in ministry. *Women, Authority and the Bible* is a collection of select presentations and responses from that colloquium. Overall, it represents an effort by authors with a biblical feminist orientation to break new ground in the theological stalemate between traditional and feminist perspectives.

The book opens with a discussion of the human element involved in the issue of women's role in ministry. It moves the discussion out of the realm of theological abstraction and reminds the reader that the issue deals with flesh-and-blood hurting, hoping women.

The next section deals with broad hermeneutical issues. Robert K. Johnston seeks to address the question of how various people who affirm the authority of Scripture can hold such radically different views on this issue. Roger Nicole discusses how feminist aspirations have been set in opposition to biblical authority and whether or not such a conflict is unavoidable. Clark Pinnock surveys feminist and contemporary traditional scholarship in order to illustrate that the conflict is, in fact, unavoidable and that biblical feminism is a contradiction in terms.

The book moves on to discuss biblical views of authority and headship. In the discussion of authority, Richard Longenecker argues for a developmental hermeneutic that roots hierarchy in creation and mutuality in redemption. In the second article on this topic, Berkeley and Alvera Mickelsen discuss the significance of *kephale* as it is used in the Pauline epistles.

Having laid this foundation, the book begins to deal with the "difficult texts" of Paul in I Corinthians, Galations, and II Timothy. The book concludes with strategies for change within the church and an evaluation of the colloquium. The thrust with which the reader is left is that there is strong biblical support for the broadening of women's roles in ministry. At the same time, the book exhorts theologians, pastors, and laypeople to continue to address the theological, biblical and hermeneutical issues involved.

The nature of this book as a collection of papers presented at a colloquium is its greatest strength. This allows for a great breadth and diversity of topics and viewpoints. Furthermore, because the book is structured as a series of presentations and responses, the reader is readily drawn into the theological dialogue and forced to think critically about the writers' claims. This structure also allows the reader to view any given issue from a variety of perspectives, an opportunity found in few, if any, books on the same subject.

–Donna Van Haren

Sociological Approaches to the Old Testament
by Robert R. Wilson (Guides to Biblical Scholarship: Old Testament Series. Fortress Press, 1984, 83 pp., $4.50).

Robert R. Wilson has provided us with a useful guide to the use of the social sciences in our understanding of the Old Testament.

He begins by providing a concise overview of the development, roles and emphases of the various social sciences and their influence on Old Testament studies. In the process he provides us with some guidelines for their use. One such guideline is that while the comparative sociological material is used to form a hypothesis, the exegesis of the text itself has the role of confirming, disproving or modifying the hypothesis.

With this background Wilson illustrates how sociological approaches can be used by applying them to three different areas of Old Testament study (reconstructing the history of Israel, understanding literary forms and understanding Israel's religion).

The last three pages are given to a look at the role sociological approaches will likely play in biblical studies in the future.

This little book will prove valuable to any student interested in a clear and concise introduction to the use of the social sciences in Old Testament studies.

–Roy E. Ciampa

Clive Staples Lewis: A Dramatic Life
by William Griffin (Harper & Row, 1986, 507 pp., $24.95).

C.S. Lewis seems a man worth knowing. And though this biography is only a partial means to that end, it exudes an enthusiasm for Lewis which is disarming—and which mitigates some serious faults. The arrangement of the biography can make for an exhausting reading: the book consists of a series of anecdotes about Lewis, arranged in chronological order. This approach tends to give the impression of Lewis as a kind of stand-up comedian, firing off witty repartee at luncheon tables and making sage comments in his voluminous correspondence. For good or ill, Griffin resolutely declines to probe any of the difficult questions of Lewis' life.

The main problem in writing a study of Lewis is that a scholar's life is dramatic indeed, but not in the sense which Griffith shows it to be—i.e., full of medical crises, endless letter-writing and frequent whiskey and sodas, though these play a definite part as well. Still, a scholar's life is dramatic because ideas excite him; and their pursuit and hammering out in prose becomes a heroic quest. The concept of an intellectual and spiritual life is definitely missing in this picture of Lewis. *C.S. Lewis: A Dramatic Life* contains no psychological subtlety, and lacks significant insight into Lewis' character. But the biographer shows an evident and warm affection for his subject; and in this case perhaps love covers a multitude of sins.

–Janice A. Rossen

Evangelical Ethics—Issues Facing The Church Today
by John Jefferson Davis (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1985, 299 pp., $13.95).

The moral dimension of our everyday experience is a pervasive and inescapable fact. Often, we seem instinctively to apply moral judgment to situations (both real and fictional) and to people of our acquaintance. However, the evangelical tradition of the last century and a half has been primarily concerned with conversion and personal commitment; in the ethical realm, evangelicalism has tended to accept the existing (and perhaps stagnant) body of traditional Christian ethical teaching. John Jefferson Davis' *Evangelical Ethics* attempts to make contact with the solid substance of Christian ethical tradition and to awaken the sleeping evangelical church to an awareness of the pressing moral issues facing Christians today.

Davis limits his discussion to ten issues that are "likely to confront the pastor and Christian layperson today." By use of causistry, Davis provides the reader with ample historical, legal and biblical data to begin reflection toward a consistent and biblically valid way of life. Disappointing is the omission of any ethical considerations with regard to non-human life. The work has many strengths. Davis' chapter on "Civil Disobedience and Revolution" is insightful, especially in light of the lack of evangelical response to South Africa.

Evangelical Ethics is a solid introductory entry which should stimulate the evangelical community to do some new systematic and creative thinking in the development of a comprehensive and distinctive ethic which is not limited to the repetition of selected Bible texts.

–John M. Kenney

BOOK COMMENT CONTRIBUTORS

Roy E. Ciampa is a missionary to France with Greater Europe Mission; Bruce Demarest is professor of systematic theology at Denver Seminary; Millard J. Erickson is at Bethel Theological Seminary; John M. Kenney is Bible Dept. Chairman at The Stony Brook School; Donald K. McKim is Associate Professor of Theology at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary; Stephen Charles Mott is Professor of Christian social ethics at Gordon-Conwell Seminary; Mark A. Noll is Professor of History at Wheaton College; Alan Padgett is a graduate student in theology at Oriel College, Oxford University; Clark A. Pinnock is Professor of Theology at McMaster Divinity School; Christine D. Pohl is a doctoral student in ethics & society at Emory University; Janice A. Rossen is Instructor in the English Dept. at Chapman College, Orange, CA; Gregory H. Spencer is an instructor at the McKenzie Study Center; Donna Van Haren has the Master of Divinity from Fuller Seminary; John M. Vayhinger is Executive Director of the Colorado Interfaith Counseling Center in Colorado Springs.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In Praise of TSF

I cannot begin to tell you how much receiving *TSF Bulletin* means to me. Living overseas, cut off from the resources which have nourished me up to this point in my journey feels lonely and ruthless. *TSF Bulletin* "brings me home."

I especially enjoyed the September/October 1986 issue. Harold Netland's article, "The Challenge of Religious Pluralism" was especially refreshing because he articulates much of my own struggle here in Asia. Netland has done a good job of outlining the problem and critiquing the false solutions (i.e., John Hicks' "theocentric" program). Netland suggests that an evangelical response to religious pluralism is to "develop a genuinely biblical theology of religions which gives special attention to three areas" (p. 24). From my experience, I would suggest that there are two other needed areas. No. 4 would be called a deeper understanding of the nature of sin, following the line of Karl Barth's insights in his Romans commentary, i.e., in our sin we human beings seek to hide from the living God; religion is not so much the fruit of seeking the true God as it is the consequence of running from the true God and embracing a false concept of God which makes us comfortable. And a fifth area would be a deeper understanding of the powers of darkness which blind human beings to the light and which disguise themselves in an aura of light (2 Cor. 4).

Again, thank you for the work you and your staff do for *TSF*. I am, by grace, a disciple of the Incarnate One.

Darrell W. Johnson
Pastor at Union Church of Manila
Manila, Philippines

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