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# BULLETIN

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## A Letter from the Editors . . .

*During the spring, our readers usually receive a letter that includes an update on our year-end finances. Not so this year. In order to reduce our expenses and to communicate with readers who borrow copies or use libraries, we decided to include the letter here.*

### Dear Subscriber,

It has been a full year! The Pinnock-Dulles-Wells series has provoked helpful discussions. The more varied approaches in spiritual formation have brought affirming comments. Bernard Ramm's book has no doubt received only the first wave of responses. Interpretive reports on major conferences have allowed those events to serve wider audiences. Our new partnership with the Latin American Theological Fraternity has helped us get started on an agenda aimed at a better understanding of our brothers and sisters to the south. Plus, *TSF Bulletin* provided reviews of over 200 books!

This has been possible because thirteen editors kept the various fields covered with the help of twenty-eight contributors (both professors and students), along with over one hundred additional reviewers. No one received payment for these labors. All articles and reviews are given to TSF. So, to this multitude, our thanks. Without them, such a publishing venture would be impossible.

Many of these friends are involved even more deeply—they provide financial help for the *Bulletin*. Our budget this year is \$37,000. We still need \$14,000 in donations by June 30 to meet that budget. Those figures include all of our costs (partial salaries in the office, rent, type-

setting, printing, mailing). We receive income from subscriptions (\$16,000), advertising (\$2,500), Sustaining Subscribers (\$3,000) and donations (\$1,500, so far). Income from the \$7 and \$8 subscription rates covers less than one-half of our expenses.

Your partnership in reaching this goal is crucial. Any deficit remaining on June 30 will undercut the new budget for 1983-84. So, we are asking you to seriously consider making a contribution to *TSF Bulletin*. Perhaps a gift of \$15, or \$25, or \$50 would be possible. Or, you may wish to become a Sustaining Subscriber. This group of special friends provide \$120 each year (sent as a single gift or in monthly or quarterly payments). In addition to receiving *TSF Bulletin*, they are provided with regular updates on editorial plans and they select free books from recent InterVarsity Press listings.

Whether your gift is large or small, regular or one-time, you will have a significant role in keeping *TSF Bulletin* on a solid financial base. We appreciate your subscription. Your comments keep us encouraged, corrected, hopeful and entertained. We will continue working to keep *TSF Bulletin* in the forefront of theological education. We need your help to accomplish that goal. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Clark H. Pinnock  
Paul A. Mickey  
Mark Lau Branson

Note: All donations are tax-deductible. Make checks payable to Theological Students Fellowship, add a note to designate the contribution for *TSF Bulletin*, and send them to TSF, 233 Langdon, Madison, WI 53703 or, in Canada, to IVCF, 745 Mount Pleasant Road, Toronto, Ontario M4S 2N5. If you wish to become a Sustaining Subscriber, indicate that in an accompanying note. Or, if you would like us to pay postage in the U.S., you can enclose your check securely inside your folded Reader's Survey (found opposite page 21).

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# Signs that They Take the Laity Seriously

by Mark Gibbs

I am more than ever convinced that theological seminaries are of fundamental importance in the development of a committed and responsible Christian laity. This is *not* primarily because they often run a few extra courses for laypeople, nor because many laypeople now take full-time theological courses without becoming ordained. It is because the priests and ordained ministers which seminaries educate have a tremendous and lasting influence once they start parish or other work. If seminary graduates sincerely believe in the vocation of the *laos*—all the People of God, ordained or unordained—and if they have learned how to encourage laypeople in their responsibilities, then in the future they can be effective and wise partners with their fellow Christians. If they still develop in their theological training and retain after their ordination paternalistic attitudes like “the clergy always know best,” then they may do great harm wherever they work. Through the generosity of a grant from the LAOS group of the Lutheran Church in America, I have been able in the last few years to visit a number of LCA seminaries. Over the last ten years, in the course of other work with the Audenshaw Foundation, I have also been in contact with other North American seminaries and British theological colleges. It would be tactless and even impertinent to suggest which of the seminaries I have visited seemed to me best or worst at understanding and encouraging the vocation of laypeople in today’s world. It is, however, possible to draw up some kind of a check list, by which we may attempt to assess how well or how poorly any given theological institution is doing in this respect.

## The Formal Curriculum

A theological seminary which takes the laity seriously is one which emphasizes from the very start of any formal theological education a *basic theology* of the *laos*—the common calling of God to all human beings, irrespective of sex, age, wealth, class, race, education or ordination. One seminary I visited is careful to put this reminder of our common vocation in the first orientation course for new students—just when they may be feeling a little “superior” to laypeople because they have started a course of training towards ordination. (Others, not only by their formal teaching to the entering classes, but also by subtle hints in ceremonies and worship services, emphasize the distinctions now to be found between these students and “ordinary” Christians.)

Our “model” seminary emphasizes the ministries of laypeople as well as clergy, not only on Sunday in church activities but also on Mondays (in jobs, being unemployed, in buying and selling, in government and politics), and also on Saturdays (in entertainment and

hospitality, in sports, on vacations, in watching and assessing television programs). It teaches about the ministries of laypeople to both church and secular structures, and not merely about personal relationships. It highlights the role of laypeople in attempting to achieve justice for many people they will never meet, as well in showing personal love and compassion towards their actual neighbors and acquaintances.

In an effective seminary this emphasis on the ministry of all Christian people forms an important part of the compulsory core curriculum. It does not become an optional course offering taken by a minority of students, like one course on the ministry of the laity which I found was available on request “every second year.” Nor is it supplanted by courses which merely help pastors “use” the laity

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## *We have almost no real histories yet of the whole People of God.*

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more efficiently in local church work.

In addition to core courses focussing specifically on the laity, our model seminary also includes the perspective of lay ministry throughout its traditional curriculum.

1. In *biblical studies* such a seminary explains to students what is clear in the Old and New Testaments about our common calling; it urges them to take this teaching seriously and prayerfully into their future work for God. It also warns against using proof texts and uncertain traditions to build up theories about priesthood and pastoral clericalism which are simply not present in the early documents.

2. In teaching *Christian ethics* it is concerned with corporate as well as personal ethics, and with questions of responsible compromise and the wise use of secular power: Some case study work I have seen about ethical questions seems too “perfectionist” and based too much on personal one-to-one counselling situations. This leaves out the dimensions of practical, rough politics and corporate life with which so many laypeople are constantly involved. In other instances, the ethics course gains a great deal by using studies from actual lay experiences, Monday through Saturday.

3. Similarly, in its study of *church history* such a seminary tries to develop an understanding of the history of the whole People of God. It is sobering to reflect on the numbers of church history courses which not only encourage a kind of denominational exclusivity (does the Holy Spirit really not work through other kinds of Christians?) but also emphasize clerical and organizational controversies. Indeed we have almost no real histories yet of the whole People of God: in many church history studies the laity are the forgotten yet overwhelming

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*Mark Gibbs is Director of the Audenshaw Foundation in London, England, and Editor of Laity Exchange. This article is adapted from Audenshaw Document No. 102 (©1982 by the Audenshaw Foundation).*

majority.

4. Again, in teaching *ecumenics* it moves beyond the traditional explanations as to why, sadly, denominations and institutional churches disagree with one another. It discovers instead the practical ecumenism which the laity have long since developed. In studying plans for church unity, it is careful to consider what positions will be held by the laity, both men and women, both "churchly" and more secular, in future church structures. I want to affirm the way in which the different Lutheran churches in America are examining this question as they move toward a merger.

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***More than once, I have been dismayed by the comment, "the laity don't want to be called."***

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5. In studying *liturgy and worship* a seminary committed to the *laos* is genuinely anxious to develop participatory styles, so that pastor and people may work together. I am fascinated to note that some Roman Catholic seminaries are now far ahead of some of the most determinedly Protestant seminaries in designing ways in which liturgy and Christian worship—formal or informal—shall be a work of the whole congregation. Our model seminary examines ceremonies and sacraments—baptism, confirmation, communion, ordination (whatever this means in a particular Christian tradition), marriage, burial—to see what all these rites teach about the laity. Baptism receives particular attention, of course: how many seminarians really understand, in the depths of their Christian conviction, that baptism is an infinitely more important symbol than ordination? One or two seminaries I know are considering what kinds of ceremonies will best affirm the adult laity in their calling, yet even some of these experiments have developed their own bias: full-time church workers are affirmed, along with medical doctors and bank presidents, but what about taxi drivers or the unemployed? Our model seminary will scrutinize prayerbooks and hymnals, and traditions of informal prayer, to see in particular whether laity involved in more secular pursuits are affirmed and prayed for. It considers the topics and styles of preaching, and how these may be evaluated from time to time by congregations. It examines music and the architecture of churches, their furnishings, pictures, acoustics, and symbols, as well as the types of retreats, conferences and evangelistic missions which are undertaken.

6. It encourages styles of *Christian learning* which continually develop both clergy and laity. It expects a conversion and whole-hearted commitment from every Christian, not merely those who are clergy or paid church workers. (More than once, I have been dismayed by the comment, "the laity don't want to be called.") It examines very carefully the Christian education of children and adolescents to see what attitudes about the laity are promoted or neglected. It looks with special care at the Christian training and development of blue collar laity and of handicapped and minority groups. (Instead of encouraging these people, churches often look down on their attempts to be Christian ministers and disciples.)

7. As students undertake *field work* or an *intern year* they work together with a group of laity and not merely with pastors; these laity include those more involved with the secular world as well as those active primarily in the church. Thus the students study lay ministries outside as well as inside the parishes.

### **The "Hidden Curriculum" of a Theological Institution**

It is well known that all educational structures develop a "hidden curriculum"—a set of traditions, psychological assumptions and habits of living together which undergirds the community's life. This hidden curriculum often blocks change even when the formal curric-

ulum is encouraging it. Seminaries are no different, and I have sometimes found a paternalistic clericalism in the hidden curriculum which would certainly not be proclaimed in formal teaching. A theological institution which takes the laity seriously will, I suggest, show in the following ways that it is in earnest.

1. It affirms that it is a *servant church institution*. It is prepared to learn new ways, even if the process is painful, so that the clergy can build a strong partnership with the laity.

2. Its administration, faculty, staff and trustees constantly attempt to assess and to redress traditional *clerical, privatist and sexist attitudes*. It is extraordinary how strongly these are held, often quite unconsciously.

3. It is prepared to examine, and where necessary to confront, *church and secular hierarchies*, as well as ecclesiastical and secular "class" structures. The laity include more than upper middle-class whites!

4. It constantly examines its *budgets* to see whether new ideas about the laity are really supported. Almost all church and seminary budgets are basically traditional: they finance what has always been financed unless the figures are constantly questioned. I have found matters concerning laity enthusiastically endorsed in theory but denied in the budget.

5. Its *library* reflects these concerns for the whole *laos*. In its selection of books and periodicals it covers the ministries of laypeople as well as those of clergy; it is concerned with Christian ministries and witness outside as well as inside the traditional parish structures. There is information about the laity in other denominations and countries, just as there is material about the international study of the Old Testament or church music.

6. Its brochures, newsletters and publicity materials equally reflect these concerns.

7. The seminary is eager to use *laity as teachers and resource people*, in full partnership with ordained faculty. When it does so, lay people are not treated as "second class citizens" in policy making committees and the like.

### **Laity as Students**

Some theological seminaries have substantial programs for laypeople during term times, weekends or vacations. Insofar as our model seminary attempts to serve laity directly, either through full-time courses or shorter seminars and conferences, it consistently manifests its commitment to the importance of lay ministry. 1. It is scrupulously careful *not to regard these as "minor" events* or ways simply to use seminary faculty or buildings for extra income. I have sometimes found such attitudes expressed rather openly and insensitively, so that laity attending such courses felt that they were only important because of the fees they paid. 2. It honors the *vocation of such lay students* equally with that of the seminarians who plan to be ordained. If necessary it provides them with special tutors and advisers. At one theological college I visited, they were distinctly neglected in these respects, even being simply excluded from some classes on pastoral counselling. 3. *Lay students* are as a matter of course *fully involved with seminary worship and community life*. It has been painful to notice how insensitive some seminaries have been to the position of women students in particular.

### **The Potential for Change**

Occasionally, I must admit, these visits to seminaries and theological colleges have been deeply disappointing. In particular, the "hidden curriculum" has seemed to resist progress toward any true partnership between ordained and unordained, a partnership in which the clergy would not be invariably the senior partners. Nevertheless, whether I visited Lutheran or Episcopal or Protestant or Roman Catholic seminaries, I have found a sincere desire—sometimes indeed a strong hunger—to find new ways of theological training. There is an interest in producing "strong pastors for strong laity," ordained ministers who know how to encourage, work with and *listen to* laypeople. In many places there is a real will to change; and though the personal and institutional costs of innovation are great in such traditional institutions, I believe we can be confident that changes will come.

# The Role of Tradition for Pinnock and Dulles: A Response

by David F. Wells

It is an honor to be invited to comment on the fine essays by Clark Pinnock and Avery Dulles. It is not my intention to develop any additional lines of thought or to quibble with incidental details in their presentations. Rather, I want to focus, as they have done, upon their respective uses of tradition and see if any further clarity can be found.

I begin by setting out my conclusion. Dulles' contention that Pinnock is an "evangelical who leans toward the catholic . . . alternative" while he himself is a "catholic who leans more to the evangelical . . . stance" is mistaken on both accounts. Pinnock may imagine he functions like a Catholic in his use of tradition and Dulles undoubtedly thinks that in his respect for authority he resembles an evangelical. These are, however, only optical illusions. Now let me justify this assertion.

Pinnock is attracted to tradition because he fears that if Scripture is interpreted merely in the light of inner experience—what, in another age, used to be derided by Catholics as "private judgment"—the interpreter could easily slip into relativism and hence into liberalism. He wants something objective to which to appeal and he finds this in the "sense" as to what constitutes Christian belief which has revealed itself through the ages. In interpretive matters, there is comfort in numbers, a quiet confidence that can be had from thinking that Augustine, Luther and Warfield said the very things that we ourselves are now saying. Dulles rejoices in this, imagining it to be the first step toward Rome, the second—which Pinnock has not yet taken—being the belief that only an authoritative church can interpret this "sense" aright. For, as Pinnock acknowledges, "tradition" is a many-fangled thing! This was a problem even in the patristic period. Vincent of Lerin did weave some order out of early opinions in his *Commonitoria*; but this did not prevent Peter Abelard, a little later, from revealing an astonishing array of contradictions on over 150 subjects in a book the Church—for reasons of self-preservation—suppressed. It was entitled *Liber Sententiarum Sic et Non*. If this "sense" is to be grasped with any certainty, if it is to be grasped with any infallibility, it is argued it will have to be an authoritative Church with divine sanction that alone will be able to do it. Pinnock, however, does not believe in any such authority. At most, his use of tradition is one of counsel. It is never one of command. It is one of gentle suggestion but never of infallible certainty.

But this leads on to something that is even more fundamental. The issue that divides Pinnock and Dulles is not at root one of tradition but of *revelation*. Pinnock believes God's disclosure of himself has occurred exclusively in Scripture; Dulles does not. Pinnock sees tradition as useful in eliciting the meaning of Scripture and providing some safeguard against the vagaries of experience and the parochialisms of each age. Dulles sees tradition as not merely interpreting Scripture but as itself being the vehicle of revelation. This vehicle, he asserts, is not identical

with the magisterium but is more broadly identified with the whole people of God whose collective experience is to be interpreted by the magisterium. This experience is not to be prescribed for the people by the magisterium.

Dulles is entirely correct in saying that Pinnock's understanding of what Catholics think of as tradition is a pre-Vatican II conception; indeed, it is late nineteenth-century. It lingers on in some of the current pronouncements from the Vatican but it has largely been abandoned in the Catholic Church.

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I am not sure, however, whether Dulles—conservative as he is in Catholic terms—is willing to acknowledge his affinity with liberalism. It is an affinity that is, of course, absent from Pinnock.

The issue can be viewed as an hermeneutical one. The question that is being asked is what the revelatory trajectory looks like as it moves from what God said in a given culture long ago to what he is now saying to our culture through the words and actions of that bygone age. Pinnock holds the original revelation to be absolute and binding; therefore the cognitive horizons and the epistemological considerations of each succeeding age must be determined by it. For him, it is the modern word that must be demythologized, not Scripture. For the liberal it is the epistemological limits of the modern person which establish what is to be believed in Scripture. The modern world and the experience of the interpreter are taken as normative and Scripture is fitted around this "given" as well as possible. Modern consciousness is authoritative and Scripture is demythologized or discarded.

Dulles, unlike the liberal, is looking for something that is authoritative, but like the liberal he assumes as an interpretive norm the faith experience of the people of God. True, this experience has to be interpreted and defined by the authoritative church but it is still *experience*. Under the notion of development it is seen as both the vehicle for and elongation of divine revelation. There is only one source of revelation, God himself, but this revelation flows down related channels. It flows into Scripture; it flows through the people of God; it flows down the magisterium. What Scripture says should therefore coincide with what the people experience and what the magisterium teaches. Hence Dulles rejoices to see that Pinnock does not disapprove too much of those evangelicals who urge us "to grasp the threefold cord of Scripture, rule of

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*David F. Wells is Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. He responds here to articles by Clark Pinnock ("How I Use Tradition in Doing Theology," TSF Bulletin, September–October, 1982) and by Avery Dulles, S.J. ("The Role of Tradition in Roman Catholic Theology: A Response to Clark Pinnock," TSF Bulletin, January–February 1983).*

faith, and authority.”

What this understanding of tradition really does, however, is to force the vagaries of later religious experience back into Scripture on the grounds that what is experienced religiously later must have been implicit in Scripture in the first place! Because Mary is thought, many centuries later, to have been assumed into heaven, it is argued that such a belief must lie implicit in some of the texts relating to her! The concern to have religious authority is anti-liberal; to treat Scripture in this way is precisely what liberals always do. By type, Dulles is a liberal on this issue but by species he is a Catholic.

My conclusion therefore is that the structure and function of authority in Pinnock's thought and in Dulles' are as different as night and day. Pinnock believes in an authoritative Scripture that exclusively contains God's special revelation; Dulles does not. Dulles believes in the unfolding of revelation within the people of God; Pinnock does not. Pinnock and Dulles both want something that is authoritative and in this both are anti-liberal. And both employ tradition to secure the proper functioning of this authority. They do it so differently, however, that it would be true to say that in this Pinnock is not catholic. And on the matter of revelation, Dulles is not evangelical.

The longing for certainty, made all the more intense by our experience in a chaotic and bedlam world, has lured many a theological sailor to destruction. As long as we are dealing with human interpreters, there

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***There will never be any absolute,  
hermeneutical infallibility.  
Not even in Rome.***

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will never be any absolute, hermeneutical infallibility. Not even in Rome. There may be greater comfort in numbers but there might also be greater danger of theological defection in numbers, too. Ultimately, we are cast back onto God that in his goodness and by his grace he will lead us, despite our many prejudices and sins, into a sufficient understanding of his infallible Word. There are no other alternatives. It is the absence of alternatives that leaves the room we need to develop our daily trust in the God who, having given us his Son, will not withhold whatever else we need to be his faithful children.

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## INQUIRY

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

# Jesus and the Historians: The Discussion Broadens

by Scot McKnight

***A Future for the Historical Jesus: The Place of Jesus in Preaching and Theology***

by Leander E. Keck (reprint ed. with Afterword, Fortress, 1981, 283 pp., \$10.95).

***Jesus and the Constraints of History***

by A. E. Harvey (Westminster, 1982, 184 pp., \$23.00).

***New Approaches to Jesus and the Gospels: A Phenomenological and Exegetical Study of Synoptic Christology***

by Royce G. Gruenler (Baker, 1982, 261 pp., \$13.95).

In the last three years, the historical Jesus debate has again surged to the fore in gospel studies. Ben F. Meyer, in *The Aims of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1979), an altogether neglected but highly valuable book, made the bold claim that the intentions of Jesus could be discerned by a critical appraisal of the synoptic gospels. His book has been followed (not necessarily in agreement) by the translation of Schillebeeckx's provocative volumes *Jesus* and *Christ* (Crossroad,

1979, 1980), J. D. G. Dunn's *Christology in the Making* (Westminster, 1980), John Riches' *Jesus and the Transformation of Judaism* (London: DLT, 1980) and a promised work by E. P. Sanders of McMaster University. Into this debate we now have new works by A. E. Harvey (Oxford) and Royce G. Gruenler (Gordon-Conwell). By examining these two works, with the reprint of Leander Keck's 1971 volume as our starting point, we can conveniently assess the paths taken in the last decade.

Although *A Future for the Historical Jesus* is called a "progress report" rather than a "finished product," Keck has not changed his views in the time between printings. Analyzing the interrelationships between "the historian's Jesus" and faith, the gospel, salvation and the character of God, Keck concludes that the historical Jesus (as reconstructed by critics) does have a role in preaching, both now and in the future. He debates Lessing, Kierkegaard, Bultmann, Jeremias, Ebeling and Fuchs and proposes "trust" as the crucial category because it is personal, social and experiential. He argues that Jesus, in preaching, must be presented as Question: by responding in trust, the hearer finds salvation (freedom from self, openness to the future and the establishment of a community). An understanding of Jesus will lead finally to an understanding of God because Jesus is the "Parable

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*Scot McKnight is a Ph.D. candidate in New Testament at the University of Nottingham.*

of God.”

I admire Keck's courage to reinstate Jesus into the pulpit and his sharp, often devastating, critique of his opponents. Nevertheless, I disagree with most of his proposals. First, the book is rooted in a dated discussion and filled with all its old jargon (“new hermeneutic,” “new quest”). Second, because Keck's critical term, trust, is never defined by exegesis of the texts, the net result is that one responds to Jesus on one's own terms. Third, Keck never delineates the “contours” of the historical Jesus. Although he surveys the debate well and proposes a sound methodology, he never seems to arrive at a point where he can show us the real Jesus. Who is this Jesus whom we are to preach and trust? Fourth, it seems that instead of a program of de-mythologizing, Keck has proposed one of mythologizing even the “brute” facts, whether historical or not. He dodges the facticity of the resurrection, wanting instead to discover its *function*. “The resurrection of a corpse has nothing to do with resurrection. . . . Rather, resurrection has to do with creation of a new mode of existence as a response of God to the irradicable perverseness of history.” Thus, one “can come to terms with . . . the non-validated character of his own existence.” How this actually can ever come to pass is not substantiated. Keck asks a good question about the historical Jesus and preaching. En route to an answer he makes many astute observations, but his overall solution is no longer satisfactory.

A. E. Harvey contributes to our discussion in *Jesus and the Constraints of History*, his Bampton lectures delivered in Oxford. Harvey finds in the synoptics considerable material about the historical Jesus. Thus, “we have every reason to think that, in broad outline. . . , Jesus whom [the evangelists] portray is the Jesus who actually existed.” Harvey comes to his conclusions by taking into account the “constraints of history”: “No individual . . . is totally free to choose his own style of action and persuasion.” Jesus, in order to communicate, had to be a part of his society. Furthermore, because of the vast research on the social fabric of Jesus' time, Harvey contends that we are now in position to understand Jesus much more clearly. Harvey's method, not at all new, is to take a fact (say the crucifixion) and, in light of our knowledge of the political constraints of that period, make salient inferences about Jesus. The constraints of history Harvey examines are politics (the crucifixion), prophecy (Law and Time), miracles, the name “Messiah” (an ingenious, but improbable, suggestion) and monotheism.

To review, or even summarize adequately, all of Harvey's arguments would exceed the limits of this review. Only a few observations can be made. First, in contrast to Keck, Harvey feels a greater freedom to accept “the basic historical reliability of the gospels,” defending it using the criteria of multiple attestation (“consistency”) and dissimilarity. Obviously Harvey is indebted to R. S. Barbour's *Traditio-historical Criticism of the Gospels* (London: SPCK, 1972). He perceives the similarities between Jesus' concerns and those of the Pharisees, and can further note their utter incompatibility when critical differences emerge. He finds in Jesus one who does not fit into a stereotyped category. Harvey has broken out of the mold of anti-supernaturalism by seeing miracles as sometimes authentic. Miracles are seen as attacks by Jesus on physical constraints which impede the kingdom. Expansion on this idea would be greatly appreciated. Also noteworthy is his willingness to use John to inform the synoptics historically. Finally, what is vitally important is Harvey's refusal to be a minimalist and, at the same time, his readiness to fill in gaps in our knowledge of Jesus with material from other sources. Although this is as old as the History-of-religions school, many NT scholars are intimidated today and refuse to say more than what is painfully obvious.

Although Harvey emphasizes the “constraints of history,” he often notes that Jesus exceeds these boundaries. As a result, the methodology of Harvey's study, at least applied to Jesus himself, does not work: Jesus is always more than the category being used. After reading his careful and penetrating chapter on the constraint of monotheism, and in light of Gruenler's book (described below), not all will allow Harvey to stop short without recognizing the implications of Jesus' Son-consciousness. I also have a few more minor points with which to quibble: Harvey regularly cites later rabbinic evidence without defending its legitimacy for the first century (contra Jacob Neusner); the book often lacks direction and disciplined control of the discussion; Harvey's use of modern sociological and psychological theories on prophecy seems faddish; and numerous

careless errors have found their way into the text. Nevertheless, these criticisms do not undermine the central focus of the book, which is to provide an explanation of Jesus in light of the “constraints” of history. I hope Harvey will eventually complete what he has called a “preliminary report.”

In contrast to Keck and Harvey, Gruenler's style in *New Approaches to Jesus and the Gospels* is so clear and demonstrative, being somewhat polemical, that even a casual reader cannot miss his concern. When one applies Wittgenstein's phenomenology of persons (as Gruenler understands it) to historical Jesus research, one immediately sees the inadequacy of redaction criticism for a complete understanding of Jesus and his purpose. As described in Part I of the book, Gruenler's method works as follows: (1) Taking the minimal, authentic passages so designated by Norman Perrin (a radical critic) and (2) applying the phenomenological approach, (3) one discovers profound, but implicit, christology on the lips of Jesus. Then, (4) assuming that a person's intentionality is expressed in words and deeds and (5) that what is implicit would very likely also be made explicit by the same person, one can extrapolate from this implicit christology to a high christology on the lips of Jesus (consciously and intentionally disclosing himself as divine). Furthermore, (6) if one can accept the recent study of David Hill on early Christian prophets, which argues that they did not create sayings and attribute them to Jesus, then the way is clear to (7) use the criterion of coherence to conclude that everything consistent with both implicit and explicit christology, whether in John or the Synoptics, is from the historical Jesus.

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***Many New Testament scholars are  
intimidated today and refuse to say  
more than what is painfully obvious.***

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Gruenler's system is as strong as the inferences he makes concerning what is implicit. Part II is a running application to the synoptic gospels of various modern authors' hermeneutical systems (those of C. S. Lewis, I. T. Ramsey, M. Polanyi, G. Marcel, J. R. R. Tolkien and C. van Til). Obviously, the book opens up Pandora's box: from presuppositions to individual interpretations of select verses.

I appreciate what Gruenler has contributed by bringing redaction criticism's hermeneutical foundations to the fore with such clarity and candor. When will critics learn that the dissimilarity test gives only what is unique to Jesus and not the entire portrait? Gruenler has provided persuasive evidence that all exegesis is presuppositional and that objectivism through distance is pure fantasy. His fair and courteous criticisms of biblical studies at the American University is erudite, though it will probably prove divisive. Gruenler trusts the text, and so he proceeds with a fiduciary mode of interpretation; his concern for joy, enchantment and attentiveness is noteworthy. Nevertheless, the following are some reminders that the end is not yet.

First, Gruenler never establishes the legitimacy of Wittgenstein's phenomenology, nor does he substantiate his appeals to other hermeneutical systems. Is Wittgenstein's phenomenological approach self-evident? Is a fiduciary mode defensible or simply chosen? I, too, am dissatisfied with the established “system,” but to embrace Wittgenstein's phenomenology necessitates a forthright demonstration and *defense* of its legitimacy. Do we need to become Marxists to understand *Das Kapital*? If not, why do we choose one system over another? Second, Gruenler's logic in Part I is not without its weaknesses. He waffles between cautious assertion and overstatement. Is it always so clear precisely what inference to draw? To make stupendous claims is not necessarily to claim divinity as a self-conscious assertion. Gruenler needs either to be more cautious or, better yet, to define more precisely his logical progression from what is implicit to what is “ineluctably” deduced. Third, I am not convinced that all of Jesus' claims



are more than what was expected of a prophet, though some are unquestionably so. Gruenler may be going too far at times. Finally, in his running application of the hermeneutics of other authors, one gets the feeling that at times he is exploiting the ideas of a writer who may not agree with such an approach to a different genre of literature.

Even so, Gruenler has made a forceful, if not always compelling, presentation of what appears to me to be the most important issue in the historical Jesus debate: presuppositions in one's hermeneutics. This book is a signpost for future studies. Read it, but do not forget

-Harvey.

What is the situation today in the debate? Three points emerge immediately: first, scholars have reopened the question of the *intentions* of Jesus (Meyer, Riches, Gruenler); second, there is a willingness to make *deductions* to fill the gaps in our knowledge of Jesus (Harvey, Gruenler); finally, the reduction of the basic issue to *hermeneutics* is promising (Gruenler, Meyer). Henceforth, any study which assumes Cartesian, epistemological objectivism will have to defend itself carefully.

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# Speaking of Parables: A Survey of Recent Research

by David L. Barr

There are perhaps fifty parables in the synoptic tradition—perhaps fifteen to twenty pages of text. This review will look at some 2,500 pages of analysis of these parables—works published over the last two years. The sheer bulk of this material illustrates both the fascination of the parables and the difficulty of reading them aright. This collection of works also illustrates the current debate over how one makes a valid (or a useful) interpretation of a literary work—a question of central importance to all of us who deal with texts.

The works under review form a veritable spectrum of hermeneutical options: from a positivist reading of the text which takes meaning as obvious and referential to a semiotic reading which takes meaning to be polyvalent and autonomous—with several shades in between. And here I think we are well advised by the father of literary criticism to seek the mean between the extremes.

One such mediating work is that of **Robert H. Stein, *An Introduction to the Parables of Jesus*** (Westminster, 1981, 180 pp.). Stein teaches New Testament at Bethel Theological Seminary and has written a very useful introduction which both explores the major theoretical issues (chaps. 1–6) and interprets specific parables (7–10). Concise and informed discussions of the nature of parables, the purpose and authenticity of the synoptic parables, and the history of parable interpretation from Marcion (c. 150) to the twentieth century give the reader the essential background needed to interpret the parables today.

From his review of previous scholarship, Stein formulates four principles which guide his interpretations: 1) seek the one main point of each parable, not allegorizing the details unless necessary; 2) seek to understand the parable in its original social setting within the life of Jesus; 3) seek to understand how the gospel writer interpreted the parable; and 4) seek what God is saying to us today through the parables.

Stein presumes that the meaning discovered in all these levels of analyses will be coherent and harmonious. In fact he regards both levels 2 and 3 as having divine authority, a conviction which also causes him to ignore the other traditional levels of analysis: the social contexts of the parables between the time of Jesus and the time of the gospels. Further, his conviction that the meaning uncovered at levels 2 and 3 is “usually a single meaning” does not allow him to take the differences between Jesus and the gospel writers with sufficient seriousness. We are almost always talking about the parables of *Jesus*. The most frequently cited author is Jeremias, followed by Linnemann and Dodd.

This is a valuable introduction to the main contours of parable research today and a worthy example of informed and critical interpretation. Its lack of serious dialogue with the full range of modern interpretations (e.g., Norman Perrin is not mentioned) is a limitation, but it will at least prepare the reader to understand such a dialogue. It is an excellent place to begin.

**Pheme Perkins in *Hearing the Parables of Jesus*** (Paulist, 1981, 224 pp., \$6.95) is strong precisely where Stein is weak: she enters into extensive dialogue with other contemporary interpreters (for example, citing Crossan almost as often as Jeremias) and gives serious attention to the diverse interpretations each gospel writer gives to the parables, including the Gospel of Thomas. More than Stein, she is apt to ask specifically literary questions of the parables. For example, how are they put together as stories? How are the versions related? Where does each focus our attention? How does a parable compare to other stories, metaphors, and proverbs of Jesus' day? Like Stein, she pursues their historical context and religious significance.

Perkins has a knack for useful comparisons of her own: Jesus' parables are “home movies” compared to the cosmic scale on which most wisdom and apocalyptic literature discuss the Kingdom of God; the woman's search for the lost coin reminds her of an experience in a supermarket checkout line; tax-collectors remind her of the “white trash” pointed out to her as a child in the South.

The book is organized thematically: after reflections on the nature of parable, proverb, and story, the reader is given “hints” for reading parables. Her method proceeds in three phases: 1) close textual analysis including both comparisons of various versions and literary analyses, 2) contextualization (history, gospel, methodology) and 3) interpretation (human significance and religious significance). Though her discussions of each of these is too brief, the ample illustration of her method in her examples should clarify her meaning. Chapter three, “Religion and Story,” will have to be read several times by those unfamiliar with rhetorical and structuralist analysis, but could provide a very useful entry to this terminologically confusing approach. She lacks the sort of general discussion and historical survey that makes Stein's book such a useful place to begin.

Most of the book consists of her own creative interpretations. She considers parables of growth, portrayals of God, allegorization, love, reversal and equality, ethics and the community. Her interpretations achieve a stimulating balance of literary analysis, historical information and religious insight which does much to achieve her goal not to “stand between the reader and the parable,” but rather to clarify and make acces-

1. This is an excellent second book on the parables and a near-perfect counterfoil to Stein's book.

For those less concerned with methodology, another possible starting point, though more demanding than the previous two, is the work of **Lambrecht, S.J., *Once More Astonished: The Parables of Jesus*** (Crossroad, 1981, 245 pp., \$9.95). This book began as a series of lectures to priests and religion teachers in 1975, was published in Dutch in 1976, translated into English and printed in India in 1978, then revised and published in America in 1981.

Lambrecht is fully conscious of the perplexities felt by modern Christians as they learn the complex traditional and redactional histories of the parables. He assumes it is possible to begin with the gospel narratives and retrace this path back to Jesus. He wishes further to raise the questions about the continuity of meanings along this path and the question of their meaning or "actualization" today. For this latter task he finds resources in the ideas of Paul Ricoeur, Dan Via, J. D. Crossan and others. Though he finds the results of structuralist analysis "disappointing".

After a very brief discussion of the nature of parable ("a metaphorical process within a narrative") and a brief description of his method (working backward from the gospel narrative, through its sources and the oral teaching of the early church, to Jesus' teaching, and then forward to the word of Jesus the "still-living Lord"), Lambrecht launches into a serious discussion of selected parables in Luke (Lost Sheep, Lost Son, Good Samaritan), in Mark (The Sower and a few others) and in Matthew (Virgins, Talents, Last Judgment).

Typically, he begins with an analysis of the context of a parable in a Gospel, compares it to other versions (or tries to reconstruct earlier versions) and tries to explain the variations and thus posit the earliest version of the story. He then asks what this would have meant in the situation of Jesus and what it could mean today. While this analysis is not always convincing, it is always stimulating. Lambrecht is master of his method and of contemporary scholarship, always able to lay out clearly at the major interpretive options are. Most refreshing is his daring to ask whether the various redactions of Jesus' parables are legitimate interpretations of his meaning.

Lambrecht never quite lives up to his title, but he does provide a comprehensive overview of how certain parables are currently interpreted along with several original and insightful suggestions of his own. It is especially good at trying to relate the parables to the larger context of each gospel.

In contrast to the previous three books, the following three have little to recommend them. Their methodologies make no serious use of form criticism and their conclusions rarely rise above the methodical. The best of the three is one by **Simon J. Kistemaker, *The Parables of Jesus*** (Baker, 1980, 301 pp., \$10.95 hardback). Kistemaker is at least aware of the range of contemporary exegesis, and his extensive notes and bibliography are quite useful.

He finds Jesus' use of parables to be absolutely unique and sees their purpose to be "to communicate the message of salvation in a clear and simple manner." He is willing to "trust" that the gospel writers captured Jesus' intention and is "confident that the contexts in which the parables are placed refer to the times, places, and circumstances in which Jesus finally taught them," "because of the link with eyewitnesses." It is far easier to make such assumptions than it is to demonstrate them. Kistemaker is equally naive in delineating his methodology; he sets forth four principles: 1) note the historical context given in the gospel, 2) mine the literary and grammatical structure of the parable, 3) make your interpretation agree with the "rest of scripture," and 4) translate its meaning into terms relevant today. At least we can be sure we will never be "once more astonished" if we follow such a procedure; we will be allowed to speak only in the doctrinal tones to which we have become accustomed. This book is only for those looking for a nice, evangelical interpretation of the parables, with some good summaries of what Jeremias and others have said about their context, and an extensive bibliography.

Unfortunately, the study by **J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Parables of Jesus*** (Zondervan, 1982, 180 pp., \$8.95) does not even have these simple virtues to recommend it. There is neither bibliography, footnote, nor index. His knowledge of the customs of the day is limited (e.g., he imagines the ten virgins taking their tiny house lamps out into a nighttime procession). His interpretations sometimes are farfetched (the "least of us" in the judgment parable in Matthew 25 are best thought of as the 1000 Jews saved during the tribulation and referred to in Rev. 7: 1

suppose we need not worry, then, about finding Jesus hungry or naked or homeless today).

Pentecost regards the parables as essentially disguised propositions, all of which presuppose "Israel's irreversible state of rejection." He too proposes four principles: 1) "the parables concerned the Kingdom of heaven"—not the Church; 2) their immediate context in the gospels is the only legitimate context in which to interpret them; 3) study the parable to determine its one main point; and 4) study the biblical customs and geography. Most of the book is an examination of some fifty-one parables as to their setting, their problem, and their solution—all *ex cathedra*.

**David Allan Hubbard's** book, *Parables Jesus Told* (IVP, 1981, 94 pp., \$2.95), is, as he says, a simple book. It is essentially a collection of sermons on the parables, eleven in all. It lacks notes, bibliography, and index. Hubbard is good at telling the stories, and sometimes has surprisingly accurate details (the virgins carry torches), but he also adds a good bit of imaginative detail merely on his own whim (spilling olive oil on themselves in their haste). He assumes their context in the gospels is to be taken as definitive for Jesus and that each parable has one point; he seeks to state the demand that each makes. Perhaps a resource for devotional reflection or a few good sermon ideas is all one should expect from such a book.

It is more difficult to decide what to do with **Kenneth E. Bailey's** work, *Through Peasant Eyes: More Lucan Parables, Their Culture and Style* (Eerdmans, 1980, 187 pp., \$16.95 hardback). The book has several virtues, including remarkable literary-rhetorical skills, profound insight into Middle Eastern peasant culture, and clear presentation. The book is a pleasure to read.

While eschewing allegory, Bailey argues convincingly for a symbolic dimension to the parables; while arguing for a "single response" to each parable, he believes each has several "themes"; while he agrees that a parable is more "a mode of religious experience" than "an illustration," he insists on spelling out the theological teachings of each. Some of these tensions are necessary, but they leave the reader somewhat unsettled. He does himself disservice in other ways, also. He too easily assumes the narrative context is the historical context. He cites material from Matthew and Paul to support his case for Luke. He is too easily convinced that material comes from Jesus. The disappointing part is that he knows better. He is a remarkably well-read missionary.

Yet if the book is judged by its strengths it is well worth reading. His literary judgments are original and provocative. His cultural insights are important and revealing. He does not dwell on quaint customs, but reveals the method and values inherent in peasant culture in the Middle East—some of which he can trace back to little-known Arab commentators of a thousand years ago. It is not a book to begin with, but neither should it be ignored.

The next three books form a new category: they are not so much books about the parable as they are about "parabaling," a word they are distressingly apt to use. These writers are concerned with the implications of language, especially metaphor and narrative. They are, alas, not so concerned with their own language: "However, it is becoming clear that Jesus infringed the symbol system of his religious tradition so that he modified the fundamental structure of the correlative semantic code." One has the feeling of coming in on the middle of a conversation, though that sentence is on the first page of the preface to Funk's book.

If one is determined to read this stuff—and there is a great deal here worth reading—the choice beginning place is **Amos Wilder's *Jesus' Parables and the War of Myths: Essays on Imagination in the Scriptures*** (Fortress, 1982, 168 pp., \$13.95 hardback).

The book is a collection (without index) of Wilder's essays written between 1959 and 1974 and includes an introduction by James Breech (who collected the essays) and a very valuable preface by Wilder. As only a master can do, Wilder summarizes the dominant modes of interpretation from Schweitzer to the deconstructionists, complete with his own annotations. Suffice it to say he is not infatuated with modernity ("Why should Melville or Wordsworth be stretched on the Procrustean bed of some schema shaped to account for the disorders in contemporary letters?").

Wilder is primarily concerned with the way language not only reflects reality but also creates it, with what he calls the "social-historical dynamics" of "biblical myth." Typical of his concern is his interpretation of the *kind* of story represented in Jesus' parables, their naturalness and realism: "Jesus, without saying so, by his very way of presenting man,

shows that for him man's destiny is at stake in his ordinary creaturely existence—domestic, economic, and social. This is the way God made him. The world is real." Further, he wants to know why the parables fascinate us and how they provide "structures of consciousness." It is a worthy endeavor, and the essays are a pleasure to read, even if not always easy to understand. It is a book for careful reading and reflection.

**Robert Funk's** book, *Parables and Presence* (Fortress, 1982, 206 pp., \$15.95), shares many of the same concerns, but deals more directly with the parables. Like Wilder's work, most of this has been published as essays in scholarly journals or anthologies. Only chapters 2-6 deal with the parables (about sixty pages); the rest deals with the letter form and with language.

Chapter one introduces in a very general way the problem of language. Chapter two closely examines certain narrative parables and concludes that they were composed in Greek. Chapter three examines the kind of language used in the Good Samaritan story, which he believes to be metaphor. Chapter four sets forth the narrative elements and plot structures of ten parables. Chapter five pursues this analysis further in the Samaritan story, seeing the structure of the parable as a relation between narrative roles. Chapter six is a short discussion of the "temporal horizon" portrayed in the parables, or the degree to which expectation of the imminent end functions as a metaphor.

In each case the discussions are brief and betray their origins in technical journals. Nevertheless, one with some familiarity with structuralist categories should find several stimulating ideas in chapters 4-6. But if you do not already know what a syntagm is you had better start elsewhere.

In the third book we also come late to a conversation already well under way. Not only is *Cliffs of Fall* (Seabury, 1980, 120 pp., \$9.95) **John Dominic Crossan's** third book on the parables, but it is a vigorous dialogue with some of the leading theorists of interpretation in contemporary letters: Paul Ricoeur, Jacques Derrida, Roland Barthes, Stanley Fish, Harold Bloom and others. In addition, the three chapters of the book were all prepared for presentation in scholarly meetings or journals.

In spite of all this, and in spite of some esoteric language, the book is easy to read. Its theme is expressed in its subtitle: *Paradox and Polyvalence in the Parables of Jesus*. Put simply, Crossan argues that while we may with a great deal of effort manage to make language mean only

one thing, the essence of language is to be ambiguous, playful, capable of more than one meaning. Language is more like planting seeds (chapter two) than like sending code. Some do not take root, but others bring forth thirty, sixty, a hundredfold.

Thus Jesus' parable about the word becomes a parable about parables, a *metaparable*. Such reflections lead Crossan in the direction of "negative theology," or stressing what cannot be said about God. Such paradox is at the center of the argument. Jesus' parables are seen as the literary outworking of the "aniconicity of God," the imaging of the unimaginable God. It is a book full of provocative ideas which have yet to be heard by evangelical interpreters.

A specific example of how **Crossan** works out his *via negativa* can be found in his other book: *Finding is the First Act: Trove Folktales and Jesus' Treasure Parable* (Fortress, 1979, 141 pp., \$4.95). This rather odd book seeks to test a structuralist theory that the meaning of a literary work can be most clearly revealed by a synchronic (i.e., a-temporal) study of a literary type. In this case, Crossan does an exhaustive study of Jewish treasure parables and world folklore to provide "background" for reading Jesus' parable of the Hidden Treasure (Mt. 13:44). Some surprising insights are thus generated, but the conclusion is ironically not polyvalent. It is just what one would expect: we have another metaparable which teaches us to give up even our giving up.

The final work I will mention is not really a book about the parables; it is a book about Jesus which uses the parables as a way of discovering who Jesus was (a strategy shared by Crossan, incidentally). **J. Ramsey Michaels**, Professor of New Testament at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, has written a major book attempting to rediscover the vision of Jesus: *Servant and Son: Jesus in Parable and Gospel* (John Knox, 1981, 322 pp., \$8.95).

The parables are seen as "complete stories functioning as metaphors," which puts Michaels closer to the approach of Wilder and Crossan than to Dodd and Jeremias: "To attach to a parable one meaning, once and for all, is to frustrate a story-teller's intent." The book is a significant endeavor to read the parables from the vantage point of Jesus and to ask what they would reveal about his experience of God, his self-understanding, and mission. It is a daring endeavor which probably does not succeed. But it does show that the consequence of our study of the parables is as important as it is difficult.

All of this from twenty or so pages of stories . . . at least a hundredfold.

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# Hermeneutical Gerrymandering: Hurley on Women and Authority

by David M. Scholer

***Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective***  
by James B. Hurley (Zondervan, 1981, 288 pp., \$6.95).

Since 1979 at least three major books have appeared in the United States which undertake an examination of the New Testament and conclude against the ordination of women and the participation of women in authoritative leadership and teaching positions within the Church. In 1979 Susan T. Foh's *Women and the Word of God: A Response to Biblical Feminism* appeared (Presbyterian and Reformed; reprinted by Baker in 1980) followed in 1980 by Stephen B. Clark's extensive study *Man and Woman in Christ: An Examination of the Roles of Men and Women in Light of Scripture and the Social Sciences* (Servant Books, reviewed in *TSF Bulletin*, September–October 1981). These books have had a relatively wide hearing and influence already. It seems, however, that strong proponents of Foh's book and its position often fail to see the irony, even the inconsistency, of the teaching function that her book has had among many men opposed to women teachers in the Church!

Published more recently has been the impressive book by James B. Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective*. Hurley is Associate Professor of Theology and Director of Studies at Westminster Theological Seminary's Miami, Florida Study Center. He has written what is undoubtedly the most able and thorough biblical study to date which

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***Hurley assumes that all "real" authority is lodged only with "appointive male headship."***

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takes a position against ordination or authoritative teaching and leadership roles for women in the Church. Hurley has a Ph.D. in New Testament from Cambridge University, and his scholarship pervades and informs the book. Without doubt, the book will have a wide hearing among those struggling with the issues involved.

Hurley's book is thorough and generally well organized. The first three chapters survey women in the Old Testament and its environment, in Judaism and in Graeco-Roman culture. After a chapter on women in Jesus' ministry and teaching, Hurley has four thematic chapters on women in the life of the apostolic church, in marriage, in worship and in church office. A concluding chapter provides a summary and several case studies for applying his conclusions. Hurley also has a detailed appendix on veiling practices in ancient Jewish and Graeco-Roman cultures.

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*David M. Scholer is Dean and Professor of New Testament at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary.*

Nevertheless, having studied these issues for nearly fifteen years in both church and academic settings, I am deeply committed to the position that God calls both women and men into authoritative leadership and teaching positions within the Church, and so I disagree with Hurley's conclusions. I wish to organize my dialogue with Hurley's book and the position it represents in terms of four broad areas. I believe these are critical to a responsible discussion of the issues which divide us: (1) the significance and use of the cultural context of the New Testament; (2) the nature and structure of authoritative teaching and leadership in biblical texts; (3) the matter of integration among the various New Testament passages on the issue; and (4) the nature of the exegetical evidence itself. Although a detailed counterpoint to Hurley's book is not possible in a brief article, I hope this analysis provides a helpful indication concerning how a thorough critique would be formulated.

## The Cultural Context

Persons arguing against ordination and authoritative roles for women in the Church have traditionally paid inadequate attention to the status of women in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman cultural milieus of the New Testament writings. While the hermeneutical questions concerning cultural influences on New Testament writers are complex, it is undeniable that God's revelation took place in particular historical contexts. Any "docetic" approach to the New Testament must be rejected. Although the cultural data does not *determine* the meaning of any New Testament text, no responsible interpretation can avoid careful dialogue with it.

Hurley's book formally states a sound approach to such hermeneutically sensitive exegesis. Hurley does provide much more extensive engagement with these issues than his ideological predecessors. However, in the seventy-eight pages given to the cultural context of the New Testament, the Graeco-Roman world receives not even three pages of discussion. This is inadequate, failing to take seriously enough the widespread convictions about the inferiority of women and their typical exclusion from public roles in Graeco-Roman society. The unfortunate result is that Hurley's cultural data is not "up front" for the discussion of the Pauline and Petrine texts which are addressed to believers whose churches are dynamic communities in that Graeco-Roman world. Even with Hurley's extensive and much more careful treatment of the Jewish milieu the problem of exegetical-hermeneutical integration remains. Hurley cites, for example, some crucial texts from Sirach, Josephus and Philo which show a very negative attitude toward any public participation by women. Hurley does draw a contrast between the attitude represented by such texts and that of Jesus portrayed in the gospels, but he does not dialogue with the implications of these texts during his discussions of particular New Testament passages (e.g., 1 Corinthians 14:33–36). Thus, readers—especially traditional evangelical ones—are not forced to struggle with the deeper issues of New Testament interpretation. They might still be able to read biblical texts as if they had not been written within particular contexts.

## The Nature of Authoritative Teaching

Perhaps the most basic issue, however, is that Hurley makes an assumption which is not, in my judgment, exegetically sound or in tune with a complete biblical theology. Hurley assumes that all "real" authority is lodged only with "appointive male headship." This presumptive structure then simply controls the argument and details of his whole book. Some examples should make this issue clear.

In Hurley's Old Testament discussion, the female prophet Huldah (see 2 Kings 22:11-20; 2 Chronicles 34:19-28) receives only a brief comment, at which point she is called a "spokesman" for God, and she is not mentioned in his summary of the Old Testament data. The presumption that "real" authority resided only in certain appointed male elders means that Hurley does not seriously confront the implications of Huldah as an authoritative prophet. Huldah is a married woman who speaks God's reliable and authoritative word to King Josiah. It is clear in the text that Huldah was, before Josiah's inquiry for the word of the Lord, a recognized and established prophet. To exclude Huldah from "real" authority strikes me as reading a structure into the text.

Hurley describes at length the gospel data on women who participated in witness and proclamation, both during Jesus' ministry and in connection with his resurrection. Nevertheless, he virtually dismisses this data, because such women were not part of the "official appointive authority structure." Of course not; Hurley has already limited that structure to men only! True, there were no women among the Twelve and Jesus did not talk about bishops, presbyters and deacons, as does 1-2 Timothy. But to conclude from that evidence that Jesus was not concerned with authoritative teaching and structure among his followers is a *non sequitur*. Although the Samaritan woman and the women who proclaimed Jesus' resurrection to men do not fit the church order concepts of the Pastoral Epistles, they are no less authority figures from the perspective of the gospel texts.

The numerous women mentioned by name in Philippians 4:2-3 and Romans 16:1-16—Euodia, Syntyche, Phoebe, Prisca, Mary, Persis, Tryphaena, Tryphosa and Junia—are placed by Hurley in a section of the book he calls "Women in the Organized Ministries of the Church." This appears innocent enough, but what it does is to separate this data, without adequate discussion, from the chapter entitled "Women and Men in Church Office," which is limited only to 1 Timothy 2:8-15. Not only is the exegetical treatment of Philippians 4 and Romans 16 inadequate (see below), but also the very organization of the material offered by Hurley precludes the possibility that these women had genuine teaching and leadership authority in the Church.

Further, Hurley's assumptions about the nature and locus of authority lead him to contextual and hermeneutical inconsistencies, I believe, in his discussion of 1 Timothy 2:8-15. Hurley believes that the prohibition in this text is applicable to a particular structure of authority. Thus, the prohibition in 1 Timothy 2:11-12 against women teaching and having authority over men is, for Hurley, a prohibition against participation by women in official appointive authority structures. Thus, his case studies allow, for example, women to teach men "authoritatively" in a mission situation so long as they are not "officially appointed elders." Or, a woman may teach in a Sunday morning worship service so long as she is an occasional teacher and understood to be distinguished from an elder (= male) who teaches. While there is considerable diversity in the forms, offices and structures of teaching and authority described in the New Testament, there is, in my judgment, no basis for distinguishing between or among qualitatively different types of authoritative ministry. The criterion of acceptable authority in New Testament texts is conformity and faithfulness to apostolic tradition, not the sex of the person.

## Integration among New Testament Passages

In the construction of a biblical theology based on the New Testament, one important issue concerns the balance between various texts. Hurley's position is strongly influenced by the choice he makes concerning which text will provide the "window" through which other texts must be interpreted.

Hurley clearly makes 1 Timothy 2:18-15 the determinative text by which all other texts—including the gospels, Galatians 3:28, Philippians 4:2-3, Romans 16:1-16, 1 Corinthians 11:5—are ultimately evaluated. Any interpretation which correlates different New Testament passages will tend to have "control" or "perspective" texts. What must be made

clear, however, is that the texts themselves do not tell us which passages should exercise control; we, the interpreters, make those decisions. Hurley virtually assumes that 1 Timothy 2 will be a "control" text simply because the Pastors are concerned with church order in an explicit and obvious manner. However, all New Testament texts polemicize, to one degree or another, for what they perceive to be the true and faithful representation of the gospel. It cannot be taken for granted that 1 Timothy 2:8-15 "controls" the evidence of other Pauline texts. It is just as defensible—for me, more defensible—to argue that the evidence of women's participation in authoritative teaching and leadership (as indicated, for example, in 1 Cor. 11:5, Phil. 4:2-3 and Rom. 16:1-18) "controls" 1 Timothy 2:8-15. That is, these passages, along with other data, provide evidence that 1 Timothy 2:8-15 speaks to a particular, limited problem of heresy in Ephesus addressed by 1 and 2 Timothy.

## Exegetical Issues

The last remark introduces the whole matter of exegesis. Careful and responsible exegesis is crucial for those who accept scriptural authority and the sound hermeneutical principle that the correct interpretation of a text—on which hermeneutical application and obedience are predicated—is found in the original author's intended meaning. The exegetical evidence gleaned from the texts themselves becomes the court of appeal from which the dialogue concerning women in the Church can advance. Of course, only a few examples of exegetical debate can be covered here.

Galatians 3:28 is, of course, a much-discussed text. Hurley, and others representing his position, stress—correctly—that the context in Galatians concerns the fact that God's justification in Christ is not predicated on any human status, heritage or even biological distinction. Hurley argues that Galatians 3:28 does not remove "distinctions," especially sexual ones. He notes the instructions to slaves and masters in Ephesians 6:5-9 as an illustration of this point. However, Hurley does not note, for example, how Philemon 15-17 implies a dramatic alteration of such categories in Christ. Further, Hurley does not adequately reckon with the sociological impact of Paul's use in first-century society of precisely these three pairs—slave/free, Jew/Gentile, male/female. Because these examples represented the oppressive structures of that society, which the gospel was intended to reverse, they necessarily imply that in Christ, which is to say in the Church, these actual distinc-

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***The participation of women in authoritative leadership, as indicated by Pauline texts, is evidence that 1 Timothy 2 speaks for a particular, limited heresy.***

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tions do not determine status or function. F. F. Bruce argues, in fact, in his new commentary on Galatians (Eerdmans, 1982), that this is so clearly the import of Galatians 3:28 that 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:8-15 ought to be interpreted in its light.

I am convinced that the data concerning the women named in Philippians 4:2-3 and Romans 16:1-16 is crucial for a proper interpretation of Paul's stance on the place of women in the Church (see my article, "Paul's Women Co-Workers in the Ministry of the Church," *Daughters of Sarah* 6:4 [July/August 1980], 3-6). In my judgment, Hurley's less than six pages on these texts constitutes an indefensible neglect of important evidence. For example, consider his treatment of Euodia and Syntyche in Philippians 4:2-3. Hurley's eight lines focus primarily on their quarrel. While acknowledging that these women were important in the Church and quoting Paul's words that they "contended at my side in the cause of the gospel," the full significance of the data is not mentioned. They are classed as "fellow workers" (*sunergoi*), a term Paul uses frequently (as Hurley does note) for men—Urbanus, Timothy, Titus,

Epaphroditus, Clement, Philemon, Demas, Luke, Apollos and himself—who certainly did exercise genuine authority in teaching and leadership. It is further noted by Paul that Euridia and Syntyche worked in the gospel *together with* Clement. It is clear to me that the natural reading of this text means that these two women participated in authoritative teaching and/or leadership in the gospel.

So much could, and should, be said about Romans 16. Phoebe is called a *diakonos*, which certainly does not here mean “deacon” in the sense of 1 Timothy 3 (as Hurley would seem to agree). However, Paul’s use of *diakonos*, apart from the technical “deacon” sense, means a minister of the gospel. He uses this term for himself, Christ, Apollos, Epaphras, Timothy and Tychichus. Again, the clearest meaning of Romans 16:1–2 is that Phoebe is the “minister,” that is, the authoritative leader, of the Church in Cenchrea.

In his discussion of Romans 16:7 Hurley concludes that “to use Junias, who may be male or female, as an example of a ‘woman preacher’ or ‘woman elder’ would be irresponsible.” *Au contraire*. There is no indication from ancient Greek evidence that Junia(s) was ever a man’s name. Hurley does not let the reader know this, nor that the fourth-century church Father, John Chrysostom (no friend of women in church leadership), understood Junia as a woman, nor that it was not until the twelfth century that any commentator saw Junia(s) as a man! In addition, Hurley’s discussion of the term “apostle,” applied by Paul to Junia, underrates the sense of authority and leadership involved in apostleship in the New Testament. Contrary to Hurley, I believe responsible exegesis finds Junia to be an example of a woman who exercised teaching and leadership authority in the early Church.

Several other Pauline texts also need attention. Hurley correctly notes that 1 Corinthians 11:5 indicates that women did prophesy within the Pauline churches. However, Hurley’s attempt to deny that prophecy was genuinely authoritative teaching is, in my judgment, ill-conceived. My reading of 1 Corinthians 14:1–25 indicates clearly that Paul considered prophecy authoritative teaching on which the edification of the church depended. I find it telling that Hurley apparently ignores 1 Corinthians 14:3 in his definition of Paul’s understanding of prophecy, and that he does not actually use 1 Corinthians 14:1–25 in any significant discussion.

Hurley’s “low” view of prophecy is critical for his interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:34–35. Here his interpretation is heavily dependent upon an interpretation, shared by very few scholars, which holds that this text’s prohibition on women speaking refers only to the official evaluation of prophets. In other words, women may prophesy (less than genuinely authoritative speech), but they may not judge prophecy (genuinely authoritative speech). I do not find this distinction to be supported at all in 1 Corinthians or anywhere in Paul. Although the text is difficult to interpret, two aspects seem quite clear. First, the context is concerned with decency and order. Injunctions to silence for the sake of order are found in 1 Corinthians 14:28 and 14:30 as well as 14:34. Second, the phrase, “if there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home” (14:35), has an obvious and natural sense entirely apart

from any issue of authoritative teaching. It seems to refer to disorderly questions which women, generally uneducated in that culture, may have been prone to ask during worship. From my perspective, then, Hurley’s discussion of 1 Corinthians 14 unnecessarily imposes on the text a distinction about authority and fails to present adequately other options for understanding it.

1 Timothy 2:8–15 will probably always generate the greatest discussion: Hurley devotes nearly thirty pages to this one text. He both assumes and argues for the position that the instructions about women in 1 Timothy 2:11–12 are “timeless” and transcend any local or limited historical situation. Indeed such a stance does need to be argued, for it ought not be assumed. Many evangelical and other scholars have presented a very defensible case that 1 Timothy 2:11–12 relates to a limited problem of heretical abuse in Ephesus (for a very brief summary of my case see “Exegesis: 1 Timothy 2:8–15,” *Daughters of Sarah* 1:4 [May 1975], 7–8; see also Mark Roberts’ article, “Women Shall Be Saved: A Closer Look at 1 Timothy 2:15,” *TSF Bulletin*, November–December 1981).

The context of the Pastoral Epistles suggests very strongly that the heresy opposed by Paul here was centered in particular on women (see 1 Tim. 4:3; 5:11–15; 2 Tim. 3:6–7). In view of the evidence elsewhere in Paul (noted above) that women did, in fact, participate in the authoritative teaching and leadership ministry of the Church, it makes excellent sense to see 1 Timothy 2:11–12 as limited to this particular problem of heresy. This interpretation is enhanced by Paul’s use of an unusual, even rare, word for “authority” in 2:12. There is very strong evidence that *authentein* should be taken as an indication of the heretical, illegitimate authority which the women taken in by the false teachers (3:6–7) are bringing to the church. Further, Paul’s rationale in 2:13–14 does not *ipso facto* make 2:11–12 a timeless, universal injunction—any more than Paul’s utilization of Genesis in 1 Corinthians 11:7–9 forever mandates head coverings for women when praying or prophesying. Paul is able to use selective argumentation from his Jewish heritage. Finally, if 1 Timothy 2:8–15 is “timeless,” why not 1 Timothy 5:3–16 as well? This extended passage about widows, containing numerous explicit injunctions, is mentioned only very briefly by Hurley, yet on the basis of his argument about the purpose of 1 Timothy would seem equally binding (and even more precise in its requirements). I certainly am not arguing for a return to a literalistic application of 1 Timothy 5:3–16, but I am calling for a deep level of hermeneutical honesty and consistency in using 1 Timothy in the church today.

My passion is to stimulate exacting exegetical work and rigorous hermeneutical discussion. Further, I believe faithfulness to biblical teaching means clear support for any person, woman or man, whom God calls to teach or lead with the authority of Christ’s gospel in the church today. Dialogue, as good conversations, never end, but they should be refreshing, stimulating and challenging in the best possible sense. May this dialogue in Christ’s Church be such edification.

#### **THE CHURCH & PEACEMAKING IN THE NUCLEAR AGE: A CONFERENCE ON BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES**

This conference, to be held May 25–28, 1983 in Pasadena, California, will provide the first opportunity for a large representative group of evangelical Church leaders to meet to address the nuclear arms race. The unique emphasis of this national conference is its balanced educational approach. Many responses to the issue will be presented by leading evangelical voices of different Christian traditions. An unprecedented coalition of over fifty evangelical organizations, including Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, has initiated this church-wide event. An additional thirty groups are contributing to the diversity of the conference by providing in excess of one hundred practical and technical workshops to some two thousand participants on a first come/first served basis. In America, many churches have taken an active role in the nuclear arms discussion. Until now, however, evangelical participation has been minimal. This conference could prove to be a major watershed in evangelical thought regarding faith issues raised by the nuclear weapons buildup. For more information contact Jim Brenneman, The Church and Peacemaking in the Nuclear Age, 1539 E. Howard St., Pasadena, CA 91104.

#### **EXTENSION ON FREE BOOK OFFER**

In the January/February 1983 issue (page 29), we offered free books to those who obtain new subscriptions for *TSF Bulletin*. We are extending the deadline for this program until June 1, 1983. In addition to showing your own copies to classmates, another possible strategy may be to set up a table in a lounge or refectory. In this way, you can help others learn about *TSF Bulletin* while receiving free books for your labors. You will also be helping us gain needed subscribers.

#### **EUROPEAN THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS CONFERENCE**

The International Fellowship of Evangelical Students will be holding a conference for theological students at Schloss Mittersill, Austria, August 6–13, 1983. The theme will be “God’s People in God’s World.” Lectures, seminars and practical sessions will explore the relationship between the Christian, the Church and the world, considering our individual and corporate responsibilities in the wider society. The main speaker will be Samuel Escobar (Peru), the IFES Associate General Secretary in Latin America. Although the conference is aimed primarily at European students, some American delegates will be admitted. The registration deadline is May 31, 1983. For more information write either Schloss Mittersill, A-5730 Mittersill, Land Salzburg, Austria; or Dr. Jim Stamooolis, IFES Theological Students’ Secretary, 154 Frothingham Ave., Jeannette, PA 15644.



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# Barth as Post-Enlightenment Guide: Three Responses to Ramm

by George Hunsinger, John B. Cobb, Jr., and Carl F. H. Henry

## ***After Fundamentalism***

by Bernard Ramm (Harper & Row, 1983, 240 pp., \$14.95).

Although the title is misleading, this book deserves the attention of theologians, students, pastors, and theologically astute laypeople. Ramm *does* point the way out of fundamentalism, but he also argues that liberal theology took a wrong turn. In the preface, Ramm sets out his agenda:

The leading themes are as follows: (1) The Enlightenment was a shattering experience for orthodox theology from which it has never fully recovered. (2) Neither religious liberalism nor orthodoxy had the right strategy for interacting with the Enlightenment with reference to the continuing task of Christian theology. (3) Of all the efforts of theologians to come to terms with the Enlightenment, Karl Barth's theology has been the most thorough. (4) He thereby offers to evangelical theology a paradigm of how best to come to terms with the Enlightenment.

My basic methodology is to first review the impact of the Enlightenment on a given doctrine. Then I review how Barth handles the doctrine in view of the criticism of the Enlightenment. Finally, I show how Barth's stances may be a paradigm for evangelical theology (even if only in a heuristic sense). By *paradigm* I mean a model, a pattern or schema, for writing theology. By *heuristic* I mean a hypothesis which may not prove to be true but which is instrumental in leading to the discovery of the true one.

An excerpt comprising the core of Ramm's challenge was published earlier in *TSF Bulletin* as "Evangelicals and the Enlightenment: Beyond Liberalism and Fundamentalism" (January-February 1983). Now three reviewers provide their perspectives. George Hunsinger, Instructor in Theology at New Brunswick Theological Seminary, is the editor and translator of *Karl Barth and Radical Politics* (Westminster). He has participated in the Evangelical Theology Group at the American Academy of Religion and is an advisor to the TSF group at New Brunswick. John B. Cobb, Jr., Professor of Theology at Claremont School of Theology, has written numerous volumes including *Liberal Christianity at the Crossroads* (Westminster) and *Christ in a Pluralistic Age* (Westminster). His Wesleyan, liberal theology is a creative force within Process Theology. Carl F. H. Henry, formerly the editor of *Christianity Today*, has completed five volumes of a major systematic theology, *God, Revelation and Authority* (Word). He continues to be regarded as the leading theologian of America's conservative evangelicals. These three reviewers approach Bernard Ramm's book from different viewpoints. They all value Ramm's contribution, and, of course, find various elements requiring critique.

In some respects *After Fundamentalism* can be seen as an overpriced accumulation of extended thoughts. These often lack careful organization and transitions, and usually suggest trajectories that cry out for further expansion. Nevertheless, Ramm and Harper & Row are to be commended for their timing. The North American church needs theological guidance. Fundamentalists and liberals usually talk past each other. Too often mistaken assumptions rule instead of caring and diligent efforts at understanding. We need to recognize the particular cultural context in which these difficult discussions are taking place, a context which can be identified as post-Enlightenment. Although there are other important contextual issues for North American

theology (e.g., the increasingly multi-cultural nature of the American church, the continuing debate concerning the dualistic nature of Western theology and the impact of world economics), Ramm has highlighted a critical issue. He clarifies our post-Enlightenment situation, identifies particular problems, and provides initial formulas for new directions.

The three critiques included here should help carry the dialogue further. Students and professors would be wise to continue the process.

—Mark Lau Branson

## **Review by George Hunsinger**

One of the main reasons Bernard Ramm wrote *After Fundamentalism* is that he wants people to read widely and deeply in the theology of Karl Barth. "My thesis," he says, "is that Barth's theology is the best paradigm we have for theology in our times." With this judgment and this intention I can heartily concur. It is almost always better, as Ramm also points out, to read Barth himself than merely to read about Barth. Barth has yet to acquire, it seems to me, a truly worthy critic—a critic who knows how to combine sympathetic insight and discerning objections in proper proportion; in other words, one whose stature as a critic begins to match Barth's stature as a constructive theologian. Instead, Barth-criticism to date tends to fall into three categories: fawning approbation (Barthians), tendentious fault-finding (neo-orthodox and evangelicals), or dismissive praise (liberals). It is hard to read this sort of criticism without feeling that Barth is a man being pecked to death by ducks.

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***Ramm's silence has the unfortunate effect of presenting us with yet another picture of a politically defanged Barth.***

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So let me simply second Bernard Ramm's intention and urge you to read Karl Barth. Read the magnificent section on God as "the One who Loves in Freedom" in *Church Dogmatics* II/1 (pp. 257ff.), or read the deeply moving account of the relationship between God's mercy and God's righteousness in the same volume (pp. 369ff., especially pp. 394-406). Compare what you find there with any of the negative things you may ever have heard about Barth and judge for yourself. Or turn to Barth's incredibly rich exegesis of the story of the rich young ruler (II/2, pp. 613ff.); after that see if you do not find yourself thumbing through the index volume to discover if Barth might have anything to say about the scriptural text on which you are preparing a sermon. Or if you happen to be strongly interested in social ethics, take a look at Barth's scathing critique of capitalism (III/4, pp. 531ff.) or at his sobering reflections on abortion (III/4, pp. 415ff.).

One need not always agree with Barth to appreciate the depth and

integrity of his work. But if your experience is anything like mine, you will find that before long, and despite any initial obstacles in reading him, he has you hooked. After a while almost everything else in contemporary theology begins to seem pale by comparison. After reading Barth for some time you may find yourself driven back to read the great historic theologians of the church, for somehow most of the contemporary theological offerings of whatever stripe will no longer impress you as satisfying. But I can only report to you my own experience: more often than not I find that when I am perplexed Barth brings real clarity, that when I study Scripture he offers great light, and that when I am depressed he does not fail to cheer me up.

Radical politics, universalist leanings and an acceptance of modern biblical criticism are the three main issues which usually separate Barth from American evangelicals. On the first of these Bernard Ramm in *After Fundamentalism* has virtually nothing to say. He seems to be untouched by the hopeful and recent political ferment in the evangelical community as evidenced by an initiative like the 1973 Chicago Declaration or the heartening influence of a magazine like *Sojourners*. Ramm repeats the old half-truth that "it was a crisis in his preaching as a pastor that started Barth in a new direction in his theology," and he neglects its political context: "I decided for theology," explained Barth, "because I felt a need to find a better basis for my social action." Ramm's silence has the unfortunate effect of presenting us with yet another picture of a politically defanged Barth.

The question of "universalism" receives one chapter in Ramm's book as well as some scattered comments elsewhere. Here again Ramm seems to be at a distance from the cutting edge of recent evangelical thought, although by no means so drastically as in the previous instance. Ramm is, for example, not prepared to go as far as Herman Ridderbos—who is himself certainly no flaming liberal among the exegetes. In his widely-acclaimed book, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, Ridderbos argues that Paul leaves us in effect with a sort of reverent agnosticism concerning universal salvation. Ridderbos speaks of "the impossibility of coming . . . to an at all rounded off and systematic conception . . . This applies in particular to the punitive judgment on unbelievers and the ungodly." As Ramm indicates in his usual fair and accurate but cursory way, Barth's position is similar to the one taken by Ridderbos with the difference that Barth sets forth a strong christological basis for universal hope. With all due regard for the scriptural ambiguities, Barth thinks there is real reason to believe that in the end we may all be surprised by grace. Since Ramm is capable of explaining Barth's view with sympathy, I was surprised and disappointed to find him later suggesting that "Christianity isn't important unless 'somebody around here can get damned'"—an utterance I think any Christian ought to find repugnant.

Ramm is obviously more interested in Barth's view of Scripture and its relation to modern criticism than in any other single topic. The fact that nearly one-third of the book is devoted to this aspect of Barth's thought bespeaks not only Ramm's theological background, but also his zeal as one who has apparently received from Barth something liberating at this point. As though a refugee from too much thankless infighting, Ramm writes that Barth "does not commit us to the worn-out arguments of the past that nevertheless keep cropping up in so much evangelical literature. And he does not think that commonly recognized difficulties in a text prevent the text from being an authentic witness to the Word of God." Ramm is enthusiastically convinced that Barth can help evangelicals avoid both the obscurantism of the faithful and the capitulation of the liberals. One can only hope that he is right. In spite of its shortcomings, Bernard Ramm's book is a step in that direction.

#### Review by John B. Cobb, Jr.

Between what is taught in most seminaries of the denominations that participate in the National Council of Churches, on the one side, and fundamentalist pre-millennial dispensationalism, on the other, there is an almost unbridgeable gulf. For some of us dialogue is easier with Hindus and Buddhists than with many fundamentalists. Unfortunately there is some tendency in these seminaries to treat all forms of fundamentalism, and even all forms of Protestant conservatism, as though they were committed to extreme positions. Recently there has developed increasing awareness that many who identify themselves as conservative evangelicals, such as Bernard Ramm, share the

discomfort with some forms of fundamentalism, and that their reasons for their self-identification are worthy of the highest respect from all Christians. All have much to gain from dialogue with this community.

Ramm's book can contribute to overcoming lingering suspicions about the intellectual honesty and authentic openness to evidence on the part of conservative evangelicals. He himself recognizes that these suspicions have not always been groundless, and he is deeply committed to freeing conservative evangelicalism from the taint of obscurantism. To whatever extent Ramm's proposals are accepted—or are responded to in a similar non-obscurantist spirit—we can look forward to a new era. Any continuing condescension toward conservative evangelicals and their scholarship will then express uninformed prejudice.

Ramm is surely correct that the position of the greatest Christian theologian of our century embodies most of what is authentically of concern to conservative evangelicals while being completely free from the obscurantism that is so offensive both to him and to ecumenically-oriented scholars. I have nothing but praise for Ramm's commendation of Barth to this community. Neo-orthodoxy swept the field in this

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### *I cannot separate questions of cosmology from those of theology in the way that Barth does.*

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country precisely because it presented itself (especially through Emil Brunner) as a way to incorporate the intellectual honesty and openness of liberal scholarship within a powerful affirmation of the historic faith. Barth's achievement remains the towering one.

I am asked to comment, however, as a non-Barthian. Why do I not believe that Barth has spoken the final word or pointed in the right direction for all future Christian thinking? I will list six reasons.

(1) I cannot separate questions of cosmology from those of theology in the way that Barth does. At this point I hope there is some continuing resistance to Barth by conservative evangelicals. I hope also that their encounter with the truly contemporary state of cosmology will free them from excessive attachment to Newtonianism and the accompanying modern form of supernaturalism. I believe (with Pannenberg) that there are encouraging convergences between contemporary cosmology and the general worldview of the Bible.

(2) I am a Wesleyan, and this leads me to unhappiness with some of Barth's doctrines. I will not elaborate, but I hope a move toward Barth will not force out of conservative evangelicalism what I take to be solid theological advances in the understanding of sin and grace since Calvin. In my opinion Wesley offers us a way of avoiding the Barthian tendency to universalism, about which Ramm is rightly concerned, without either returning to any sort of doctrine of double election or weakening emphasis on the primacy of divine agency in salvation.

(3) Since 1965 many Barthians have felt it to be important to establish a different relationship between history and eschatology than that of their master. Jürgen Moltmann is the most influential figure in this development. Barth's formulations served brilliantly as a rallying point against the Nazification of the church, but they serve less well the needs of the oppressed in the Third World. From my point of view the shift expressed in the theology of hope is an important and needed move beyond Barth. I hope conservative evangelicals can be open to this.

(4) Barth was staunchly opposed to Nazi anti-Semitism. Nevertheless, viewed in light of recent Holocaust studies his own doctrines about the relation of Christ to Israel are not above criticism. I hope conservative evangelicals will work sensitively in this area to avoid some of the pitfalls of which Barth was not nearly as aware as we should now be.

(5) Barth's treatment of other world religions removes the objectionable condescension characteristic of much earlier Christian thinking. It removes any idea of the superiority of Christianity, Christendom, or Christians. Nevertheless, its form of Christocentricity places the achievements of other traditions outside the sphere of salvation



history altogether. The influence of Barth on the World Council of Churches has limited its readiness to listen to the religious insights of other traditions. I hope those who now turn to Barth for guidance can avoid these restrictions.

(6) As our consciousness is raised about the patriarchal character of our Jewish and Christian heritage, few of our influential theologians escape severe criticism. However, on some points Barth's patriarchalism is egregious. It would not be wise to turn to Barth for help on theological direction without being aware of fundamental objections to his theology on this score.

None of this is intended as opposition to Ramm's proposal that conservative evangelicals can turn for help from fundamentalism to Barth. I believe this will be an excellent next step for many evangelicals. It is intended as a suggestion that Barth does not offer a permanent resting place. In due course we will need another book entitled "after Barth." However critical many conservative evangelicals may be of specific doctrines of "process" theology, it is well to remember that their theological tradition, like all theological traditions, is "in process."

### Review by Carl F. H. Henry

Although Bernard Ramm gives fundamentalist theology last rites at the very time Jerry Falwell heralds its revivification, the thrust of Ramm's book lies elsewhere. Ramm promotes Barthian theology (in distinction from both evangelical orthodoxy and fundamentalism) as the best model for coping christianly with the intellectual impact of the Enlightenment. He focuses especially on the way Barth responds to the Enlightenment erosion of supernatural theism.

Ramm's is not the only or the most complete abstract of Barth's views, but it is nonetheless a highly readable survey that concentrates on some important issues where evangelical and Barthian thought intersect. Preachers will profit from the chapter on "Preaching," moralists will profit from the chapter on "Ethics," and dispensationalists will be angered by the appendix on Lewis Sperry Chafer and Barth. Ramm criticizes Van Til for putting Barth in the worst light and Chafer (in effect) for ignoring Barth altogether. Ramm, by contrast, puts Barth in the best light; others' criticisms are overstated to accommodate a hurried defense. Ramm too much overlooks changes in Barth's own thought (e.g., "Barth . . . has always argued that revelation is rational") as well as the costly effect of Barth's early existential

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***Barth's academic impact, notably,  
has been felt more fully by  
loosely-anchored evangelicals  
than by modernists and humanists.***

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enthusiasm. Moreover, Ramm underplays the dialectical elements even in Barth's final formulations.

On some issues Ramm does criticize Barthian perspectives. He rejects supralapsarianism (without wrestling with Barth's criticism of sublapsarianism) while ignoring Barth's reconstruction of the doctrine of a divine supertemporal election of individuals. Ramm grants that radical biblical criticism may overwhelm Barth's insistence that criticism cannot impair the content of revelation, yet he still endorses Barth's approach. He considers Barth too ambiguous on the theme of universalism and is prone to exclude Schleiermacher along with some other theological goats. He suspects that Barth was less independent of philosophy than Barth acknowledged. Finally, Ramm thinks Barth "overloads his theology with Christology," but he does not develop

the criticism.

Aside from these few exceptions, Ramm seems to opt for Barthian alternatives. The point at which evangelicals will consent is the insistence that we must not force human beings to choose between evangelical faith and true learning. Any worthy theology—in contrast to mechanical repetition of one's beliefs—is an agonizing task that calls for our serious wrestling with the dominant ideas and ideals of our age.

Ramm wishes to preserve both modern learning and the Christian faith. Unfortunately, he does not precisely define what is "valid in modern learning," although he does accuse contemporary evangelicals of glossing over it. Furthermore, both liberal Protestantism before Barth and then religious humanism claimed to have made peace with modern learning. Barth's academic impact, notably, has been felt more fully by loosely-anchored evangelicals than by modernists and humanists.

The central problem, Ramm says, is the authority in a scientific age of a prescientific book. "How can the children of the computer-electronic revolution admit divine authority to the Holy Scriptures written in much more primitive times?" The inherited view, says Ramm, is challenged by "biblical criticism . . . historical science . . . modern astronomy . . . the new geology . . . the theory of evolution . . . scientific historical knowledge . . . philosophies . . . new opinions." These are imposing generalizations. Ramm seeks nonetheless to know how both the biblical and modern accounts can be true, and he categorizes as obscurantist castigation any suggestion that the scientists are wrong. With Barth, Ramm insists that historical and literary criticism are to be granted their rightful place without surrendering the theological integrity of Scripture; with Barth he presumes to achieve this by the verdict that both the ancient and the modern accounts "are true in their own way."

Ramm apparently joins with Schleiermacher and Barth in affirming that an inerrant Scripture is indefensible: cultural-linguistic considerations influentially shape, determine, govern and limit all human thought (even Ramm's?) (p. 54); the biblical text is culture-conditioned (p. 57); we must reject "the perfection of biblical history," whatever that means (p. 97); human language imperfectly mirrors the Word of God (but not of Ramm?) (p. 109). The Word must be *sought* (p. 112), but Ramm does not tell us how in these circumstances it is assuredly cognizable since biblical text is declared errant even in the original (p. 109). If Scripture is declared errant because revelation comes in human language, is not Jesus' teaching (which we now know only in Scripture) likewise errant? And where does Jesus—or the apostles—affirm that Scripture is errant? Or is their "witness" untrustworthy? Ramm seems to hold with Barth that "the Son of God took actual sinful humanity in the incarnation" and that, "if to be human is to err," Scripture is vulnerable to error (p. 127).

Ramm criticizes the evangelical emphasis on propositional revelation as presupposing "a pure conceptual language" (p. 110). He then implies that Barth teaches propositional revelation (p. 113) and insists that Barth holds to "the objective authority of Scripture and Scripture as the Word of God." But the matter is not so simple; the complexity Barth adds, in fact, is what vulnerably complicates his theology.

If the Christian revelation is not amenable to any test for truth, moreover, as Ramm insists along with Barth (p. 75), and if every test of revelation is to be deplored as rationalism (p. 86), then no logical basis exists any longer for preferring Christian to Muslim or Mormon claims of revelation. If one cannot know the truth of revelation before one appropriates it, Christianity forfeits any apologetic confrontation of the unbeliever. In this respect, and in excluding revelation from the cosmos that scientists probe and from the history that historians investigate, Barth capitulated to implications of the Enlightenment which he heroically resisted at other levels. In light of such concessions which Ramm would make to Barth and to the Enlightenment, it would be useful if Ramm were now to provide a constructive exposition of theology from his neo-evangelical quasi-Barthian perspective.

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# Meditations on Greed, Compulsion and Worry

Applying the Teachings of Christ to Alter Destructive Life Patterns

by Edward "Chip" Anderson

## VII

Then Jesus said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'

"Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I'll say to myself, 'You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.'"

"But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'"

"This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."

Luke 12:15-21

This parable has been titled the Parable of the Rich Fool. The main idea contained in it is found as Jesus introduces the story: "Be on your guard against all kinds of greed."

Here Jesus looks at the psychology of greed and points out how foolish it is to want, desire, lust for, and spend one's energy trying to accumulate more than is needed. Some people accumulate much more than they need; perhaps they even accumulate more money than they could possibly spend in the remaining years of their life. While few of us can readily identify with such a wealthy individual, we would likely agree that such a person is foolish, particularly if he or she has spent great energy and neglected other people and things to accumulate possessions. But why would we think that this person is foolish? Probably because the strain this person went through shortened his or her life and was a distraction from people and things which were more important.

So then why are people so foolishly greedy? Why do people seek and spend great energy trying to obtain more than they need? I believe it is because they are trying to make up for some aspect of their lives in which they feel inferior.

When we feel inferior, we look for something to arrest our feelings of insecurity. But if the thing about which we feel inferior is not addressed, confronted, and accepted, our greed, our attempt to compensate, simply makes us slaves to our feelings of insecurity.

Foolish? Yes, because that which compensates for insecurities can never make up for that over which we feel inferior!

## VIII

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will

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*Edward "Chip" Anderson, a psychologist, serves as Director of Preparatory Programs at UCLA. This series, which began in the January-February, 1983 issue of TSF Bulletin, was originally prepared for use in an adult education class at Bel Air Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles.*

*wear. Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds. Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?"*

Luke 12:22-26

Feelings of inferiority trigger feelings of insecurity and out of insecurity comes great energy to try and compensate for that over which we feel insecure. But, since that which we are greedy to gain can never compensate for the inferiorities which started the strivings in the first place, we worry—which just starts the cycle all over again.

Someone has commented that there is something called "poor people's paranoia": the fear that what little they have will be taken away. Maybe there is a parallel to that fear among those who are more wealthy: "compensation compulsions": compulsions to compensate for areas of perceived inferiority.

A compulsion is a driving desire to do something or get something done. Compulsions are based upon fear and are perpetuated by worry. Our compulsions drive us to achieve, accomplish, and gain—in hope that these achievements will compensate for that which makes us feel insecure. But such compulsions never directly address the real problem—our feelings of inferiority.

The compensation compulsion will never be broken until a person addresses, confronts and accepts these feelings. But how does one do that?

A first step is to realize how the cycle began. Feeling inferior starts with negative judgments about ourselves. These negative judgments may be about our body, mind, personality, sensuality, background, race, appearance, etc. Usually, some early experience when we were rejected or judged as unworthy starts the process. Then we perpetuate it by our own judgments and evaluations. Because we have judged that aspect of ourselves to be so insufficient, ugly and repulsive, we try to cover it up, our hope being that if we do enough, accomplish enough, or have enough, that which is inferior about us will not be noticed.

## IX

*"Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith!"*

Luke 12:27-28

I have been describing a cycle that results in expending considerable energy and yet fails to relieve the tension that drives the cycle. I have termed this pattern the compensation compulsion. The stages in the cycle of compensation compulsion include: 1) negative self judgments, 2) which generate feelings of inferiority, 3) which results in insecurity, 4) which gives rise to compensation strivings, 5) resulting in greedy efforts to achieve, and 6) worry about succeeding which fuels more insecurity and compensation strivings.

Clearly many individuals accomplish many things as a result of their

compensation compulsions. They may amass considerable wealth, achieve highly in school, become powerful, become well known, develop physical beauty or strength, or become famous through effort fueled by their compensation compulsions. On the other hand, many people who have compensation compulsions are not successful. For them, life is a desperate experience; they are driven to achieve but are never successful. Thus, their compensation compulsion cycle becomes more and more desperate. And, if they do not succeed, they eventually give up on life and quit living, one way or another.

Even if a person is successful and accomplishes many things through their compensation compulsion, one must ask: What's the cost: Time? Energy? Peace of mind? One of the first things to go when we are caught up in compensation compulsions are our love relationships.

Compensation compulsions interfere with love relationships in two ways. First, they consume considerable time and effort needed to maintain love relationships. Second, spouses will hide from their partners the insecurities and inferiorities for which they are compulsively trying to compensate. And since that which is hidden cannot be loved, the love relationship is lessened.

There is an alternative to this sad situation: stop hiding and stop covering up. Expose the areas where you feel inferior; expose these areas to God in prayer and expose these areas of perceived inferiority to your mate. Try this and experience acceptance. . . . Sounds hard to do? Real life, down to earth faith is hard work. It is a step of faith to expose yourself and believe that it will work out better if you do.

## X

*"And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well."*

Luke 12:29-31

I have written about greed and compulsions in terms of accumulating things beyond what one actually needs. Most people would agree that being compulsive or worrying about "excessive" matters is self-defeating. However, in this Scripture passage, Jesus speaks about more basic life-sustaining matters. Here he warns us not to worry about even life-sustaining elements as food and drink.

The point of this Scripture seems to be that anything can become a source of security and comfort—even food and beverages. The problem with food, beverages, money, people, jobs, positions, or any other person or thing becoming a source of security is that it can be taken away from us! Thus, they provide only temporary security. And since these sources of security can be taken away, we worry.

Christ does not want us to waste our time and energy worrying foolishly. In his love, he does not want to see us hurt or cheat ourselves through pointless worry which robs us of the "life," the aliveness, which he came to give us.

So what does Jesus want us to do, pretend we do not feel insecure? Does he want us to pretend that we do not worry? No. He wants us to gain our needed security from someone who will not and cannot be taken away.

Who is that someone who will not be taken from us? Who is that someone who cannot be taken away from us? And, who then is the only one on whom we can "set our hearts" to find security and reduce worry?

Important relationships with spouses, children, and other family members are often posed as sources of security. But since they could be taken away, we worry about them and worry about what we would do if we lost them. So even preciously important relationships will not suffice to bring us security. Likewise careers, possessions, political agendas and even church activities are not sufficient for solving security needs.

Thus Jesus' directive, spoken in love so that we can have a more secure and worry-free life, is: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God."

## XI

*As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to*

*be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"*

*"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."*

Luke 10:38-42

It is interesting to me that I tend to worry about things that are either beyond my control or that seem to be slipping into disarray. I find this interesting because my worrying reflects my attempts to be a responsible person, to be a good person. But oddly enough, worrying often defeats my attempts to see that good and responsible person, for I exhaust myself in worry.

Martha, the worrier, was not a bad person. She was trying to be good and responsible. She wanted to prepare and make a nice meal for Jesus. And yet Jesus did not recognize her attempts to be good. Instead, he complimented Mary because she chose a better action. But how could anything be better than being responsible?

Jesus' statement to Martha that "only one thing is needed" seems so simple, almost naive. In my life, it seems that I am often like a juggler trying to keep the balls from falling. It seems to me that there is never just one needed thing; so often everything seems to be needful and important. And I cannot seem to respond to all the important things that need to be done. Thus, I worry . . . the balls are dropping, and everything seems to be falling apart.

But in an effort to be open to this Scripture, I re-read it and noticed what Mary did that Jesus identified as "better" than all of Martha's attempts to be responsible. Mary simply "sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said!" Could it be that the one thing that I really need to do is to sit and listen to the Lord?

## XII

*Then they asked Jesus, "What must we do to do the works God requires?"*

*Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."*

John 6:29

I have written about the detrimental effects of greed, compensation compulsions, and worrying on our lives. I have also pointed to Christ's teachings as an antidote to these life-destructive patterns. But the challenge is to apply the teachings of Christ so that they make a difference in our lives.

I have always been intrigued by magic. I enjoy seeing an expert magician exercise his craft. Personally, I would like to be a magician in my work as a counselor and therapist. I long to say the right thing, to "turn the trick," to make profound observations which will magically solve problems and make everything right. And yet, it is my experience that each step of personal progress and each helping act has been based on work, not magic.

To break compensation compulsions, to break worrying patterns, to break greedy strivings, or to break any other self-defeating pattern takes work—there is no magic!

Jesus is well aware that it takes a lot of work to have the "life more abundant" which he came to give. But the work and effort he teaches us to engage in is significantly different and in many ways more difficult than what we are used to.

The type of work Jesus teaches us to engage in is that of belief and faith. For me, it would have been easier if Jesus would have said he wanted me to build something. But he said believe and have faith. I do not trust, have faith, or believe anything or anyone easily. For me faith is work.

Even believing the beautiful message of John 3:16—that God loves me—takes work. I have to remind myself, take leaps of faith, and work at it.

I want magic, but Jesus affirms that work is required. That work involves and requires me to make a choice. "The work of God," Jesus said, "is to believe in the one whom he has sent." And that has profound ramifications—believing that Jesus was the Son of God, believing his teachings, believing in him for salvation and forgiveness, believing that I am to be a lover, and believing that I am loved for who and what I am, rather than for who and what I might become. In each instance, believing is a choice.

## Review Essay

**Old Testament Survey: The Message, Form, and Background of the Old Testament**  
by W. S. LaSor, D. A. Hubbard and F. W. Bush  
(Eerdmans, 1982, 675 pp., \$24.95).

There are "books" that are just pages of print bound in covers and sitting on bookstore and library shelves. And then there are really "books"—volumes of bound pages whose quality and relevance earn them profound and widespread influence.

*Old Testament Survey* by LaSor, Hubbard, and Bush seems destined to be a book in the latter sense. If it becomes a standard textbook in college and seminary classes, it will shape the understanding of the Old Testament in the minds of the next generation of readers. For this reason, *TSF Bulletin* has asked two scholars from differing theological traditions to respond to the book. I will add some closing comments.

The book is organized around the Hebrew canon. After introductory chapters on the authority of the OT, revelation and inspiration, canon, the formation of the OT, and Bible geography, it moves book by book through the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. Supplementary chapters introduce the reader to canonical sections: Pentateuch, Former Prophets, Prophets and Prophecy, and the Writings. Other chapters provide background on biblical chronology (e.g., Thiele's solution to the chronological differences between Kings and Chronicles), Hebrew poetry, messianic prophecy, and wisdom literature. Maps and pictures (many taken by LaSor himself) abound as do many helpful charts (e.g., ones about offerings in Leviticus, pp. 154–155; census figures in Numbers 1 and 26, p. 167; prophets and their contemporary rulers, pp. 328, 435, 486; and holy days and seasons, pp. 526–527, to cite a few).

It is clear the authors have the Bible reader in mind. They intend their book be read "as a guide and supplement to the biblical text itself" and to lead the reader to obedience to the Lord of Scripture (p. vii). Consequently, many chapters are replete with scripture quotations, thereby linking the discussion closely with the Bible itself. Lengthy discussion of detail is relegated to footnotes so as not to interrupt the flow of the main thought. All chapters close with an annotated bibliography which points the advanced student to "further reading."

Within each chapter, the authors seek to implement the book's subtitle quoted above. Although chapter subdivision titles vary, the emphasis throughout is consistent: helpful background from Ancient Near Eastern history and culture as well as from archeological discoveries skillfully accompanies comment concerning the literary form of the text; most chapters conclude with a discussion of the book's theological contribution.

Obviously, such a book represents a major achievement. But how have scholars viewed it? *TSF Bulletin* offers the response of two scholars representing different religious traditions: Dr. Rolf Knierim, a United Methodist minister and Professor of Old Testament at the School of Theology at Claremont and Claremont Graduate School, and Dr. Elmer Martens, President and Professor of Old Testament at the Mennonite Brethren Seminary in Fresno, California.

—Robert Hubbard

### Review by Rolf Knierim

This introduction to the study of the Old Testament intends to combine the "theological and scholarly approaches" (p. VII) congenially. Accordingly, it wants to pay attention to the Old Testament as Holy Scripture that finds its fulfillment in the New Testament and in Jesus Christ as well as to "the historical, cultural and social setting of Scripture together with

the literary and linguistic means by which it was recorded" (p. VIII). To this end, the volume opens with programmatic chapters on the Authority of the Old Testament, on Revelation and Inspiration, and on Canon. Its treatment of the individual biblical books presents the scholarly approach and the theological view.

The emphasis on the theological aspect of the Old Testament is perfectly in order. The Old Testament is basically theological literature, and a scholarly treatment that does not take this fact into consideration is not doing its job. Of course, one wonders whether the theological approach is for the authors non-scholarly, and the scholarly approach non-theological when they speak of the "theological and scholarly approaches."

The presentation of the "scholarly" results and ongoing debates is balanced, if guarded, and up to date, particularly if one includes the references "for further reading." It is a bit surprising that the authors did not find it necessary to include a concise chapter on their exegetical method, as a balance to their opening chapters on the theological method. It is more surprising that varying methodological approaches can be found in the book. Chapter 7, *Genesis: Primeval Prologue*, for example, deals with the "Contents," "Literary Genre," and "Theology," whereas chapter 8, *Genesis: Patriarchal History* deals with "Content," "Historical Background," "Date and Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives," "Literary Genre . . .," "Religion of the Patriarchs," and "Theology of the Narratives." The treatment of Exodus is subdivided into "Historical Background" (chapter 9) and "Contents and Theology" (chapter 10), whereas Leviticus contains a discussion of the contents of the Book only. Similar observations can be made everywhere. It seems the difference between the historical situation of the literature and the historical events it speaks about has not been treated homogeneously, and the question has not been clarified as to what procedure should be followed in the study of the Bible.

Similar unclear items must be registered in the theological discussion. Many of us affirm the authority of the Old Testament as the word of God, its revelation and inspiration, and canonic nature. But what does it mean when on the "Relevance of Leviticus Today" (p. 161) we learn that "God's holiness insisted that for fellowship to be enjoyed, sin must be dealt with, and on terms acceptable to him. Leviticus, thus, is much more than a compendium of sacrifices and feasts, for it spelled out the terms of that fellowship." Correct, but it's only a half-truth. The other half is that Leviticus speaks also of sacrifices and feasts. This part, then, is also an authoritative, inspired and revealed word of God. Who of us adheres to it? And if not, why not? Because of Christ's sacrifice (p. 161). Thus, authority, inspiration, revelation of or in texts are occasionally superseded, and occasionally not. On what theological grounds can we discern the difference, in all the pericopes of Leviticus, and of the entire Old Testament as well? What is the theological validity of the exegesis of texts, just when it takes the texts' scholarly aspects seriously, if their theology can be superseded by theological criteria outside of them? It seems an Old Testament Survey that combines the theological and scholarly approaches must come to grips with the critical relationship between exegesis and theology in their mutual distinctiveness. This quest remains perhaps the most important desideratum in the field, and not only in this book—notwithstanding its appreciable intention.

### Review by Elmer Martens

This *Survey* is distinguished by its theological posi-

tion, which is definitely conservative and basically evangelical. Several opening chapters discuss the inspiration and the authority of the Bible, both of which are strongly affirmed. "The Old Testament which God has seen fit to preserve can be relied on as His word in all its trust and authenticity" (p. 34). There is a reasonably generous sprinkling of references to evangelical scholars, British more than American, as well as to *ISBE*, the *Tyndale Bulletin* and the *Theological Students Fellowship Bulletin*. At the same time, pace setters such as W. F. Albright, J. Bright, W. Eichrodt, G. von Rad, and B. S. Childs, together with such commentaries as *Interpreter's Bible*, are very much in the discussion.

The theological strength of the book is that it presents an alternative to the much-championed, yet dubious theories of literary composition of the Pentateuch, Isaiah and Daniel. Little space and virtually no credence is given to the Pentateuchal JEDP theory or its variations. The highly original role of Moses in the formation of the Pentateuch is affirmed (p. 63). Still, the diversity and the complexity of the material is not glossed over: the authors hold that via a complex process the Pentateuch was completed substantially in its present form about 1000 B.C. A strong case is made for the unity of Isaiah, once again contrary to much prevailing opinion. Elaborations are allowed, but "Isaiah was responsible for the entire prophecy" (p. 377). Here, as elsewhere, the argumentation is clear, extensive, irenic. As for Daniel, the authors hold that it stems from the man Daniel; the book in its present form was formalized, not in the second century B.C. but earlier, perhaps the fourth or fifth century. These conclusions are given following careful marshalling and weighing of the data.

The writers face squarely the problems that emerge when questions of historicity and facticity are put to Scripture. Quite correctly they stress the selective nature of history writing. "They [biblical authors] recount history so as to inculcate theology . . . they do not distort or falsify history, but are often highly selective in light of their purpose" (p. 108). Moreover, a "firm principle in biblical study is that even in a clearly historical passage, the religious message is more important than the historical details" (p. 353).

It is in the specifics that the writers' approach will be open to misunderstanding and can be challenged. Stress is laid, for instance, on the artifice of the literary material of Gen. 1-11. These chapters are not called "history" in the modern sense of eyewitness, objective reporting. Rather, according to the authors, the primeval prologue "conveys theological truths about events, portrayed in a largely symbolic, pictorial literary genre" (p. 74). Granted that much is symbol. But should not greater emphasis be given to the "eventness" in these chapters? Miracle is affirmed, but there is large openness to naturalistic explanations for such events as the plagues and the sun's standstill. As for the historical nature of the Jonah account, "for the moment judgment must be reserved" (p. 352).

Evangelicals, who have sometimes made extremist claims about the importance and scope of historical material, should realize that the Bible is not invalidated by discrepancies in date, place and numbers. The Christian public should recognize the variety of genre, other than history, available for effective communication. Even so, some readers, this reviewer among them, will at times be uneasy, despite the chronological or data problems cited, with such statements as "while the story [of Esther] as such may not be historical, the background is so full of accurate Persian details, it must be based on history" (p. 626). Can the argument that distinguishes between history generally and redemptive history (Esther is not part of strict redemption history) be sustained? While the

writers claim that the handling of historical details does not compromise the view of inspiration set out earlier, some readers will not so readily be convinced. They will continue to wonder whether the relationship between the historical details of a narrative and its message is not closer than claimed. Others, to be sure, will rejoice at new options open to them for reconciling a high view of inspiration with some historical puzzlement, for the writers are painstaking in stating the evidence that informs their conclusion. This book's mediating position between those who insist on the importance of historical factuality and those who are more relaxed about biblical factuality may earn these authors some displeasure from both groups.

A distinguishing and laudable feature of the *Survey* is its section on theology or religious significance of biblical books. The treatment of Job in stressing God's freedom, for example, is superb. These sections qualify the book for the genre "survey" rather than "introduction," and make it functional for the practitioner as well as for the academic. For this reviewer, the subject of ethics and life of the people of God is insufficiently stressed (e.g., Leviticus, Jeremiah). Further, while the authors take an unequivocal position on the reality of prediction and properly resist treating prophecy as precalendaring, yet in the chapter on Messianism the predictive element is strangely muted. It also seems unfortunate that the dispensationalist view should be so studiously eschewed—the word does not appear in the subject index and there is scarcely mention of scholars with dispensationalist leanings. Overall, however, the theological emphasis represents a very major contribution and is most praiseworthy.

This *Survey* is information-packed, highly readable, and offers an adequate and balanced treatment of literary, Ancient Near East and archaeological data. Separate chapters deal with geography, prophecy, chronology, wisdom literature, and poetry—especially well done. Here is admirable sensitivity to literary genre. Charts are a welcome feature.

Indeed this *Survey* fills a need. Compared with R. K. Harrison's work, the *Survey* is more concise, balanced and, of course, more up to date. The *Survey* is more congenial for evangelical college or seminary courses than is B. S. Child's *Introduction*. Its presentation is more encompassing and more tightly argued than Child's. All in all the *Survey* is of first-rate quality, challenging in its synthesis and essentially sound in its approach.

#### Comments by Robert Hubbard

This book's uniqueness stands out most clearly when it is compared to books in related genres. It is not an "introduction to" the Old Testament. The latter is a technical term for a book that treats problems of authorship, sources and composition of books. The emphasis is more on what scholars have said concerning those problems than on the content of the books themselves. Examples of such introductions would be Eissfeldt, Fohrer and Soggin.

On the other hand, its organization tacks closer to the canon than the retelling of the Old Testament story provided by Anderson (*Understanding the Old Testament*), and Napier (*Song of the Vineyard*). But given its broader set of purposes, it pays far less attention to questions of canon and canonical shaping than Child's *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*.

Two books in the same genre with which *Old Testament Survey* may be usefully compared are J. Jensen's *God's Word to Israel* (The Liturgical Press, 1968) and H. Hummel's *The Word Becoming Flesh* (Concordia, 1979). Jensen's work, in the post-Vatican II Roman Catholic tradition, is more comfortable with the critical enterprise than *Old Testament Survey*. It contains reading suggestions, but is only about half as long. Hummel's work, in the evangelical, especially Lutheran tradition (Luther and Wellhausen have the longest author index listings), is less comfortable with

the critical enterprise than *Old Testament Survey*, and, in contrast to that work's eclecticism, tends to push typology more consistently. But it lacks reading suggestions.

*Old Testament Survey* stands midway between a simple survey of Bible content and a weighty OT introduction. Its discussion of the OT books is well-informed by scholarship, and yet its aim is to open up the Bible's content and message to the reader. Thus, it does not supersede the OT introductions but rather serves a different aim. The advanced student will still find use of the introductions as an absolute necessity.

Now, how well has *Survey* achieved its purpose? On the whole, it has succeeded admirably. All the basic historical and cultural background for understanding the OT is present in readable form, and the emphasis upon the literary form of the books is commendable. Its scholarship is current, although, as Martens pointed out, the book tends to be more influenced by British and American scholars than by those from the continent.

The only obvious deviation from that purpose, in my judgment, occurs in the chapters on the Books of Samuel and Kings where the authors simply retell the history and note its importance. The discussion of the sources behind these books is weak (pp. 228–229, 253–254), and little stress is given to the literary art of the narratives. More importantly, to say that Judges, Samuel and Kings are written under "a prophetic view of history" (p. 229) fails to reckon adequately with the difference in theological perspective in Samuel over against that of Judges and Kings. A section on theological implications drawing, for example, upon the insights of von Rad and Whybray is noticeable by its absence.

Further, in other places the discussion of some issues was overlooked. While well-known controversies receive in-depth coverage (e.g., the composition of the Pentateuch, Isaiah, Daniel, etc.) similar problems in the minor prophets are left virtually untouched (e.g., the unity of Amos, the relationship between Hosea chapters 1–3 and 4–14 and the possible redaction in Judah of some prophets from the northern kingdom era).

As for the Pentateuch, the complexity of the material is lucidly laid out, the evidence for Moses' strong influence presented and a possible scenario of composition sketched (pp. 58–63). The result is, however, all too inconclusive and broad to account for the complexity observed in the material. Granted, the problem is monstrously complex, but one wonders if a more rigorous focus on the observed phenomena might yield a more sophisticated theory of the Pentateuch's origin, one which might attract a sizable scholarly consensus.

As is evident from the responses of Professors Martens and Knierim, the book again raises the thorny but fundamental question of methodology. For Knierim, the issue involves two questions: How shall one study biblical texts? and, Once one uncovers the theology of a given text, how does one relate it to other theologies within the Bible and to Christian life and worship today? For Martens, on the other hand, the question centers on the relationship of the Bible as a report (or reflection) of historical events (i.e., its "facticity") to the Bible's nature as a collection of literature written under literary and theological interests rather than historical ones. How can one tell whether or when these interests dominate a given writer? How can one tell when literary and theological concerns may have overridden a concern for historical details? Further, how does one maintain such a view of literary freedom and yet have a high view of biblical authority? Finally, one must reckon with the issue raised by Knierim of the relationship between the historical situation underlying the literature and the historical events they narrate.

All of this, of course, means that *Survey* is a "book" in the best sense. It not only provides Bible readers with a useful, up-to-date resource for understanding

the Old Testament but also provokes them to struggle with how to study and appropriate what they find there. Several generations of evangelicals will be greatly in debt to its three authors for this significant work.

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#### *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah*

by George W. E. Nickelsburg (Fortress, 1981, 352 pp., \$19.95). Reviewed by Peter H. Davids, Visiting Professor of New Testament, New College, Berkeley.

George Nickelsburg has provided the world with a historical introduction to the Jewish literature written between about 400 B.C. and A.D. 100. It is a historical introduction in that he does not study the literature by whole books, but divides books, especially Daniel and 1 Enoch, among the periods during which they arose. This method means that he can discuss each work (which he helpfully summarizes) within the context of its own historical setting, not just as background for New Testament works as part of a dark "intertestamental period." To make this work more helpful as an introduction, Nickelsburg has provided an extremely useful bibliography listing the best texts and translations of the Jewish literature he discusses. This includes such modern versions as the SBL Texts and Translations series and Charlesworth's *The Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*. Thus it updates many of the earlier standard works.

The design and content of this work are excellent. This reviewer wishes that he had had such a work in his hands when he began to read this literature a decade ago. On the other hand, one can level some criticisms. While some might wish Nickelsburg had kept books together and thus studied them as complete works of literature (which was part of his purpose), his dividing them into periods of composition is certainly defensible in some cases. For example, the later dating of the Similitudes in 1 Enoch is most helpful. Yet all scholars will not be pleased with his particular datings of other literature, such as Daniel. Also problematic is his title, "Between the Bible and the Mishnah," for he includes in this "between" category not only Daniel (which is reasonable given the dates which he assigns it), but also Matthew. Yet he excludes other Jewish-Christian works such as James. While this method does help one avoid a tunnel "period mentality," his choice appears a little arbitrary or at least controversial.

Nevertheless, in spite of the criticisms, this is a work which serious students of the period (which means all students of the New Testament) will want to have on their shelves and which professors will gratefully recommend to their students as an excellent guide to the mysterious land of the apocrypha and pseudepigrapha.

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#### *Paul's Apocalyptic Gospel: The Coming Triumph of God*

by J. Christiaan Beker (Fortress, 1982, 127 pp., \$6.95). Reviewed by James L. Jaquette, Pastor, Union Church of South Foxboro, Massachusetts.

Beker, who is Professor of Biblical Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary, deserves the admiration of all who seek to make the transition from the scholastic to the pastoral. In his magisterial work, *Paul the Apostle* (Fortress, 1980), the author argued that the coherent center of Paul's thought is found in his christologically determined future apocalyptic. His latest volume explores the meaning of Paul's apocalyptic gospel and its relevance and challenge for the church today, thus carrying the previously developed thesis to its practical con-



clusion.

Beker begins by discussing the rise of modern neo-apocalyptic movements (using Hal Lindsey as a representative) and identifying their appeal in a basic empathy with the cultural elements of our time. He next delineates the apocalyptic character of Paul's gospel by focusing on the motifs that form its coherent center. By demonstrating the inseparable relationship between Paul's apocalyptic gospel (the coherent center) and his apostolic career (the contingent interpretation) the author proposes that the apocalyptic character not only provides the content of the gospel but also its preaching mode. Following a defense of his primary thesis against contemporary apocalyptic and nonapocalyptic interpreters of Paul, Beker arrives at the crucial question: Is Paul's apocalyptic gospel a viable option for Christians today? This challenge is answered by discussing four basic objections to Paul's apocalyptic: the obsolete character of the apocalyptic world view, the misleading literal language of apocalyptic, the argument that apocalyptic has a purely symbolic significance, and the refutation of future apocalyptic by the ongoing process of history. The final chapter presents the challenge of Paul's apocalyptic gospel for the church by focusing on its catalytic power in the areas of ethics, theodicy, anthropology and eschatology.

Beker's continuous interaction with contemporary Pauline interpreters makes for lively reading and illustrates a tremendous grasp of the secondary literature. One is especially appreciative of the clarity with which he treads the line between a rigid biblicalism (a resuscitation of the literal apocalyptic world view of Paul with its imminent expectation) and an exclusively existentialist interpretation (notably Bultmann), which removes any literal dimension of Paul's apocalyptic-cosmic intent from consideration. This is no mere compromise but a redefinition of the *centrum Paulinum*. The catalytic function of Paul's apocalyptic is differentiated from time-conditioned interpretations of the gospel. This is the burden of every preacher, to assure the truthfulness of all interpretation by being faithful to the old text in a new situation, to separate the contingent from the coherent and apply the latter. Here Beker has provided an outstanding interpretative paradigm. The essay is the completion of a hermeneutical *tour de force* in discovering Paul's methodology and applying it to today. The author intertwines an erudite grasp of the contemporary sociological climate with precise critiques of interpreters who have let the mood of the times dictate their hermeneutics.

The primary reservation in accepting the challenge posed by this volume is related to the thesis itself. Since the exegetical development of the thesis is not the focus of the book, one cannot fault the author for failing to support his contentions biblically. But we must identify the methodology Beker uses to arrive at this particular center of Paul's gospel. The author cannot be accused of arbitrariness in his choice of this core over those centers he deems peripheral until one is able to examine the exegesis the book assumes. This is not a suggestion that the argument is unclear; indeed, the exact opposite is the case. But it must be remembered that this essay is the second half of a two part work. When Beker suggests that the early church, as represented in the New Testament canon, has shifted the relationship between the Christ-event and the parousia to an almost exclusive concentration on the former, the reader is given an insight into Beker's methodological assumptions. Likewise, one finds that the author is using an abbreviated Pauline corpus, which certainly has implications for the central thesis assumed. One appreciates the fact that Beker has above all desired to make himself a servant of the text, but the question remains, which text(s)?

Notwithstanding the reservations about Beker's

main thesis, this book is a clear and thought-provoking example of bridging the historical gap between the original author and our own age. As a pastor the reviewer was challenged by the author's suggestions as to the catalytic effect of Paul's apocalyptic gospel. One does not have to agree with the main thesis to understand the need to assess and apply the apocalyptic motifs in Paul. Their challenge is not exclusively the possession of the curious chronological literalist or the existential individualist but forms at least part of the agenda for the church in this age. This is a stimulating volume. I recommend it highly and suggest that Beker's *Paul the Apostle* be studied carefully as well.

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#### **Galatians**

by Hans Dieter Betz (Hermeneia, Fortress, 1979, 382 pp., \$27.95).

#### **The Epistle to the Galatians**

by F. F. Bruce (NIGTC, Eerdmans, 1982, 325 pp., \$15.95).

#### **Galatians**

by Charles B. Cousar (Interpretation, John Knox, 1982, 167 pp., \$13.95).

Reviewed by Richard B. Hays, Assistant Professor of New Testament, Yale Divinity School.

In spite of the historic centrality of Paul's letter to the Galatians in Protestant theology, there has been until recently a shortage of useful modern commentaries on this text. After E. D. Burton's ICC volume in 1920, no major critical commentary on Galatians appeared in English until the publication of Hans Dieter Betz's *Galatians* in 1979. Now the earlier shortage is being replaced by abundance, as we have also a learned commentary by F. F. Bruce in the NIGTC series and a less technical offering by Charles Cousar in the new Interpretation series.

Betz's work, the first Hermeneia volume to be written in English rather than translated from German, is a landmark in modern biblical scholarship. Betz argues vigorously that Galatians belongs to a clearly-defined genre of Hellenistic antiquity known as the "apologetic letter" and that the structure of Paul's argument must therefore be understood in terms of the conventions of Graeco-Roman rhetoric. This approach allows Betz to present a cohesive interpretation of the letter as a "defense of the Spirit," asserting the adequacy of the Spirit to direct the lives of the Galatians, who are presumably having a "problem with the flesh." Many useful insights emerge from Betz's treatment of the text, as he demonstrates on page after page how Paul employs the devices of ancient rhetoric to make his case. Extensive footnotes provide the specialist with ready access to a wealth of ancient parallels and modern critical studies; at the same time, since all quotations from foreign languages are translated, this information is made accessible to the interested general reader.

While the great strength of the commentary lies in its ground-breaking use of rhetorical theory to map the structure of Paul's argument, there are a number of fundamental questions that must be raised about Betz's approach: (1) Does it significantly reckon with the strongly *Jewish* style and content of Paul's argumentation? (In particular, Galatians 3 looks very much like a rabbinic midrash on Gen. 15:6.) (2) Is it appropriate to speak of an "apologetic letter" genre in light of the dearth of actual specimens of the beast? It is noteworthy that Betz is forced to derive his parallels throughout the commentary not from actual "apologetic letters" but from handbooks on rhetoric. (3) In any case, does the text really fit the model? For example, Betz describes Gal. 5:1-6:10 as the "exhortatio," but there is no such section in the prescribed structure

of the apologetic speech. For further discussion of these and other issues, see the very penetrating reviews by Paul Meyer, W. D. Davies, and David Aune (*Religious Studies Review* 7 [1981] 310-28), and by Wayne Meeks (*JBL* 100 [1981] 304-07.)

In addition to the above difficulties with the commentary, it is also significant that—theologically speaking—Betz's interpretation of Galatians stands very much within the mainstream of Lutheran interpretation as mediated through Bultmann. Faith remains primarily an individual matter, and the Gospel is set in sharp and irreconcilable opposition to Judaism. Betz appears uninfluenced by the growing body of exegetical studies which stress Paul's apocalyptic world-view and his concern to maintain continuity between the Gospel and Jewish Scripture and tradition.

F. F. Bruce pays more attention than Betz to the Jewish background of Paul's thought, but—in common with Betz—places little emphasis on the apocalyptic framework of Paul's theology. Bruce's commentary is aimed—even more than Betz's—at a scholarly audience; the reader without Greek would find it very difficult to use this commentary. Much of the discussion in the text consists of Bruce's summary of and interaction with recent critical literature. This makes the commentary useful as a bibliographical resource, but at the same time renders the text cluttered and diffuse; Bruce's own interpretation is often obscured by this welter of technical data. In fact, the book as a whole reads like the product of an earlier era when commentators sought primarily to provide notes on syntax and background information which could serve as data to aid the reader in his or her *own* work of interpretation. Used in this way, the commentary could be serviceable: Bruce's accounts of the data are thorough and reliable. But the reader who comes to this volume looking for fresh theological insight will be disappointed. Perhaps the most valuable part of the commentary is the Introduction, in which Bruce devotes fifty-six pages to a clear discussion of the classic issues of critical introduction: addressees, occasion, opponents, date, etc. In this section, as well as in the commentary on the text, it would not be unfair to observe that Bruce neither breaks any new ground nor frames any questions which help us see the text in a new light; instead, he provides sober and judicious assessments of familiar issues. In any case, Bruce's work provides us with an evangelical Galatians commentary which is far more comprehensive and balanced than the very unsatisfactory NICNT commentary by Herman Ridderbos (1953).

Cousar's *Galatians*, one of first volumes of a new commentary series produced under the auspices of the journal *Interpretation*, sets a commendable standard for the volumes to follow. The series is designed "to meet the need of students, teachers, ministers, and priests for a contemporary expository commentary." The key word here is *expository*: Cousar makes no attempt to deal with technical problems or to provide a word-by-word commentary on the text. Instead, he offers expository reflections on each paragraph unit within the letter. This approach enables him, in contrast to Bruce, to concentrate on the theological implications of major sense-units within the letter. The discussion is informed throughout by the insights of the best recent scholarship (see the helpful selected bibliography at the end of the book), and Cousar moves through his exposition with considerable grace and theological subtlety. Some may find the tone of the exposition excessively "homiletical," but this commentary would serve as a stimulating conversation partner for anyone who sets out to preach or teach on Galatians.

As valuable as these commentaries are, we may still await with eager anticipation the forthcoming publication of two more major critical commentaries on Galatians, by J. Louis Martyn in the

Anchor Bible and by Richard Longenecker in the new Word Biblical Commentary series, since both Martyn and Longenecker are specialists in the area of early Jewish Christianity. We may justifiably suppose that their commentaries will provide formidable counterweights to Betz's effort to place Galatians within the intellectual culture of the Graeco-Roman rhetoricians.

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**Luke and the Last Things: A Perspective for the Understanding of Lukan Thought** by A. J. Mattill, Jr. (Western North Carolina Press, 1979, 253 pp., \$8.95). Reviewed by Joseph L. Trafton, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Western Kentucky University.

A. J. Mattill, Jr. has sought to produce a comprehensive study of one of the more controversial issues in Lukan studies: eschatology. In reality, however, his book could be characterized as an extended polemic against Conzelmann's "anti-apocalyptic" interpretation of Luke-Acts. Conzelmann argued that Luke, recognizing growing disillusionment among Christians as their hopes for a quick return of Jesus began to fade, wrote in order to focus the attention of his readers on the Church's present mission. Luke did not deny the eventual return of Jesus; he simply deemphasized it and suggested that it would not come for a long time. Mattill spares no effort to prove that this approach to Luke's eschatology is incorrect.

In chapter one Mattill argues that Luke's writings reflect Luke's "impassioned longing for the consummation." In chapter two he presents a critique of Conzelmann, and in chapter three a critique of the view that Luke rejected the notion of an end-time resurrection in favor of the concept of the immortality of the soul. In chapters four and five Mattill presents evidence that Luke expected an imminent consummation—i.e., within a generation. In chapter six Mattill suggests that despite his *imminent* expectation, Luke toned down the hope for an *immediate* consummation "by adding conditions which must be fulfilled before the end can come"—i.e., the destruction of Jerusalem, the world mission to the Gentiles, the restoration of the kingdom of Israel, and cosmic woes. In chapter seven Mattill argues that "the six key verses which are commonly understood to mean that for Luke the kingdom is present in this age" suggests rather that "Luke thinks of the kingdom as entirely futuristic." Finally, in chapter eight Mattill suggests a life-situation which would explain Luke's eschatology. In response to "over-heated apocalyptists," on the one hand, and to some who had begun to doubt the return of Jesus, on the other, Luke affirms an imminent, but not immediate, consummation. Luke wants his readers to recognize that they are involved in the final holy war against the kingdom of Satan, and he writes to stir them to action so that the war might reach a speedy conclusion.

Mattill sets forth his unusual interpretation of Luke in the context of extensive interaction with the relevant literature on Luke-Acts. He presents a wide range of possible interpretations for virtually every passage which he examines. In addition, he supports his own arguments with detailed studies of key words. This encyclopedic character of the book gives it real value.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for Mattill's thesis. First, his approach is atomistic. Although he usually attempts to view each verse in its immediate context, he makes no real effort to see a verse in relation to the literary whole. The assumption seems to be that it is enough to find verses to support one's thesis regardless of whether or not they appear at strategic points in the narrative. Such an approach is hardly acceptable for determining a perspective for the understanding of

the overall thought of an author. Second, many of Mattill's interpretations seem forced. Surely, for example, his insistence that Luke's use of *mellō* carries with it a sense of "eschatological urgency" is to read too much into a simple Greek word. Third, Mattill's distinction between an "imminent" and an "immediate" expectation seems to be overly subtle. And by arguing that Luke rejected the concept of an immediate expectation and added conditions which must be fulfilled first, Mattill has virtually conceded Conzelmann's basic point anyway. Finally, one must ask, does the understanding of Luke as a holy warrior writing to bring about the consummation really explain all that is present in this two-volume work, in terms both of contents and of literary genre?

One does not have to be a follower of Conzelmann to believe that Mattill's book suffers from overkill. As a catalogue of alternate interpretations of key Lukan passages which bear upon the theme of eschatology, it is certainly very helpful. As a unique—and consistent—interpretation of Luke's eschatology, it is indeed interesting. But as an accurate assessment of Luke's eschatology, and, hence, as "a perspective for the understanding of Lukan thought," Mattill's interpretation seems most implausible.

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**Thy Kingdom Come: A Blumhardt Reader** edited by Vernard Eller (Eerdmans, 1980, 180 pp., \$4.95). Reviewed by John R. Burkholder, Professor of Religion, Goshen College.

This is a deceptive and dangerous book! It is deceptive because, while it does not argue a thesis or present itself as a theological treatise—being simply a collection of excerpts from miscellaneous writings published a century ago—it nevertheless makes a significant contribution to theological understanding. It is dangerous because if taken seriously, it will threaten conventional theology and complacent ecclesiology and comfortable ethics. This it accomplishes simply by developing the implications of the biblical premise in the title: "the kingdom of God is among us."

Vernard Eller wants the world to know about the Blumhardts, father and son. The elder, Johann Christoph (1805–1880), a Reformed minister in southern Germany, discovered the transforming power of Jesus through an extended pastoral ministry to a demented (demon-possessed?) woman in the village of Mottlingen. Victory in this spiritual battle triggered a revival in the parish and beyond, leading to controversy with church authorities. Blumhardt moved to the town of Bad Boll, where he established a retreat center that served as focal point for an ongoing ministry grounded in the conviction that the kingdom of God is real, here and now.

The son, Christoph Friedrich (1842–1919), eventually joined his father at Bad Boll, after university and theological studies. He gained recognition as a mass evangelist and faith healer, then took a turn in the world, identifying with the democratic socialist movement and its concern for the rights of the working class. But after one term in the legislature (for which he had to resign his ministerial status), he became disillusioned with party politics and returned to Bad Boll. Eller observes, however, that this rejection of direct political involvement was not a denial of the concern for social reform.

Although they remained relatively unknown in the English-speaking world, the Blumhardts made a major impact on continental theology. In his perhaps too-brief introduction Eller outlines the Blumhardt influence on Oscar Cullmann's *Heilgeschichte* theme, the fact that Karl Barth's key phrase "Jesus is Victor" is a motto from the elder Blumhardt, and

the claim by Emil Brunner that Blumhardt and Kierkegaard are the two great predecessors of the neo-Orthodox movement. Basic themes in Bonhoeffer, Ellul, and Moltmann also trace their roots to the work of the Blumhardts.

But this volume is much more than a footnote filling in the gaps in a history of theological ideas. Its profoundly biblical perspective, holding together personal piety and social concern, makes it a strangely relevant resource for the church life of this decade. Although history may not repeat itself exactly, the issues of our time are still parallel to the themes that the Blumhardts had to address.

In these writings, one discovers forceful commentary on such questions as the inspiration of Scripture, eschatological escapism, shallow conversionism and the final judgment. Their answers may not always meet the tests of certain contemporary orthodoxies, but the Blumhardts speak from a depth of biblical insight and pastoral experience that cannot be ignored.

Charismatic ministries today face the same kinds of criticism as the faith healers of Bad Boll. Today's political or liberation theologies come under censure for reasons similar to the Blumhardts. What makes the Blumhardts unique and important, however, is the fact that their long ministry combined both these emphases in a creative synthesis of healing, justice and salvation themes from Scripture.

This book is spiritual dynamite as devotional reading, a splendid source-book for homiletical ideas, and a worthy instrument for stretching one's theological and personal horizons. The Blumhardt perspective sets the rigorous demands of discipleship in a context of unwavering faith in the manifest power of God. The message is profoundly simple: Believe and obey, for the kingdom of God is here!

Yet, as men immersed in the ambiguities of human history, the Blumhardts were biblical realists. Although they claim that there are no inherent obstacles to the inbreaking of divine power, they are nevertheless conversant with the despair of the ancient Hebrew: "How long, O Lord, how long?" A dialectic of "waiting and working" pervades the book. As C. F. Blumhardt preached, "We have experienced that the Lord is our help and shield, and that is why we *can* wait."

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**Christian Theology: An Introduction to its Traditions and Tasks**

edited by Peter C. Hodgson and Robert H. King (Fortress, 1982, 360 pp., \$15.95). Reviewed by Geoffrey Wainwright, Professor of Systematic Theology, Union Theological Seminary, New York.

Intended as a teaching aid, this book is the product of a "Work Group on Constructive Theology" originally centered at Vanderbilt. It takes many of the traditional topics of dogmatic theology, plus one or two more, and, with named authors finally responsible for each chapter, treats each topic in a four-fold way: 1. "Where we are" (a brief reading of the present situation); 2. "The doctrine in its classical formulation" (an interpretative history); 3. "Challenges and contributions of modern consciousness" (the so-called Enlightenment is usually seen as a watershed); 4. "Issues and Proposals." A bibliography is appended to each chapter.

The general tone of the book is "liberal Protestant" (with apologies particularly to Fr. David Burrell, who contributes a graceful essay on spirituality); but the result is not as reductionistic as it might be. Apart perhaps from the epilogue by Sallie McFague, the most critical chapter is that on "Scripture and Tradition," which describes "the collapse of the house of authority" and proposes to see Scripture and Tradition emphatically *not* as instances of authority, but as "vehicles of ecclesial process." The

vagueness of this notion is confirmed by the weakness of the chapter on "The Church," which comes alive only in the fleeting page on the black church. Remaining otherwise highly abstract, the chapter admits that its view "needs to be tested against the actual situation in which the church finds itself during the final decades of the twentieth century, namely the quest for reunion of the churches in an increasingly pluralistic, non-Western world"; but no existing church is there described or even named. If all the contributors hold the view of Scripture and the Church represented in these two chapters, it is remarkable that so many of them remain as close as they do to a recognizably Christian faith. It would be yet again the case of a liberal Protestantism parasitic upon a book and an institution which it criticizes to excess while yet continuing to draw sustenance from them.

In fact, however, the contributors vary considerably in the degree of sympathy they show for the classical positions they expound. If Farley and Hodgson, on Scripture and Tradition, can write that "there is a sense in which giving a historical account of the classical criteriology *as we have done* [my italics] is its own critique," others are much more sensitive to the achievements and strengths of classic formulations and developments: I am thinking notably of L. Gilkey on "God" (though I am not sure about his tantalizing final remark regarding "a close encounter with the nothingness of Buddhism"), R. R. Williams on "Sin and Evil" (even Augustine is admired, though needing supplementation from Irenaeus and Schleiermacher), and above all W. Lowe on "Christ and Salvation." (For my money, Walter Lowe's is the outstanding piece in the book, both for its sympathetic and perceptive history and for its constructive proposal of a worshipful and trinitarian kind). The authors differ, too, concerning the strength of the challenge which they see the Enlightenment and Modernity bringing to scriptural and traditional positions—and concerning their willingness to counter-critique the Enlightenment and Modernity.

All this is to say that the authors have not worked out an agreed position on what is perhaps the underlying theme of the whole book: namely, continuity and discontinuity, or Christian identity in relation to what may be called in epistemology "paradigm shift."

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***The Religious Right and Christian Faith*  
by Gabriel Fackre (Eerdmans, 1982 126 pp., \$8.95). Reviewed by Hal Miller, Ph.D. candidate, Boston College.**

In the spate of recent books on the emergence of such groups as the Moral Majority, Gabriel Fackre's is unique, for *The Religious Right and Christian Faith* analyzes the phenomenon theologically. Although several authors have critiqued the movement ethically or politically, no one has tried to peer behind its issues and tactics to understand the theological substructure which gives it life. Fackre takes up this task, using morals and politics as pointers to deeper convictions about God, humanity and the world.

Two preliminary chapters locate the religious right (especially Moral Majority, Inc., and the more amorphous "electronic church") politically and historically. How did such a movement arise from the most apolitical wing of the church? How does it relate to other recent social movements? What is the "secular humanism" which it seeks to fight? After this prefatory discussion, Fackre begins his theological analysis, devoting one chapter to each major doctrinal cluster of Christian faith. He is concerned to make his analysis eminently fair, so each chapter has both a "Yes" and a "No" section in response.

He finds points where the religious right has been

unjustly maligned. They are commonly criticized, for example, as violators of the separation between church and state. In reality, all they violate is the idiosyncratic ACLU definition of that separation, which cannot abide *any* religiously self-conscious politics. The religious right justifiably attacks this definition as both historically naive and morally self-serving.

Though the good points of the religious right are not to be underplayed, several consistent problems emerge as Fackre's analysis continues. To make these problems clear, he distinguishes between the movement's "explicit" theology and its "functional" theology. Explicitly, Moral Majority and the others are often impeccably orthodox; they answer all the right catechetical questions in all the right ways. Functionally, however, they leave something to be desired. Their orthodox confession does not impell their action; rather, an implicit heterodoxy functions as the motive force for their political stances. Fackre identifies a thread of nearly Manichean dualism in their theology, one which pits the forces of good against the forces of evil, emphasizes the holiness of God at the expense of God's love, wallows in suspicions that the material order itself is evil, and paints apocalyptic "us versus them" scenarios for all kinds of political situations.

Their heterodox functional theology, Fackre insists, comes not from true Christian insight but from the religious right's own covert cultural captivity. For all their condemnation of "secular humanism," they themselves have fallen victim to a "secular humanism of the right." They have failed to realize that "secular humanism" might appear in various forms; and in fighting tooth and nail against one particular incarnation, they have fallen into a trap set by another.

This analysis comes out most clearly in Fackre's critique of the religious right's ideal of power. Far from embodying the Christian insight that the greatest should be as the youngest (Lk. 22:24-27) and that power is to be found only in what the world identifies as weakness (1 Cor. 1:25-31, 2 Cor. 12:8-10), the right's "mighty man" ideology betrays biblical truth for the sake of political expediency and administrative efficiency.

Though it is difficult to give a theological critique of a movement which claims not to be Christian but to be merely "moral," Fackre's insistence that a seriously defective theology underlies Moral Majority's political agenda brings a helpful perspective on an ambiguous movement. Whatever the future of that movement, *The Religious Right and Christian Faith* can be of great help in purifying our Christian political perception. Unless such perceptions are grounded in good theology, they can only bring political tragedy.

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***Metaphorical Theology: Models of God in Religious Language***

**by Sallie McFague (Fortress, 1982, 240 pp., \$11.95 pb.). Reviewed by Elouise Renich Fraser, doctoral candidate in Theology, Vanderbilt University.**

This is a book to be reckoned with. Sallie McFague, Professor of Theology at Vanderbilt University, writes from a self-consciously post-Enlightenment, Protestant, and feminist perspective. Her lucid, straightforward style belies the complexity and challenge of the issues which lie above and beneath the surface of her discussion.

On the surface, the book addresses two problems: how primary religious language moves toward secondary theological language, and how this move can be accomplished without falling into idolatry (taking our language about God literally) or irrelevance (finding this language meaningless). McFague suggests that both issues can be addressed

by understanding religious and theological language in terms of metaphors and models (dominant metaphors). She offers "metaphorical" thinking or theology as an alternative to symbolic (classic) sacramentalism which sees the world in harmony with and permeated by divine power and love. McFague argues for the appropriateness of this form of theology by appeal to the parables of the Kingdom (as extended metaphors) and to Jesus as a parable (or metaphor) of God. Its appropriateness is also tied to seeing metaphorical thinking itself as the basis for all human thought and language. Thus our religious and theological language about the relation between God and the world takes on both the positive and negative characteristics of metaphors: it is open-ended, tentative, indirect, tensive, iconoclastic, and ultimately transformative. In a word, it retains both the "is" and the "is not" of metaphors.

In the final chapter, McFague uses the model of God as father as a test case for metaphorical theology. Can this model, wrongly absolutized by some and found increasingly irrelevant by others, be revitalized so that its valid insight is identified and retained, and the dangers associated with exclusive or near-exclusive reliance on this model are avoided? McFague contributes to the discussion by briefly exploring the possibilities of a model of God as friend. But, as she admits, the verdict is still out. Beneath the surface of the feminist critique of this pervasive model lies a complex web of related and potentially revolutionary issues, many of them already operative as presuppositions throughout the essay.

One of the most outstanding features of the book is McFague's survey of the use of models in science in order to show that even here metaphorical thinking is important, and in order to gain insight into the use of models in theology. Other points worth noting are her more than token use of female scholarship throughout the study and her incisive critique of feminist theology, stated briefly in the last chapter, but already embodied in and given credibility by the very nature of the entire essay.

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***Biblical Inspiration***

**by I. Howard Marshall (Eerdmans, 1983, 125 pp., \$4.95). Reviewed by Gary M. Burge, Assistant Professor of Bible and Religion, King College, Bristol, Tennessee.**

Within evangelical circles today there seems to be no end to the production of books about biblical inspiration and authority. This present contribution stands out, however, for a variety of reasons. Marshall, a professor of New Testament in Aberdeen, Scotland, discusses the question of biblical inspiration with refreshing clarity and conciseness (for which he is well known) while addressing important American developments as an overseas observer (e.g. the Chicago Declaration). This means that one does not read a rehearsal of so much recent polemic. Marshall sizes up the options in the inerrancy debate, launches serious and effective criticisms, and proposes a substantial evangelical alternative. If one has not yet tackled this crucial issue for oneself, this volume is undoubtedly an excellent place to begin.

Marshall opens his discussion with a study of how the Bible views itself. He is cautious in his approach and admits that while the Bible exhibits a general consciousness of divine authority, this tendency still should not be pressed too far. For instance, NT references to Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16) may really refer to the OT alone. And it is difficult to know just how the NT writers viewed their own work. It is true that Second Peter places Paul's writings alongside "the other scriptures," but does the NT bear witness to a thoroughgoing view of special revelation?

Of great help is Marshall's well-organized and



concise outline in the next chapter of the various views of inspiration. He looks with equal disdain at extreme liberal options, at the views of Barth, and at strict dictation theories. In the end, he affirms a "classical conservative" position (with Packer, Warfield, and Pinnock) which sees inspiration at work not only in the lives of the biblical authors but in the words they penned. Marshall takes pains, however, to stress that this inspiration results in a Bible that is both divine *and* human. The literary and historical processes must be appreciated. He favors Packer's description of "the concursive action" of the Spirit: God is at work both through the ordinary processes of history as well as in imposing his own will on that history in providence. Hence the Bible bears the stamp of human creativity and contribution as well as God's providential direction.

If, however, God is involved with the *words* of Scripture, what is the result of this activity? Marshall's third chapter, at the heart of his book, is his longest and will clearly be the center of evangelical interest. Marshall wants to shift the focus of the inerrancy debate from the notion of "truth," as defended by such documents as the Chicago Declaration, to the adequacy of the Bible to do what God intends it to do. To say that the Bible is "entirely true" may not be effective language in representing the nature of the Bible itself or what God intends the Bible to be. *True in what sense?* Many biblical passages reflect statements that cannot be evaluated as "true" or "false." Further, some texts require us to ask, "true for whom?" Legislation in Deuteronomy, while true for Israel in one era, is clearly not "true" for us today in that it is no longer valid. "Truth" therefore is a complex notion.

Even in historical contexts where factuality is at issue and the meaning seems clearest, Marshall wonders if the required precision of this "truth" is dependent on the cultural context. That is to say, did the NT writers have a view of historical precision that is different from ours? To illustrate, Marshall draws in phenomena which in most quarters would be deemed inaccuracies: historical approximations (Matthew 9:18), imprecisions and historical errors (in his judgment, Acts 5:33-39). He chastises defenders of inerrancy for not facing these problems squarely: "The flaw in the argument for inerrancy here is that a particular view of the nature of scripture is being assumed." In his estimate, the approach should be *inductive*. The varied phenomena of Scripture (honestly studied) should determine our doctrine of Scripture. Marshall remarks: "Now when we bear in mind that the theory of biblical inerrancy collapses totally if *only one* factual error is proved to exist, and when we further remember that many people find almost innumerable possibilities of factual error in the Bible, it is not surprising that they conclude that the theory of inerrancy involves too many unlikelihoods, and that therefore the probabilities are against it." Marshall feels the weight of these problems. "Whether or not the Bible, as originally written, is free from error, the subsequent transmission and understanding of it is not free from error." Therefore for him evangelicals must grapple with the text *as we have it* and not find the minor inadequacies there to be insuperable barriers to full biblical authority. In other words, the Bible may accomplish God's purposes as it is (thus being "entirely trustworthy" in all it intends) while not meeting our modern expectations of inerrancy.

Many evangelicals will take exception with this result. Marshall is a British evangelical scholar in the tradition of F. F. Bruce who hopes to cut a path between a strict inerrantist view and less than conservative positions. He wants to be honest about the nature of the text. Yet he still remains profoundly conservative in the larger spectrum. He shies away from the word "inerrant" and prefers terms like "infallible" and "entirely trustworthy." That is, Scripture is completely reliable in all that it intends to accomplish—and it is a matter of debate whether this

intention includes matters of twentieth-century historical precision and scientific detail.

Is Marshall's position a "slippery slope" which leads away from other fundamental doctrines? If this domino falls, will the entire set collapse? He argues against this and suggests that biblical doctrines are inter-related much like separate links in a piece of chain mail, with all doctrines securely fastened to the others and strengthening the whole. Besides, he comments, belief in biblical inerrancy has never been a *guarantee* of orthodoxy in other doctrinal areas. This is an accurate and interesting insight.

Marshall's other contributions in this volume will all generously repay close study. He gives attention to the Bible and higher criticism, problems of interpretation, and the necessary application of biblical authority in our lives. But this book's pre-eminent value will be its fair and irenic stand for a position outside of strict inerrancy. The problems he identifies are acute, the questions he poses are penetrating, and the option he offers has much that is appealing.

### ***A Survey of Recent Christian Ethics***

by Edward LeRoy Long, Jr. (Oxford University Press, 1982, 221 pp., \$13.95). Reviewed by David W. Gill, Associate Professor of Christian Ethics, New College Berkeley.

Edward LeRoy Long, Jr., Professor of Christian Ethics at Drew University, has done a marvelous job of surveying the major thinkers, books and developments in Christian ethics over the past fifteen years. In his latest book, Long provides a sequel and update to his 1967 *A Survey of Christian Ethics* (also Oxford University Press). In both volumes Christian ethicists are located and discussed in relation to two general categories: (1) the formulation of the ethical norm and (2) the implementation of ethical decisions.

Ethicists whose work aims primarily at the formulation of norms are further subdivided into (a) those who address the problem of reason and moral deliberation (Sellers, Dyck, Macquarrie, Wogaman, Beauchamp and Childress, Gustafson, and Ward are the figures discussed in the new book), (b) those who try to identify prescriptive laws and rules (Berman, Muelder, Haring, Curran, Ramsey, Rudnick, Geisler, Erickson) and (c) those who develop a more relational understanding of ethical guidance (Ellul, Thielicke, Logstrup, R. M. Adams).

Ethicists whose work is primarily concerned with the problem of the implementation of ethical decisions are subdivided into (a) those who focus on structures and institutions of justice and order (Thielicke, Stackhouse, J. L. Adams, C. F. H. Henry), (b) those who focus on the political, operational exercise of power (Mouw, Lehmann, P. B. Henry, Metz, Moltmann, Soelle), and (c) those who propose intentional alternatives to institutions and politics (Ellul, Stringfellow, Yoder, Loomer, Campbell).

In *A Survey of Recent Christian Ethics*, Long adds two additional sections in which to locate new trends in Christian ethics. The first of these concerns moral agency. Here he reviews work being done on virtue and character formation (Hauerwas, Gustafson, Guardini, *et al.*), conscience (E. Mount, C. Nelson, D. Miller, Menninger, D. Browning), and moral development (J. Nelson, D. Maguire). In the final section Long describes three new arenas of ethical discussion: (a) vocational and policy-making ethics (bio-medical, business, legal, and technological), (b) liberation theology (black, feminist, and Latin American), and (c) comparative religious ethics (Smurl, Little and Twiss, Green).

While specialists will no doubt criticize one or another of Long's specific statements or applications of his typology, it is difficult to imagine how a work

of this type could have been done better. Long gives enough substance in his presentation of each figure to be fair; these are not just one or two-sentence thumbnail sketches! While few individuals fit neatly into any category, Long is generally on target and tries hard to point out the nuances and variations from one thinker to another. Long avoids much editorializing on the figures he discusses—and I am sure it was difficult to resist at times. He contents himself with presenting a fair portrayal of each figure and promises that his own opinions and proposals will come in a later volume.

Anyone who has ever written dictionary or survey-type articles knows how difficult and thankless a task it can be. Long has done a masterful job, and his book should be read not only by Christian ethicists but also by all seminary students and faculty, pastors and lay leaders who wish to get a handle on developments in Christian ethics. *A Survey of Recent Christian Ethics* is especially valuable for its attention to the rise, over the past fifteen years, of evangelical ethics, professional ethics, liberation theology, and comparative religious ethics.

***The Christian Life: Church Dogmatics, IV/4***  
by Karl Barth, translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Eerdmans, 1981, 310 pp., \$17.95).  
Reviewed by Douglas M. Pierce, student,  
University of Dubuque Theological Seminary.

Karl Barth's *Church Dogmatics* were to consist of five volumes. Only three were entirely completed, however. Volume V, which would have taken up the doctrine of redemption, was never written. Volume IV, wrestling with the doctrine of reconciliation, was only partially finished. The latter, in its incomplete form, has been published in two separate works. The first, published in 1967, carried the title *Baptism as the Foundation of the Christian Life*. It appeared as §75 in Barth's system of ordering. The second, published posthumously in 1981 as *The Christian Life*, contains §74-78, excluding §75. Both published works have been estimated to form less than one-half of what was to be *Church Dogmatics IV/4*.

To put into perspective the "fragments" which comprise *The Christian Life*, it is helpful to understand Barth's "game plan," though he did not live to fulfill it. He begins by introducing ethics as the "task" of the doctrine of reconciliation (§74). He follows with the doctrine of baptism (§75) which is succeeded by a "partial" exposition of the Lord's Prayer (§76-78). He planned to conclude with a discussion of the Lord's Supper.

Such ordering of this material is in itself significant, for it reveals Barth's "mature" understanding of the contours of the Christian life. These contours include (1) baptism as the foundation of the Christian life, (2) the Lord's Prayer as a "model" of the proper human response to God's grace made in obedience, and (3) the Lord's Supper as an integral part of God's continual renewal or sustaining of the Christian life. Barth desired to bring these three aspects together under the guiding concept of "calling upon God," which he sought to posit as the primary Christian "imperative."

It should be noted that included in *The Christian Life* is the first version of the conclusion of paragraph §74. This is important, for it clearly shows how Barth "corrected himself" in the midst of his work. His original idea was to construct his ethics of reconciliation upon the structure of "faithfulness." He soon discarded this, as well as other more "traditional" concepts, finding "invocation" to be a more appropriate way to present the relationship of the divine commands to human obedience.

Using the Lord's Prayer as his "model," then, and

"invocation," as the "imperative," *The Christian Life* is a seasoned theologian's contribution to our persistent question as Christians—"how should we then live?" Though his answer comes by way of only two of the petitions of our Lord's Prayer (Barth's death prevented him from moving beyond the second petition, "thy kingdom come"), his work nevertheless offers a wealth of profound insights and a comprehensive view of the Christian life that is both timely and awe-inspiring. Anyone who thoughtfully considers Barth's exposition will certainly benefit from its wide-ranging implications.

How should we then live? Barth's answer in *The Christian Life* is that we should live as "children" of a "gracious God" who commands his children to "call upon him" unceasingly and confidently. Moreover, as his children our growing desire will be that he (who alone is capable and worthy) will "hallow" his name on earth as it is in heaven. Thereby we affirm that his "kingdom" (seen in its Christocentric state of "already" and "not yet") issues in the proper "ordering" of human life, an ordering which includes the guarantee of human rights, freedom and peace. This ordering results when people in obedient fellowship with God allow this fellowship to carry over in their relationships with one another. All of this is opposed to the "disorder" which is a manifestation of the "lordless powers." They have been "de-demonized" through the work of Christ, but are nevertheless a present reality inhibiting God's rightful ordering of human life. As Christians who are "zealous" for God and God's rule, we "move" by his grace toward that for which we pray. All of this is made possible through the fellowship and power of the Holy Spirit, who is God's "agent" in reconciliation.

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***Evangelism: Doing Justice and Preaching Grace***

by Harvie M. Conn (Zondervan, 1982, 112 pp., \$5.95).

***Evangelization and Justice: New Insights for Christian Ministry***

by John Walsh (Orbis, 1982, 120 pp., \$5.95).

Reviewed by David Lowes Watson, Assistant Professor of Evangelism, Perkins School of Theology.

These are both very useful monographs, each imparting a distinctive concept of evangelism meaningful to concerned clergy and laity alike. Harvie Conn's approach is directly evangelical, arguing from Scripture that evangelism as *kerygma*, *koinonia*, *diakonia* and *leiturgia* must be complemented by *dikaioma*, "the righteous deed," if it is to be authentic and believable. Christians must hunger and thirst after righteousness (Mat. 5:6), and their faith must work by love (James 2:14-17, 24; 1 John 2:29, 3:10, 4:7-8). The outcasts of the world are "tired of gospel used-car salesmen who sell vehicles with three pistons missing."

Conn shows convincingly that the church ("the only organization in the world that exists for the sake of its non-members") must have compassion for the world rather than mere sympathy. This compassion comes primarily from perceiving the "publicans" of the world to be not only sinners, but also those sinned against. To be equipped for this task, Christians must pursue a covenant spirituality, which stresses both the new relationship with God and the obligation to join with the work of the Holy Spirit in the world. Evangelism is thus restored to its proper context of involvement with God's history, and prayer becomes the "eschatological link" with the power of Christ's New Age. The book is peppered with pithy one-liners, and reinforced with a number of poignant illustrations which testify to Conn's first-hand experience of this work.

John Walsh's book is a gem. It requires close reading, not because it is a difficult text, but because it

plumbs the depths of the Christian consciousness with a language so simple that the casual reader may well miss the majesty of its central theme.

It begins with a summary of James W. Fowler's *Stages of Faith*—an important introduction, incidentally, for anyone not acquainted with this seminal work. Instead of restricting the theme to personal faith development, however, Walsh extends Fowler's concepts to human culture. He presents a view of humankind in the process of making a "quantum leap" from an innate tribalism, in which systemic change is unthinkable, to a cultural identity which is freed from structural impediments for an evolution to justice and peace. Evangelism is the catalyst for this "quantum leap," bringing people to a new consciousness and enabling them to become co-seekers for the Kingdom, the fulfillment of which will be the Parousia of Christ's new universe.

This is an exciting statement of contemporary Roman Catholic perspectives on evangelization, and it is supplemented by a very helpful overview of recent papal encyclicals and episcopal statements on the subject. Protestant readers, and evangelicals in particular, may wish to complement its basic arguments with a more radical doctrine of human sin and justification by faith; but they should read it nonetheless—and carefully. If there is a blind spot in Protestant evangelism today, it is the inability of evangelicalism to grasp the grandeur of Paul's cosmic vision in Romans 8. Our justification lies not only in what Christ has done, but in what the Spirit of Christ is still doing in the world. Our salvation continues to unfold, and if we restrict it to the parochialism of personal response, we miss the scriptural promise altogether. With brilliant illumination, Walsh reminds us that when we evangelize, we come to the threshold of the universe. We may know its Lord personally—but that is no reason not to have a proper sense of occasion.

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***Embodiment: An Approach to Sexuality and Christian Theology***

by James B. Nelson (Augsburg, 1979, 302 pp., \$5.95). Reviewed by Lewis B. Smedes, Professor of Theology and Ethics, Fuller Theological Seminary.

Sexual conservatism these days is seen as a sign either of sated cynicism or envious old age; nevertheless, I have been thinking that the case against Augustine is not open and shut. I am referring to his suspicion that while sex itself was included in God's good design for human living, passion is the invention of the devil, snuck into human experience in the backwash of sin. In the garden, he believed, sexual intercourse would have had the same relieving effect as the emptying of one's bladder, hardly more ecstatic. Augustine's vision of Eden may not arouse today's sexually fine-tuned Christians to a new zeal for regaining paradise, but I still think we should consider it. My hunch—nothing more, though, than a hunch—is that passion has, in our crazy world, caused people as much frustration, pain, and sheer misery as pleasure or happiness. Sinless sex, in Augustine's portrait, may not have been as voluptuously promising of mind-blowing joy—a promise not that often fulfilled anyway—but it would have left love more serene and life less turbulent.

Well, now comes James B. Nelson with his big book on sexual theology to tell us that Augustine was wrong, not on grounds of comparative pleasures, but on grounds of anthropology. We are embodied to the core of our being—not angels driving automobiles around, not spirits temporarily occupying flesh, but beings totally and essentially embodied. And since passion is half psychic and half neurological, more or less, we are passionate from the start. Passion moves us toward one another in sexual complementarity to find unity in

soul through unity in passion. Very nice; I am reassured.

Nelson's book is a theology of sexuality, not an ethics of sexual behavior. It is a brilliant piece of theological journalism. He listens to many people, and reports on almost everyone he heard. As a result, he encumbers us with what is, for my taste, a rather unmanageable bundle of opinions. I like a little more distillation, but, as I say, it is a matter of taste. The more important observation is that he combs thorough the psychological and the biological literature as well as the theological. He uses all three to help us understand why people do the sorts of things they do—not the why of final, but of material cause. That is, he lets us in on what drives people to want to have and what enables them to find pleasure in oral sex, anal sex, masochistic sex, and what have you. Very illuminating. I do not mean that Nelson always knows why, but he offers a lot for the sympathetic imagination to muse over.

Sexuality, in the long run, is for personal union. Not for kids—having them I mean. So the morality of sex is judged mainly by its bearing on union. But the contribution sex makes is not a mysterious creation of the union; you do not become one flesh by having sex. The contribution is mostly a psychic enrichment of the union two people have already created by their personal fidelity as persons. The result is that fidelity is the main thing; sexual monogamy is not the main thing. The mystique of sexual intercourse is, I should think, melted away some here.

Take homosexuality as another instance. Nelson will not let us make moral judgments about homosexual love purely on the basis of a notion of what sorts of genitals people must have in order to have licit sexual experience together. Anyone who makes a negative judgment concerning homosexual people solely on the basis of a negative judgment on their specifically genital activities has not learned to live in grace. Amen! I agree.

Maybe the most helpfully novel part of this fine book is its treatment of sex for the handicapped among us. I know that it took me an insufferably long time to gain empathy for the problems and potential of sexual living for physically handicapped folk. How stupidly lazy our imaginations are that we should not recognize and rejoice in, as well as encourage and help satisfy the sexual needs of people for whom courtship can never happen on a dance floor or a jogging track.

In any case, besides teaching me things I never knew before (e.g., did you know that the graham cracker was invented as a sexual depressant?), Nelson's book helped restore my faith in the divine gift of passion ("I believe, help my unbelief"). I could argue, and do, with some points made here and there on the moral side of sex; but carping on them here would spoil the effect of saying that the book is rich in wisdom and sympathy, is theologically sound and is engagingly written. If it helps anyone recapture the gratitude for being a body, I shall be glad. And, as Nelson says, "insofar as that happens . . . it will be an endless journey. But God has promised to make better lovers of us all."

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***Christian-Marxist Dialogue in Eastern Europe***

by Paul Mojzes (Augsburg, 1981, 336 pp., \$14.50). Reviewed by Ruy Costa, Ph.D. student in Social Ethics, Boston University.

Paul Mojzes does not claim to be unbiased about Marxism. He was born of Christian parents in Yugoslavia and affirms to be Christian in his primary identity. In his Preface he writes: "I am not a Marxist, nor am I especially attracted by Marxism." Yet, he believes that "Marxism has some useful insights and challenges for Christians," and vice-versa.

Mojzes suggests a number of reasons for the cur-

rent Christian-Marxist dialogue, the first being the emergence in Eastern Europe of new Marxist postures. In this context he distinguishes between two main types of Marxism: the dogmatic Marxist-Leninist kind (also known as *diamat*—dialectical materialism) and the humanist Marxism of the younger Marx. This is one of the most important distinctions in the book, because through his whole work Mojzes is implying that it is the common humanism of both the Christian and Marxist systems which can facilitate the dialogue.

The author offers a provisional definition of "dialogue." Among many other things, he proposes that dialogue should be "a dialectical engagement rather than a path to convergence." Both Christians and Marxists of the Eastern European "dogmatic" type, as well as those who see themselves as Christian Marxists (as do many of the Protestant majority in East Germany) may have problems with Mojzes' advocacy of this kind of "dialogue." By emphasizing the engagement of *two distinct parties*, "without removing essential differences between them," such a definition excludes a priori the possibilities of conversion and/or convergence.

In chapters two and three Mojzes analyzes the history of the dialogue. In this section he utilizes six ideal types: (1) Total Absence of Dialogue, (2) Avoidance of Dialogue, (3) The Practice of Dialogue Despite Official Disclaimers, (4) Carefully Managed Dialogue in Order to Facilitate Cooperation, (5) Critical Involvement in Dialogue, (6) Dialogical Engagement in Freedom. The author affirms that nearly all countries in Eastern Europe went through phases one and two. The only one currently remaining in type one is Albania, which unlike the others has made the obliteration of churches and anti-religious propaganda its permanent post-revolutionary policy. Type six is Mojzes' most idealistic. He does not see such dialogue occurring anywhere presently. On the other hand, type five is found in Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and in the documentation of the Paulus Gesellschaft International Congresses. Type five includes Christians and Marxists departing from past mutual demonizations and discovering real values in each other. For example, Mojzes summarizes the Dominican T. Veres "Marxist atheism denies a different God, presumably the God of the philosophers, not the God revealed to Christians." The largest sub-section of these two chapters concerns Poland (type four), where the formal dialogue is so extensive and well documented.

In chapters five and six Mojzes focuses on the "Changing Marxist Views on Religion and Christianity" and the "Changing Christian Perceptions of Socialism and Marxism." On the Marxist side we find four novel variants of the Marxist theory of religion. These range from the view that religion is a "false consciousness" to the view that "religion in and of itself is neither good nor bad" and that, when it contributes to social justice, Marxists should cooperate with it. On the Christian side, we find five perceptions ranging from "all-out rejection of Socialism and Marxism" to a new "synthesis of Marxism and Christianity." The first type was more characteristic of the first years after the establishment of socialism and is presently fostered by the *emigre* press (e.g. R. Wurmbrand and H. Popov). The synthesis of "Christianity and Marxism usually means the affirmation of a belief in God and other Christian doctrines . . . and the acceptance of the Marxist socioeconomic and related theories and practical strategies."

Mojzes' work is a priceless repository of data. But it is more than this. It is a statement in the dialogue itself. Professor Charles West of Princeton said that Mojzes' linguistic resources and involvement in the dialogue enabled him to write a book "which almost no one else could have written." With the richness of his reporting and documentation, Mojzes brings the dialogue to the West. His book may cause us to wonder whether we should not start thinking

about dialogue too. At least he gives us resources for needed dialogue with Eastern European Christians!

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### ***The Bible in America: Essays in Cultural History***

**edited by Nathan O. Hatch and Mark A. Noll (Oxford University Press, 1982, 201 pp., \$6.95). Reviewed by George W. Harper, student, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.**

This delightful volume consists of eight essays developing the complementary themes of the centrality of the Bible in the weaving of the American social fabric and the diverse and even contradictory ends which Scripture has been made to serve by various strands within that fabric.

One of the finest essays is George Marsden's contribution on the role played by Baconian epistemology in the mid-nineteenth-century clash of orthodoxy with the new "higher criticism." Marsden's notes are as rewarding as the body of his text, containing, among other things, a rebuttal of Rogers and McKim's insistence, following Sandeen, that a systematic defense of inerrancy based on an appeal to the autographs was essentially the creation of Princeton theologians after 1850. Also notable is Nathan Hatch's treatment of the problems raised by private interpretation in Jacksonian America: interestingly, he finds antecedents for the "Bible-only" frontier sects in the liberal Christianity of New England. Mark Noll's exploration of the role which nationalist OT typology played in the development of rationales for slavery in antebellum America is unsettling.

The weakest article is Harry Stout's attempt to link the New England Puritan establishment commitment to covenant theology with the supplanting of the Geneva Bible by the Authorized Version. He presents little direct evidence to buttress his assertion and parenthetically reveals that he has derived most of his understanding of covenant theology from Perry Miller. Too much of his argument is based on the simple-minded idea that differences of emphasis between Calvin and his heirs are best described in terms of opposition rather than development. (For a refutation of this too-common misunderstanding, see Paul Helm's recent *Calvin and the Calvinists*).

In a time when the Bible is cited to justify pacifism and greater defense appropriations, Christian socialism and free-market capitalism, the problems addressed by this volume in various historical contexts are still very much with us. This book commends itself to all who are interested in exploring the hermeneutical issues underlying many of the difficulties now confronting evangelicalism.

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### ***Preserving the Person: A Look at the Human Sciences***

**by C. Stephen Evans (Baker, 1982, 180 pp., \$5.95). Reviewed by H. Newton Malony, Graduate School of Psychology, Fuller Theological Seminary.**

This reprint, originally published in 1977, is by a popular professor of philosophy at Wheaton College. The volume is a clearly-presented treatise on the understanding of humans from the perspectives of contemporary social science, coupled with a critique from the viewpoint of Christian faith. Evans, a precise yet colorful writer, is a knowledgeable philosopher of science and the humanities. His critique and thesis are well argued. The resulting volume is of import to all social and behavioral scientists, whether pure or applied.

Evans quite clearly recognizes that the issue of the last five hundred years in Western thought has

been the question of the status of human beings—in other words, the "person." In all interactions with science during these centuries, the question posed by both religion and the liberal arts has been, "what does this mean for our understanding of men and women?" As science has attempted to extend its influence and become exhaustive in its interpretations, so have religionists and others attempted to reinterpret or maintain their sense of the dignity and worth of the individual. Evans portrays this dialogue quite poignantly in his analysis of the dualistic legacy of Descartes. For those who thought the mind/body problem dull or unimportant, Evans' account will be enlightening.

Having set the stage for addressing the central problem of personhood in the age of science, Evans divides the rest of the volume into four main sections. He surveys the loss of the person in psychoanalysis, behaviorism and sociology, considers why this loss is important, describes attempted responses, and offers a Christian critique and reinterpretation of these efforts.

I found Evans' book to be significantly more convincing and foundational than several recent attempts by Christian psychologists to integrate their discipline with Christian thinking. Perhaps this is because the psychologists, always thinking about the clinical situations in which these issues become concrete, are less astute about their underlying assumptions. Although Evans is a philosopher with little or no experience in counseling, his presentation of Christian options for recovering the person (both theoretically and practically) are masterful and extremely suggestive. He builds his argument around the concept of the person as agent and concludes that this is an operational understanding of the meaning of the image of God in persons. The doctrines of creation, sin and redemption are discussed in relationship to several possible options for dealing with scientific reductionism. He is convinced that the contribution of Christian theism to human self-understanding is an almost essential corrective to secular alternatives.

This volume should be valuable for a wide audience—from undergraduate students to practicing social/behavioral scientists. I was almost fully persuaded by Evans' arguments and will be provoked to new insights both in and out of the consulting room because of his treatise.

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### ***America: Religions and Religion***

**by Catherine L. Albanese (Wadsworth, 1981, 411 pp., \$13.95). Reviewed by John G. Stackhouse, Jr., doctoral student in modern church history, University of Chicago Divinity School.**

This book takes a giant step off the well-trodden path of American religious historiography. The familiar story of American religion—Puritanism at the center and everything else only now and then coming into view on the periphery—has been told for more than a century, by Robert Baird (1843) to Sydney Ahlstrom (1972). Catherine Albanese, who studied both church history and the history of religions at the University of Chicago Divinity School, here attempts to blaze a new trail by combining the perspectives of the two disciplines.

This path is actually a multi-lane highway, with a variety of American *religions* moving along their own routes. Albanese discusses Native American religions, Judaism, Roman Catholicism, Afro-American religion, Eastern Religions, and New, Occult, and regional Religions, as well as Protestantism. In Part One, Albanese fences off these religions from each other into separate chapters. In Part Two, she takes us up in a helicopter from which we can see the general direction of the highway which all these religions follow. This is what Albanese calls American *religion*, whose dimensions she describes as

Public Protestantism, Civil Religion and Cultural Religion. She concludes that each constituent "lane" is really just a merged route which originated somewhere else (Europe, Asia). American culture has shaped all these religions into one religious highway of a certain construction and direction (e.g., patriotism, millennialism, individualism), but it has not integrated them into one undivided road on the one hand, nor has it produced an indigent alternative to these various lanes on the other.

This book has two halves which do not make a whole. It describes parts (religions) and the unity they constitute (religion), but it does not describe the relationships between the parts and the process by which they came to be a unity, which are fundamental historical issues. Albanese's work nonetheless provokes a critical appraisal of the American religious historical "canon" and encourages scholars to seek a better way of writing America's religious history that will take pluralism fully into account. This book marks a turning point in the discipline of American church history and deserves a wide reading.

## BOOK COMMENTS

***The Quest for the Historical Israel***  
by George W. Ramsey (John Knox, 1981, 208 pp., \$12.50).

The last decade has brought significant new developments in the study of the history of Israel, especially prior to the monarchy; this book attempts to survey these developments. After a chapter explaining how the historian works, four chapters are devoted to special problems: The Patriarchal Period, Exodus and Covenant, Settlement in Canaan, and Literary Study and its relation to External Evidence. The final chapter explores the relation between history and faith. Here Ramsey devotes nine pages to a critique of Montgomery, Pinnock, and Schaeffer (referred to as Fundamentalists!) and their "historical verification" approach. After evaluating other approaches he gives (far too briefly) his own position that the Bible should be read as story, not history.

This book is a valuable survey of the difficulties in reconstructing the early periods of Israelite history. On the whole various approaches are presented accurately and fairly. However, there is too little emphasis on the author's own reconstructions, possible resolutions of difficulties, or even what new research might be valuable. Theological students will benefit from the explanation of historical research and its application to biblical studies. In some respects this book is similar to *The Old Testament and the Historian* by J. M. Miller, but it goes into greater detail and is confined to the pre-monarchical period. The footnotes (about 40% of the book) and selected annotated bibliography are particularly valuable for those wishing to do additional research.

—James C. Moyer

***The Forms of Old Testament Literature, Vol. XIII: Wisdom Literature***  
by Roland E. Murphy (Eerdmans, 1982, 200 pp., \$12.95).

This first volume of a twenty-four volume series entitled *The Forms of Old Testament Literature* has appeared. In *Wisdom Literature: Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Canticles, Ecclesiastes, Esther*, Roland E. Murphy first discusses each biblical book as a whole with respect to the four categories of structure, genre, setting and intention. Then each book is broken down into its units and each unit is analyzed according to these four categories. It will become clear immediately that so far form critics

have succeeded much better at classifying pericopes than books. There is bibliography for each book and at the end is a glossary of terms.

This is a valuable tool for the student of Scripture. It offers a wealth of information about each pericope. The author, in presenting his findings, interacts with the results of other scholars. This format affords an excellent reference point for further investigation into the passage.

This book inaugurates a series that will become a standard resource for biblical study. Form criticism is a well-established discipline for biblical studies, being pursued by scholars from all traditions and theological perspectives. While it is certainly not the final exegetical method, as the energetic efforts of both redaction critics and structuralists attest, its results clarify passages and offer an excellent foundation for scholars who pursue other critical methods.

The series needs to be high on every student's list of acquisitions. This first volume achieves the objectives of the project and is presented in a very usable format. We expectantly await further volumes.

—John E. Hartley

***Paradise Now and Not Yet: Studies in the Role of the Heavenly Dimension in Paul's Thought with Special Reference to his Eschatology***  
by Andrew Lincoln (SNTSMS 43, Cambridge University Press, 1981, 240 pp., \$34.50).

Pauline eschatology has been a favorite topic since Weiss and Schweitzer. However, the specific aspect of Paul's picture of heaven has not often been covered. This study by Andrew Lincoln (St. John's, Nottingham) ably fills that gap. He posits three formative forces in Paul: his Jewish and Old Testament background, his Damascus road conversion and other visionary experiences, and debates with false teachers. Originally appearing as his 1975 Cambridge Ph.D. dissertation, the volume is primarily a passage by passage discussion of the topic through the Pauline corpus.

For instance, Lincoln sees the heavenly Jerusalem of Gal. 4:21f in a context of realized eschatology in an ecclesiological setting, with Israel's prophetic hope fulfilled in Christ's exaltation and the Church's mission. Contrary to many current exegetes, he takes 2 Cor. 4:16-5:10 to be in continuity with 1 Cor. 15, the difficult circumstances addressed in the second epistle leading to the change. The "enemies of the cross" in Phil. 3:18f he considers to be the Judaizers of 3:2-3 rather than gnostics, and the "worship of angels" in Col. 2:18 to refer to ecstatic experience. In keeping with his thesis throughout, Lincoln argues for a local rather than spiritual interpretation of "the heavenlies" in Ephesians (he accepts Pauline authorship). Although he makes a good argument for this thesis with regard to the two difficult passages, Eph. 3:10 and 6:12, I remain unconvinced and prefer the spiritual interpretation.

All in all, this provides the best study I have seen on this topic. It is must reading for anyone studying Pauline eschatology.

—Grant R. Osborne

***Believing in the Church: The Corporate Nature of Faith.***

**A Report by the Doctrine Commission of the Church of England (Morehouse-Barlow Co., 1982, 310 pp., \$15.95).**

As the title indicates, this is a formal study of faith rather than a description of the content of faith. Some will legitimately suspect that the absence of "praxis" in the subject index means that the book may be safely ignored; indeed this is symptomatic

of a basic imbalance in the collection of essays.

But there are a number of gems which should receive wide circulation: John Drury's study of two English reactions to nineteenth-century German biblical criticism (Bishop Trench, George Eliot); W. H. Vanstone's use of the notion of speech-acts to illuminate our use of the New Testament stories; and Anthony Thiselton's study of "Knowledge, Myth, and Corporate Memory," which concludes with his synthesizing the affirmations, "Here I stand," "There is no salvation outside the Church," and "I must not saw off the branch on which I am sitting."

—Thomas H. McAlpine

***The Bible: Its Authority and Interpretation in the Ecumenical Movement***  
edited by Ellen Flesseman-van Leer (Faith and Order Paper No. 99, WCC, 1980, 82 pp., \$4.95).

This work contains five documents coming out of work sponsored by the WCC, the latter four through the Faith and Order Commission: "Guiding Principles for the Interpretation of the Bible" (Wadham College, Oxford, 1949), "Scripture, Tradition, and Traditions" (Montreal, 1963), "The Significance of the Hermeneutical Problem for the Ecumenical Movement" (Bristol, 1967), "The Authority of the Bible" (Louvain, 1971), and "The Significance of the Old Testament in its Relation to the New" (Loccum, 1977).

These are given an introduction by the editor, which is particularly valuable in highlighting changes since World War II. The first paper spoke confidently about a center and goal of the Bible (Jesus Christ) and about "the biblical position" (singular). Subsequent papers reflect the growing awareness of diversity within Scripture, which for some seems to "undermine the raison d'être of the ecumenical movement" (Bristol, 1967). But the final paper pushes again towards the unity of Scripture.

In light of the recent articles in *TSF Bulletin* about tradition (Pinnock, Dulles, Wells), the Montreal 1963 paper is particularly relevant as a watershed in Protestant discussion of tradition.

In sum, these documents are valuable both as a context for discussions about the Bible among many Christians since World War II, and as a set of reference points by which to question and develop one's own thinking. As context, they neither tell how to sail the boat nor why it should be sailed; but context, if ignored long enough, can render these other issues immaterial."

—Thomas H. McAlpine

***Biblical Authority or Biblical Tyranny? Scripture and the Christian Pilgrimage.***  
by William Countryman (Fortress, 1981, 110 pp., \$5.95).

This book is a series of popular addresses with no documentation, so it leaves the reviewer up in the air as to the author's sources. The tyrants using the Scriptures the wrong way are fundamentalists and conservatives, although none are identified. The first part of the book outlines all the reasons why the fundamentalist version of the Bible is unacceptable, and the second part of the book is Countryman's positive thesis that the Bible is a guide to spiritual pilgrims and not a handbook of resources for dogmatic theology. Even taking into account that the book is based on lectures given to lay people, it is still regrettably superficial. I got the impression that the author had not read any serious treatise on authority (like Martineau or Forsyth). Nor does he seem to recognize that there is another whole crowd of people who would differ radically from him and yet retain the magisterial authority of Scrip-

ture, such as Paul Althaus, Otto Weber, Regin Prenter, Heinrich Vogel, and Thomas Torrance. Finally, if Holy Scripture is only a *vade mecum* (handbook) for spiritual pilgrims, it never would have made the impact it has on Western literature, culture, philosophy, education and jurisprudence.

—Bernard Ramm

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**Epistemology: The Justification of Belief**  
by David L. Wolfe (IVP, 1982, 92 pp., \$3.95).

This little introductory book on epistemology is just excellent. It is clear: in perspective, in argument, in description, and in conclusions reached. It draws on the sort of technical philosophical literature any responsible treatment of these topics must consider, but it does so without losing the reader with too many technical details. It renders the complex comprehensible without losing a firm grip on the issues. It discusses, and dismisses, various historically important and culturally influential conceptions of how one gains knowledge, making clear the attractions and the problems of these conceptions. It makes a good case for another conception of how knowledge is gained—one which has much contemporary support. Within the limits such a volume requires, it is comprehensive; it makes helpful suggestions as to where to go for further reflection. It would be very, very difficult to write a better book, which would still be comprehensible to non-philosophers, on the perennial problem of how one can properly justify one's beliefs.

This book is not on apologetics, but it has more value for one interested in apologetics than a five-foot-shelf of the standard apologetic fare. I commend it highly to those who know, or need to learn, that faith and reason are not related as oil and water.

—Keith E. Yandell

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**Schleiermacher's Early Philosophy of Life: Determinism, Freedom, and Phantasy**  
by Albert L. Blackwell (Scholars Press, 1982, 314 pp., \$39.95).

Albert L. Blackwell, Associate Professor of Religion at Furman University, has written a superb study of Friedrich Schleiermacher's intellectual development from age 20 to 35—from the end of his student days at Halle to his return there as Professor of Theology and Preacher to the University. Although this early period is biographically the more interesting half of Schleiermacher's career, Blackwell's work is the first sustained study in English of this formative period. Blackwell has immersed himself in Schleiermacher's early writings and in the writings of his idealist and romantic contemporaries, most of which are not in English translation, and has made them accessible through extensive quotes and careful analysis.

Blackwell demonstrates persuasively that Schleiermacher's ideas can be rightly appreciated only when they are understood in intimate association with his life. Hence, biographical material is regarded from a philosophical point of view, using determinism, freedom, and phantasy as "clarifying" concepts which provide partial yet undistorted insight into Schleiermacher's early philosophy, life, and times.

Students of Schleiermacher will find intriguing discussions of any number of topics. For example, Blackwell develops the role of phantasy in Schleiermacher's life during his exile from Berlin and in his moral philosophy, where it offers an alternative to Kantian moral law. Other topics include the relation of absolute dependence and freedom, the meaning of race-consciousness, Schleiermacher's purported elitism, his relationships with women, his thoughts on the moral education of children, and his reasons

for defending Schlegel. In addition, the volume has been carefully put together with the reader in mind, with helpful cross references, footnotes, illustrations, several indexes and a bibliography. The price is exorbitant, however, and one might have expected a subject index.

—Elouise Renich Fraser

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**Romantic Idealism and Roman Catholicism: Shelling and the Theologians**  
by Thomas F. O'Meara, O.P. (University of Notre Dame Press, 1982, 241 pp., \$20.00).

O'Meara offers a remarkably vital and graphic account of the intellectual ferment in German Catholic theology during the first half of the nineteenth century. He brings to light vistas long obscured by neoscholastic fogs and opens books denounced and indexed by ill-informed Thomist critics, thus introducing the reader to the ranks of Catholic theologians who labored to join in constructive dialogue with the philosophers of the age who transformed European intellectual life. Building on Kant and Schleiermacher and in critical tension with Hegel, Friederick von Schelling portrayed the active self and the identity of nature and history in a manner which opened connections between modern science, religion and art to express a new vision, will and esthetic delight in Christian tradition.

*Romantic Idealism and Roman Catholicism* chronicles the development of Schelling's thought together with the changing expressions of romantic idealism and the work of the Catholic theologians of the period. Schlegel, Staudenmeier, von Baader, Sailer, Drey, Mohler, Kuhn and Dollinger are among the figures brought into striking relief. Evangelical theologians will be interested in the treatment of pantheism as the Catholic theologians struggle with the idealistic systems. The book provides an agile counterpoint to Gerald McCool's *Catholic Theology in the Nineteenth Century*, which follows the attempt to establish Thomism as the normative standard and describes the eclipse of earlier idealistic thinkers.

—Gerald W. McCulloh

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**Calvin and the Anabaptist Radicals**  
by William Balke, tr. by William J. Heymen (Eerdmans, 1981, 96 pp., \$6.50).

This is an important work in a key area of historical concern. Unfortunately, its deficiencies of execution will probably detract from its potential contribution.

The book's focus is simple: what were Calvin's perspectives and dealings with the Anabaptist movement of his time? Balke divides his book into two parts, a slightly longer section that surveys historically the Genevan reformer's personal and intellectual relations to Anabaptism, and a shorter section that treats Calvin's theological system in its interaction with Anabaptism.

The historical section is meticulous in its treatment of Calvin and the Anabaptists. In thus filling in a context for Calvin's perspectives on Anabaptism, the book advances our understanding of Reformed-Anabaptist relations. Given the generally polemical nature of theological discourse in the Reformed period, Balke establishes that Calvin was sensitive to the varieties of movements in the radical wing of the time. Furthermore, Calvin generally understood the concerns of the Anabaptist proper and attempted to address them at the key points where he believed them wrong. Understanding Calvin and the Anabaptists as "sons of the same family," Balke argues (rightly, it seems) that Calvin's concern for societal and ecclesiastical order and his deep-seated abhorrence of schism in the Body of Christ underlay his differences with the Ana-

baptists over issues of ecclesiology, church discipline, and the relation of church, state, and society.

The disappointments of the book lie in its unimaginative dissertationese. Neither Calvin nor the Anabaptists come alive in Balke's hands. Nonetheless, the work remains valuable in its content for all those interested in going beyond theological stereotyping and understanding the historical background to the current and important dialogue between the Reformed and the Anabaptist traditions.

—Douglas Firth Anderson

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**The Faith of the Church: A Reformed Perspective on its Historical Development**  
by M. Eugene Osterhaven (Eerdmans, 1982, 248 pp., \$11.95).

Gene Osterhaven, Professor of Theology at Western Theological Seminary, has given us an illuminating and provocative introduction to the Reformed faith. Osterhaven does not narrow the word "reformed" to a particular ecclesiastical tradition, but instead understands it as a commitment to the continual reformation of the church in the light of the gospel of free grace to undeserving sinners. It is not surprising that the author includes Augustine, Luther and Kierkegaard in the Reformed tradition of faith.

This book is not a systematic theology as such but an overview of the faith of the church seen in historical perspective. Osterhaven explores the issues which occupied the early church and then proceeds on to the Reformation, finally ending in a discussion of current issues. His treatments of the controversy between Augustine and Pelagius and the later debate between Luther and Erasmus are especially valuable. Osterhaven shows that whereas the doctrines of God and Christ were paramount in early Christian history, later on the doctrines of the atonement, the church and the sacraments were given primary attention.

Osterhaven conceives of theology as a critical reflection on the faith of the church. Its norm is Holy Scripture, but its range of inquiry is practically universal. Throughout this work, Osterhaven makes a convincing case that the Reformed faith is not purely intellectual but contains a mystical dimension as well. He does not claim that the Reformed understanding of the faith of the church is the only viable one, but he establishes good grounds for believing that the key to Christian renewal in our time lies in reappropriating those elements of the faith which Reformed Christianity has deemed essential.

—Donald G. Bloesch

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**A Dialogue Concerning Heresies**  
by Thomas More. Edited by Thomas M. C. Lawler, Germain Marc'hadour and Richard C. Marius (Vol. VI in two parts of *The Yale Edition of the Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, Yale University Press, 1981, 910 pp., \$80.00).

The English New Testament—translated by William Tyndale, printed in the Germanic lands, and smuggled into English ports—was the first volley of what has been often called "the classic confrontation" of the reformation. But such an appellation is a misnomer when applied to the Tyndale-More "debate": More, with his humanist learning and critical world view, was far from the typical English Catholic of the early sixteenth century. Neither is it typical that More, a layman, should defend his faith against Tyndale, a priest. If Tyndale's translation was the first shot, More's *Dialogue Concerning Heresies* was a valid return of fire.

More does not appeal to papal authority but



rather to the general consent of the faithful. He does not discern differences within the reformed movement, but contentedly pounds away at all heretics (Wyclif, Luther, Tyndale, Barlow, Pelagius, etc), for all who would challenge the unity of the church were obviously motivated by pride. There is some humor, but little kindness. One wonders if More clearly understood what Tyndale had set forth in his *Obedience of the Christian Man* and *Parable of the Wicked Mammon*. More feels compelled to defend each practice, custom, and tradition at a length post-Vatican II Catholics would find irrelevant, if not embarrassing.

The editors have not only established the critical text but have also provided extensive introductions, commentary, appendices, glossary and a correspondence table to earlier editions. They also provide a perceptive analysis of More by showing, perhaps for the first time, that More drew information and argument from those, especially Cochlaeus and Eck, who were already in the battle against Luther.

—Donald D. Smeeton

the level of phenomenology to that of clashing truth claims"—yet in such a way that the personal and religious integrity of the participants is not violated.

Second, to develop a paradigm of such "I-Thou" argumentation, Borowitz enters into debate with a number of Christian theologians ("liberal": Knox, Ruether, Soelle, Schoonenberg; "traditional": Berkouwer, Barth, Pannenberg; "post-liberal": Rahner, Moltmann; ethics, Gustafson; culture: Niebuhr) on the issue that divides Judaism and Christianity most sharply, namely christology. This represents the first serious attempt from a contemporary Jewish perspective to interact critically with this aspect of Christian faith at a *theological*, in contrast to an exegetical or historical, level.

Borowitz' probing and perceptive analysis should stimulate discussion, not only between Jews and Christians but—it is to be hoped—among representatives of differing Christian positions as well. His irenic and charitable spirit provides a fine model of how such religious argumentation should be carried out.

—T. L. Donaldson

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### *Becoming Human*

by Letty M. Russell (Westminster, 1982, 114 pp., \$5.95).

Letty Russell suggests four positive components of a struggle to become more fully and truly human. First, we must eschew a hierarchical view of things, in which those who really count rule from the narrow top of a pyramid. Instead, we must recognize God's propensity for using "losers" and must seek for the meaning of our humanity among them. Second, we must accept God's invitation to work in partnership with us through Christ. Third, as men and women alike, we need to view ourselves as helpers who refuse at our peril to be radically helped by one another and by God. And finally, we need to "join in God's freedom movement," which includes supporting freedom to hope in God and freedom to live in a human fashion.

Not much new here; few surprises. Some (including me) would question the critical assumptions underlying use of certain texts and offer caveats against too quickly extending the "partnership" ideal to our relationship with God. My larger concern, however, is that what is valuable and timely in *Becoming Human* will escape attention simply because the book avoids provocative, flashy polemics. Its very unpretentiousness and simplicity and irenic spirit may permit many to pass over it "once lightly" without probing its potential depth. True, taken alone, it will not light many fires. But how about as a discussion-starter in a group with a competent leader who wants gently to expand the horizons of members? For such a purpose I recommend the book; and the potentially very stimulating, experience-oriented questions for each chapter should help get the conversation going.

—Marguerite Shuster

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### *Know Your Christian Life*

by Sinclair B. Ferguson (IVP, 1981, 179 pp., \$5.95).

Ferguson, now of Westminster Theological Seminary, presents here a study of various Christian themes connected with the doctrines of sin and grace. He writes simply, with great concern for the practical implications of doctrines. His theological stance is informed by what J. I. Packer in the "Foreword" calls, "biblical theology," and "reformed theology," and "reformed theology of the older, ripier, wiser, deeper sort."

Ferguson moves through the Christian experience of conviction of sin, being born again, faith, repen-

tance and justification to other themes such as union with Christ, election, and perseverance. His eighteen chapters take us from "God's Broken Image" to "Glorification." The theological points made under each heading are significant, the quotations from hymns, poets and theologians appropriate. Ferguson's method of treating his themes reminds one of Puritan writers—though without tedious repetition and undue technical jargon.

One wishes, however, that Ferguson's view of the Christian life were more expansive. Where is the place of the Church in Christian experience, the place for service to the world? In that sense it is most strange for a theologian to take us from the garden of Eden to the gates of heaven without showing us along the way that God has a world on his mind and in his heart with which we Christians as the body of Christ must be most vitally concerned. Privatized religion and individualistic Christianity are surely strangers to both "biblical" and "reformed" theology!

So read Ferguson to see the inner structures of Christian experience. But know also that "your Christian life" includes much, much more.

—Donald K. McKim

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### *Crying In The Wilderness: The Struggle for Justice in South Africa*

by Desmond Tutu (Eerdmans, 1982, 125 pp., \$4.95).

In this small, readable book, the prophetic voice of Bishop Tutu, appointed General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches in 1978, speaks to us from the wilderness of the apartheid system in South Africa.

It is not surprising, in the midst of this oppressive system, that many young black South Africans have left the country to be trained in military tactics. The wonder is that individuals like Bishop Tutu continue to act with charity and understanding toward those who continue to strip away human rights and dignity from their people.

Bishop Tutu is deeply aware that true Christian charity must be based on justice. He has shared the suffering of those denied justice. All that black South Africans want, says Bishop Tutu, is an equitable sharing of the land, with the same basic rights that the whites enjoy. "Surely," says the Bishop, "white South Africans should be willing to give up something, rather than risk losing everything."

The risk of losing everything is real. Bishop Tutu points out that this is the last generation of black South Africans willing to negotiate for change.

*Crying In The Wilderness* is a book well worth reading for anyone wanting to listen to the words and wisdom of a man still willing to "speak the truth in love."

—Judy Boppell Peace

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### *Toward A Response to the American Crisis*

by Glenn N. Schram (University Press of America, 1981, 134 pp., \$7.57 pb.).

All but one of these political essays by the Associate Professor of Political Science at Marquette University were previously published. He examines the American Constitution and the concept of human rights in making a case for the need for Christian influence in our legal and educational institutions. He critically interacts throughout with the thought of Reinhold Niebuhr and Eric Voegelin. He is particularly concerned with the political implications of human depravity and justification through Christ. These studies will be of value to those working in these particular areas, but probably not to a wider audience.

—Stephen Charles Mott

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### *In Search of Christianity: Discovering the Diverse Vitality of Christian Life*

by Ninian Smart (Harper & Row, 1979, 320 pp., \$10.95).

Having written several books in philosophy of religion, Ninian Smart turned to history and phenomenology of religion. *In Search of Christianity* describes many diverse expressions of Christian doctrine and practice, even among those intending to be faithful to the teachings of the Bible and to serve the God the Bible reveals. I think it is eminently worthwhile that a Christian be reminded (or for the first time informed) about the enormous diversity of institutions, creeds, and practices one finds within Christendom. One can find in this book a sense of this diversity by contrasting, for example, the centrality of sacrament as a portrayal of doctrine in Eastern Orthodoxy and the centrality of preaching as an account of doctrine in the Reformed tradition.

The intent of the phenomenological approach is to describe, not to interpret or evaluate. Whether or not this is possible or desirable, suffice it to say that Smart is not committed to supposing that he *only* describes and never interprets or evaluates. Still, one does not find any overt or sustained effort to ask whether one expression or another of Christian faith and action is more adequate, nor to ask what proper criteria for adequacy there might be. This is the glory and limitation of phenomenological accounts. The diversity within Christendom is clear, but what sense it may be possible to make of all this is another matter. For the most part that must be sought in some other book than this one.

—Keith E. Yandell

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### *Contemporary Christologies: A Jewish Response*

by Eugene B. Borowitz (Paulist, 1980, 203 pp., \$7.95).

This highly-stimulating contribution to the Jewish-Christian dialogue breaks fresh ground in areas of both method and substance.

First, Borowitz recognizes that the phenomenological approach—where members of differing religious traditions each attempt to give accurate descriptions of their faith "from within," without pressing any religious claim on the other—represents a positive and necessary step beyond the polemical and narrowly partisan debate of earlier times. Nevertheless, he insists that the truth question cannot be tabled indefinitely if dialogue is to continue. Interreligious dialogue must not be content merely to share information in a spirit of tolerance and good-will. Rather, it should "move from

***The Necessity of Ethical Absolutes***  
by Erwin W. Lutzer (Zondervan, 1981,  
110 pp., \$4.95).

From the pen of the senior pastor of Moody Memorial Church, the ethical system of absolutes based on God's moral revelation vanquishes four contemporary rivals. The book will be helpful to those new to the subject who are ready to be persuaded. The publishers are to be praised for the clarity of the format, which is akin to that of Prentice-Hall's Foundations of Philosophy series (though for a more popular audience).

—Stephen Charles Mott

***The Prometheus Question: A Moral and Theological Perspective on the Energy Crisis***  
edited by C. A. Cesaretti (Seabury, 1980, 114 pp., \$3.95).

One third of this book provides instructions and materials for a four session course or workshop for adults seeking to understand the energy crisis. The remainder provides background material, including first-hand experiences with the crisis and data on alternative energy sources. The study course is biblical and workable. Use it!

—Stephen Charles Mott

***The Earth Is the Lord's: Essays on Stewardship***  
edited by Mary Evelyn Jegen and Bruno Manno (Paulist, 1978, 215 pp., \$4.95).

These essays search our Christian tradition for insight into our responsibility for the goods of the earth and relate it to global hunger. The essays come from a joint seminar in 1976 conducted by Bread for the World Educational Fund and the Office for Moral and Religious Education of the University of Dayton. The book is designed for well-educated lay people, for whom discussion questions and action suggestions are provided. But no one will fail to profit from the probing examination of values, issues, and lifestyle responses. One of the most interesting essays is Doris Donnelly's argument on the appropriateness of the perspective of Christian feminism for this kind of stewardship.

—Stephen Charles Mott

***Unreached Peoples '82: Focus on Urban Peoples***  
edited by Edward R. Dayton and Samuel Wilson (David C. Cook, 1982, 435 pp., \$9.95).

This volume of the *Unreached Peoples* series will be of particular interest to those interested in urban evangelism. There are a number of theoretical articles, including Raymond Bakke's "A Contemporary Perspective on the Evangelization of World Class Cities." ("Seen globally, then, in terms of numbers or demographics, our world of 4.3 billion people is nearly 50 percent urban. The more developed world has been urban, while the rest of the world is in the process of urbanization.") There are also a number of more practical case studies covering the South Bronx, Adelaide, Toronto and Bangkok.

Beyond strictly urban concerns, Samuel Wilson's essay, "The Power and Problem of People Group Thinking in World Evangelization" is must reading for those using "people group" vocabulary. *Inter alia*, it makes clear the problems associated with the use of the concept by Ralph Winter's U.S. Center for World Mission/*World Christian: Today's Mission Magazine*/etc. But further, Wilson's article, to set the problem in rather different terms than he does, makes it clear that a people group approach provides excellent tactics, once one is *in situ*, for seeking the affiliation that will unlock a group for

the gospel.

What is less clear is how a people group approach can function as a strategy for determining where a mission agency should focus its attention. The problem is apparent in Parts 3 and 4 of the volume, "Unreached Peoples—Expanded Descriptions" and "Registry of the Unreached," which contain such entries as "Bachelors in Lagos (Nigeria)," "Barbers in Tokyo," "Ex-Mental-Patients in New York City," and "Gays in San Francisco" (an unreached group being defined as a group which has less than 20% practicing Christians). Since even the reader receives the opportunity to submit entries to the listing, it is fortunate that the "Registry" includes a validity code, which for over 50% of the entries indicates minimal information available.

—Thomas H. McAlpine

***The Total Image: or Selling Jesus in the Modern Age***  
by Virginia Stem Owens (Eerdmans, 1980,  
97 pp., \$4.95).

What would archaeologists of the future find distinctive about the church of our day? Not much, according to Owens, who feels that Christian imagination has been subsumed by contemporary culture to the extent that Jesus is being sold as a therapeutic product. The criteria of commercial success—growth and change—have been unquestioningly adopted by the church, thereby imitating rather than challenging the world. The poor and the meek are not allowed into this picture, and the gospel, far from being the grotesque offense of a crucified Savior, is packaged for mass consumption and maximum congruity with existing values. We should be stewards of the mysterious things of God, pleads Owens, not public facilitators of an advertising campaign.

Her incisive essay argues eloquently for a Christian witness against the homogenizing of the gospel with the world by those who shamelessly propagate a faith by proxy, and especially those who would substitute a media church for the personal fellowship without which no Christian discipleship is authentic. The reader is immediately reminded of Malcolm Muggeridge's lectures, *Christ and the Media* (Eerdmans, 1977), a minor classic now unfortunately out of print. Mercilessly exposing the demonic role of the media—including the chilling story of a TV crew who interrupted an execution in the Biafran War to change their battery—he makes his witness clear. The Word was made flesh, not celluloid, and we need to bind ourselves firmly to the reality of Jesus Christ in a world increasingly subjected to the make-believe of the media. Accordingly, Muggeridge has disposed of his television set. The time is coming when we all may be called to make the same witness.

—David Lowes Watson

***Science and the Quest for Meaning***  
by Donald M. MacKay (Eerdmans, 1982,  
75 pp., \$3.95).

This book contains the two Pascal Lectures delivered at the University of Waterloo in 1979, each of which is followed by brief discussion. MacKay argues that the pursuit of scientific knowledge is quite compatible with Christian faith. In the first lecture he corrects a number of misunderstandings about science that have led some Christians to be overly suspicious of the scientific enterprise. The second lecture explores the incentive Christianity provides for doing science: good stewardship demands that we make use of, and so first understand, the created order, and the nature of the world's dependence on a faithful Creator gives us good rea-

son to think scientific research will yield reliable knowledge of scientific laws. Science cannot tell us the meaning of science, or the value of doing it well (that would be "scientism"). But neither does it stand in antithesis to Christian values.

MacKay stands squarely in the tradition that sees "an organic unity between biblical Christian faith and natural science," and so may be of interest to those seeking to work out their own understanding of these issues. One should know, however, that some distinctive themes of MacKay are both dubious and not at all required by an "organic" view of science and religion: his agreement with R. Hooykaas' historical thesis that the rise of modern science was the inevitable result of a truly biblical attitude toward nature; his occasionalism, which holds that all natural events are attributable to the direct agency of God; and his "nothing-but-ery" response to the bogey of determinism, wherein he reconciles free will and determinism by mistaking an epistemological issue for an ontological one—thinking that if one can never *know* that one is completely determined then one really *isn't*. Distinctives and all, this book provides a brief but valuable introduction to the thought of Donald MacKay.

—Keith Cooper

***Out of Mighty Waters***  
by Lois Landis Shenk (Herald Press, 1982,  
190 pp., \$10.95, \$6.95 pb.).

This is not a theological treatise, but an intimate, moving portrait of mental illness. Lois Landis Shenk was a missionary teacher in Kenya when she first encountered the "dragon." Seeing herself and her newborn son as the woman of Revelation being pursued by the dragon, she fled on the wings of an eagle, a TWA airplane, back to America. She hoped to find safety and sanity in the security of her Pennsylvania Mennonite home. Instead she was hospitalized in Washington, D.C. It was the first of four psychiatric hospitalizations between 1969 and 1977.

*Out of Mighty Waters* is her chronicle of her struggles to find and hold onto personhood, to be a wife and mother, to become a whole, drug-free human being. It is an incredible picture of how Christian faith can sustain one in the darkest torments and of how biblical images can become interwoven in frightening fantasies. Ultimately Shenk found help from a Christian psychologist who was willing to try conventional and unconventional treatments until he found the one that worked. For Shenk that was orthomolecular or nutritional therapy.

This book will be particularly valuable to those who counsel the mentally ill. It is must reading for those studying psychology and religion or pastoral counseling. It is also of particular interest to feminists, those women and men seeking personal and relational wholeness. In this book Shenk has given us all a marvelous gift.

—Nancy A. Hardesty

***Fiction From Prison***  
by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, edited by Renate and Eberhard Bethge (Fortress Press, 1981,  
pp., \$14.95).

What an odd book! Fascinating, but odd.

Bonhoeffer was a pastor and theologian imprisoned for a political crime. Apparently as a means of taking stock of his personal foundations, he made two attempts at "autobiographical fiction," completing neither.

The first is an overly dramatic play that he wisely abandoned. The second is a more lengthy, more credible novel set in his own teen years. The drama we must grade an F and the novel perhaps a C.

Odd, isn't it, that such is the core of a serious book? Three essays have been added. The first, an

introduction by Clifford Green, is concerned with reconciling the other two in the question of whether Bonhoeffer was so class-conscious as to be elitist.

The second is by the Bethges: Eberhard, Bonhoeffer's close friend, is a character in the fiction and primary editor of Bonhoeffer's writing. Eberhard's wife, Renate, was Bonhoeffer's niece and an articulate thinker in her own right. The Bethges' essay highlights the fascinating interweaving of Bonhoeffer's biography and theology and adds excellent crossreferences to other Bonhoeffer works.

Ruth Zerner has added a commentary that places Bonhoeffer's fiction in the light of similar writings. She has also engaged in a bit of amateur psychoanalysis of Bonhoeffer through his literary works.

There are at least four themes worth exploring in this book: Bonhoeffer's struggles with death, his own privileged family, and the Nazi dismantling of all that was noble in the Germanic tradition; and, more abstractly, that great threat to our dreams of objectivity, the dependence of our own theology upon our biography.

—Michael Hayes

### **The Celebrant**

by Charles Turner (Servant Books, 1982, 144 pp., \$8.95).

In this novel a young Episcopal priest feels called to go into the midst of the yellow fever epidemic in Memphis in 1878 and minister to the sick, dying and bereaved. *The Celebrant* has a good subject, the Christian call to risk and sacrifice, and the story is based solidly on historical events. The two main assets of the book are its perceptive treatment of the Christian theme and its careful historical documentation. The narrative flows smoothly, and there is a lean clarity about the style which is admirable.

*The Celebrant*, however, is not a strong novel. It fails primarily in characterization. We never really understand this priest's inner self, we are told precious little about his past, and the same vagueness clings to the other main characters. The novelist tries to tell his story too quickly, largely avoiding anything which does not have historical basis. He becomes a chronicler rather than an explorer to the passionate human psyche. There is theological insight, but it is usually spoken in dialogue rather than being rendered in events, situations, and character development. Several encounters and especially the ending are moving, but the book could have been much more powerful if given a more novelistic treatment.

—Corbin Carnell

### **BOOK COMMENT CONTRIBUTORS**

In addition to regular *TSF Bulletin* editors and contributors (listed on the outside and inside front covers), the following reviewers have contributed book comments in this issue: **Corbin Carnell** (Professor of English, University of Florida), **Keith Cooper** (Ph.D. student in Philosophy, University of Wisconsin—Madison), **T. L. Donaldson** (Professor of New Testament Studies, College of Emmanuel and St. Chad), **Elouise Renich Fraser** (Ph.D. student in Theology, Vanderbilt University), **John E. Hartley** (Professor of Old Testament, Azusa Pacific University), **Michael Hayes** (Pastor, Knollbrook Covenant Church, Fargo, North Dakota), **Gerald W. McCulloh** (Associate Professor of Theology, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary), **James C. Moyer** (Professor of Old Testament Studies, Southwest Missouri State University), **Judy Boppell Peace** (author of *The Boy-Child is Dying: A South African Experience*), **Marguerite Shuster** (Minister of Pastoral Care, Arcadia Presbyterian Church, California), **Donald D. Smeeton** (International Correspondence Institute, Brussels, Belgium).

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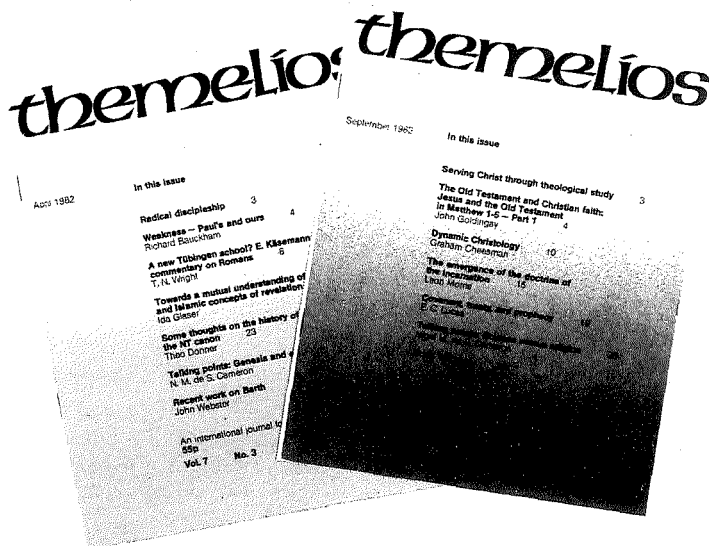
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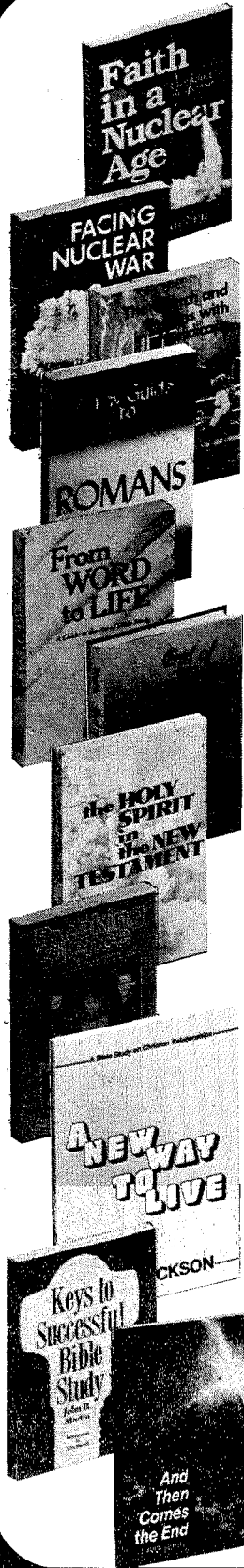
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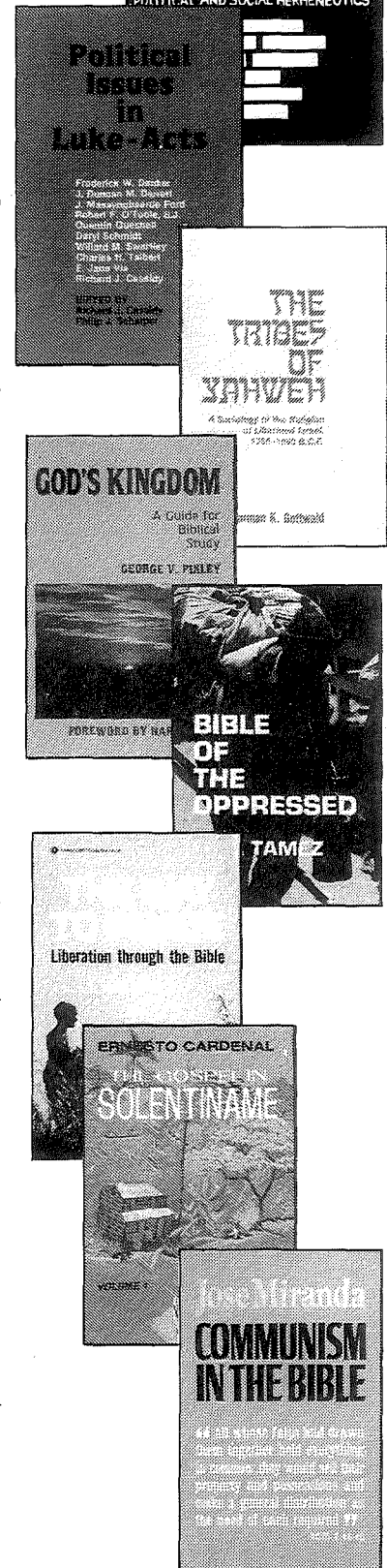
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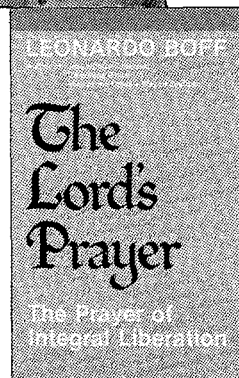
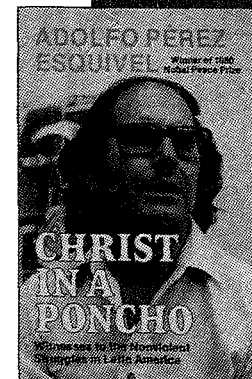
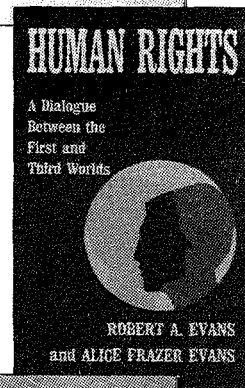
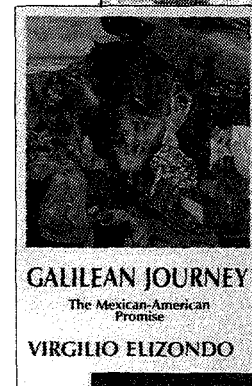
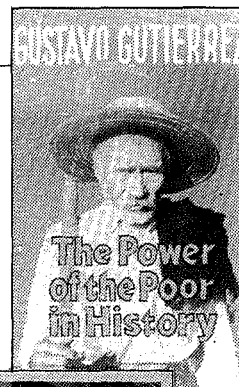
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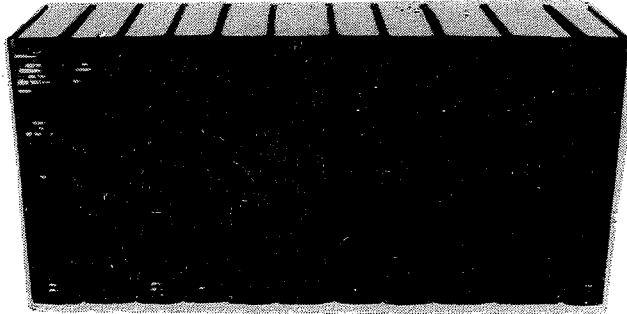
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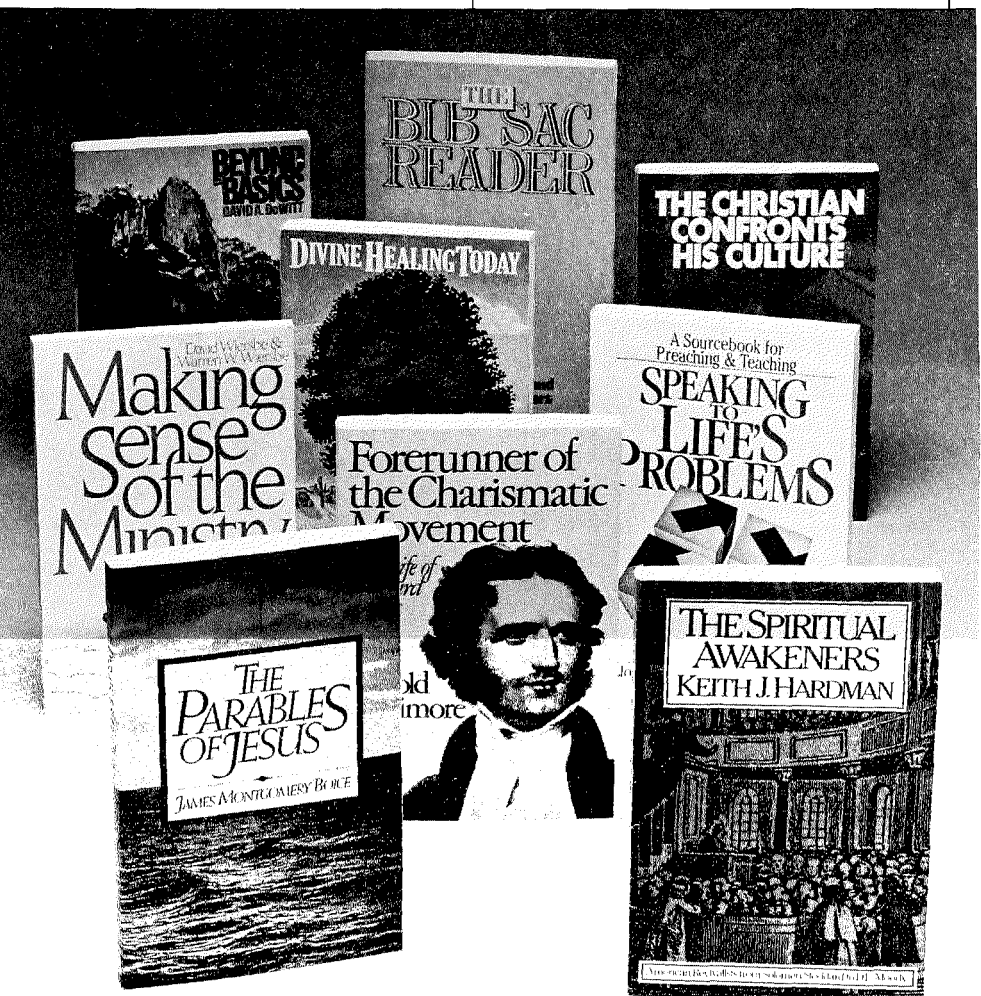
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