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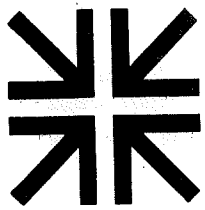
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# TSF News and Reviews

Theological Students Fellowship 233 Langdon, Madison, Wisconsin 53703 (608) 257-0263

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OCTOBER 1978

## AN OPEN LETTER TO SEMINARIANS

By Mark R. Branson

The Christian student studying at a seminary may be motivated by academic pursuits, religious experiences and vocational decisions. Too easily the seminary years become a time of disappointment in fellowship, theological doubts and loss of enthusiasm for the gospel. Maybe the establishing of some clear concerns now can help alleviate some of the frustrations and tensions.

The idea of a seminary focuses attention on community living, companionship, fellowship. One anticipates an atmosphere of shared dreams, caring friends, warm fellowship, vigorous prayer and vital worship. A student who hopes for these is generally confronted by fairly thorough disillusionment. However, seldom is "community" ever an atmosphere into which one simply walks, rather it necessitates search, initiation and commitment. The seminarian who desires a prayer fellowship will probably need to initiate one. This also applies concerning support groups, worship and Bible study discussions. Do not be discouraged, there are probably others close by who will readily respond to your initiative.

Secondly, the seminary relationship with academics tends to be confusing and disintegrated. Professors often seek better ways to make scholastic pursuits deeply relevant and personally rewarding. However, do not be surprised if you encounter a less sympathetic instructor who pursues the goal of relieving you of cherished beliefs which the professor sees as naïve and archaic. No doubt we all need our intellectual systems to be challenged and deepened, but the "expert" sometimes disregards options which vary with one's own presuppositions and therefore belittles the student's beliefs and questions. The student is wise to listen, seek understanding and then avail herself or himself of resources beyond the required reading. Helmut Thielicke speaks of the "spiritual instinct of the children of God" and encourages students not to ignore inner senses and convictions even when they may conflict with a professor.

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Associate Editors: Stephen T. Davis (Claremont Men's College) *Philosophy*; Robert E. Frykenberg (University of Wisconsin) *World Religions*; David W. Gill (New College, Berkeley) *Ethics*; Robert L. Hubbard (Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary) *Old Testament*; Paul A. Mickey (Duke Divinity School) *Practical Theology*; Grant Osborne (Trinity Evangelical Divinity School) *New Testament*; Keith Yandell (University of Wisconsin) *World Religions*.

"Doing theology" can be far more relaxed and enjoyable when one realizes that a complete, defensible systematic need not be finalized by graduation, and certainly not by the end of a course. Defensiveness, whether student's or professor's, will only interfere with the prayerful search for wisdom and the well-counseled building of life-giving, viable church doctrine.

My third concern is also introduced by Professor Thieliicke, "Under a considerable display of the apparatus of exegetical science and surrounded by the air of the initiated, (the seminarian) produced paralyzing and unhappy trivialities and the inner muscular strength of a lively young Christian is horribly squeezed to death in a formal armor of abstract ideas."

(*A Little Exercise for Young Theologians*, p. 8). One should be concerned not only for the spiritual lives of future parishoners, but more immediately for one's own spiritual formation. In our rejection of legalistic structures we too often give up the very God-given means for grace! Devotional Bible study, prayer, fasting, journaling, silent retreats are all desperately needed if one seeks more than intellectual pride and disintegrated pastoral skills. Perhaps the counsel of a personal pastor or spiritual director can provide guidance and accountability during these seminary years.

Finally, I would like to suggest resources which might be of assistance in these areas. Thieliicke's *A Little Exercise for Young Theologians* (Eerdmans) and Bonhoeffer's *Life Together* (Harper) can help set the tone for seminary education. Academic pursuits can be aided by Howkin's *The Challenge of Religious Studies* and Brown's *History, Criticism and Faith* (both available from TSF at \$2 and \$3 respectively). The recent release of Donald Bloesch's *Essentials of Evangelical Theology Vol. I* (Harper & Row; reviewed in this issue of *News & Reviews*) gives us an excellent systematic theology. A very worthwhile critique by an outsider has been written by James Barr entitled *Fundamentalism* (Westminster; reviewed in the April *News & Reviews*). Other guidelines are available in Jose Miguel Bonino's *Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation* (Fortess Press) and Marshall's *New Testament Interpretation* (Eerdmans). On spiritual formation, Foster's *Celebration of Discipline* (Harper & Row), O'Connor's *Search for Silence* (Word), Ellul's *Prayer and Modern Man* (Seabury) and Nouwen's *Pray to Live* (about Merton, published by Fides/Claretain) are all powerful and rewarding.

TSF seeks to make available printed resources and significant conferences to make seminary education a richer experience. Please let us know of any particular needs or suggestions you have. May 1978-79 be a year treasured for its experiences, maturity and spirituality.

*TSF News & Reviews* will be published five (5) times during the 1978-79 school year. The subscription price (\$5.00/one year, \$9.00/two years; add \$1.00/year outside N. America) includes three (3) issues of *Themelios*, an international student theological journal (subscription for *Themelios* costs \$3.00/year). All subscriptions begin in the fall and end in the spring. Bulk rate available on request. Published by the Theological Students Fellowship, 233 Langdon, Madison, Wisconsin 53703.

## WHO'S WHO IN TSF

TSF is a loosely-knit fellowship of university religion majors, seminarians, and graduate students. Clark Pinnock, Professor of Theology at MacMaster Divinity College (Hamilton, Ontario) and Mark Branson, a recent graduate of the School of Theology at Claremont and a campus minister at UCLA, serve to coordinate and advise the overall movement. Dave Jones, a Ph.D. student at Vanderbilt University, visits campuses in the Southeast. Peter Northrup, Vice President of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, helps as Managing Editor of *TSF News & Reviews*. On page one you can find data on those who serve as associate editors. A network of professors offer invaluable assistance as encouragers and guides: Gerald Sheppard (Union, New York), Donald Bloesch (Dubuque), Donald Dayton (Chicago), Bernard Ramm (Modesto, California), and Carl Amerding (Vancouver) to name a few of over one hundred!

Finally, I want to give a special thanks to Lois Hart (Madison, Wisconsin). Lois has shared the vision and labors ever since TSF began in December, 1973. She was recently reassigned as secretary to John Alexander, President of IVCF. TSF could not be what it is today without the perseverance of Lois as secretary, liaison and friend. A computer and several office personnel (introductions will follow in the coming year) will attempt to take over the work. Lois, thank you!

## N E W S

### VANDERBILT

Last year TSF staffer Dave Jones (Ph.D. student at Vanderbilt) sent out a letter to incoming students which was a good catalyst in encouraging others toward a fellowship. It is printed here again for your possible use:

To All Professional Students (or Graduate Students):

On Monday, September 18, and each Monday thereafter (if this is a convenient day), a group of us (M. Div., D.Min., and a few Ph.D. students) will be meeting for lunch at 12:10 in Room 139 to talk about the relationship between our studies and work at Vanderbilt and our commitment to Christ and His Church. We are from a variety of backgrounds and traditions, but we are united in our concern for the Christian Church, the personal life of faith, vital Christian ministry, and a faithful theology. We intend to explore together the positive contributions of the historic Christian faith, vital neo-orthodoxy, the historic Christian confessions, and evangelical Christianity to our lives and the life of the Church. We invite all who would like to join us.

If you are interested, but cannot make in on Monday, or if you have a question, please put a note in my mailbox or call me at 298-4807 (early morning or late evening). We look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,  
David N. Jones

## DUKE

Another chapter, Duke University and Divinity School, sent a letter to all incoming students:

Dear Fellow Student:

Shortly you will be coming to Duke Divinity School and we want to use this means of welcoming you to the campus. It is our prayer that your initial experiences at Duke will be positive ones and we hope we can contribute in some way to that. The Theological Students Fellowship is beginning its second year at Duke. It is our purpose to provide learning and fellowship opportunities for interested students. We seek through forums to show the relevance of evangelical theology, as well as to interact with the wider perspectives of theological education. And through fellowship meetings we seek to know each other better in the seminary community, and to be supportive on one another during the academic year. In short, we hope these opportunities will provide both information and inspiration in your first year of theological study. When you arrive on campus in the fall, you will find a schedule of our activities in your mail box. We hope to see you at our first forum, and we hope that as quickly as possible "Fellow Student" will be dropped and in its place will be your name, your face and a relationship of friendship and support.

Sincerely in Christ,

Dr. Paul Mickey, Faculty Advisor  
Steve Harper, Graduate School Representative  
Lenny Stadler, Divinity School Representative

In addition, the dean's office asked TSF to make comments during orientation week. Their plans include monthly open forums during the Wednesday hour reserved for specific meetings. "Process Theology," "Prayer and Psychotherapy," and "Clergy Supply and Demand" are the Fall lecture-discussion topics. Also, monthly dinner meetings involving students and spouses include dinner and a worship-devotional time.

## UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SANTA BARBARA (USCB)

Plans for 1978-79 center around two directions. First, bi-monthly meeting for discussing recent publications like Colin Brown's *History, Criticism and Faith* (IVP) and monthly evenings with guest speakers (Robert Gundry, Bieger Pearsons, Robert Michaelsen). Interaction among students and faculty is promising. The TSF chapter hopes to co-sponsor a spring lecture with the UCSB Religious Studies Department.

## TORONTO

The TSF chapter at the Toronto School of Theology includes activities on most of the nine seminary campuses, as well as activities for the overall group. A brochure, to be distributed during orientation will introduce seminarians to the purpose and plans of TSF. Terry Donaldson (phone 416-690-5870) set out this agenda: Clark Pinnock on "The Challenge of Religious Studies," Fr. G. T. Montagne on "Theoskitzophrenia," Oliver Donovan on abortion, Harvey Cox on liberation theology and Jim Wallis on a several day series on the Role of the Church. A monthly newsletter keeps area members advised of activities.

## NOTEWORTHY:

### KARL BARTH SOCIETY

The Karl Barth Society (Mid-West Region) will meet October 13 and 14 to host lectures and discussions on "Ethical and Political Themes in the Theology of Karl Barth." Participants include James Gustafson (Chicago), M. Douglas Meeks (Eden) and John H. Yoder (Goshen and Notre Dame). Write to Professor Ronald Goetz, Department of Theology, Elmhurst, Illinois 60126 for information.

### THE BERKELEY LECTURES

The Berkeley Lectures, February 9 -11, will feature Dr. David Hubbard (Fuller) speaking on several OT topics. Information is available from First Presbyterian Church, 2407 Dana Street, Berkeley, CA 94704.

### RECOMMENDED PERIODICALS:

*The Evangelical Review of Theology*, published by the Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Fellowship, gathers articles and book reviews from various sources around the world and prints selections in a 170+ page journal. Contents of the April, 1978 issue included, "The Christian Task in the Arts: Some Preliminary Considerations," "Evangelism, Salvation and Social Justice," and "Community and Mission: The Moravian Model." Edited by Bruce J. Nicholls (Former *Themelios* editor), *ERT* is available for \$4/year (2 issues) from *World Evangelical Fellowship*, Box 670, Colorado Springs, CO 80901.

*Old Testament Abstracts*, published by the Catholic Biblical Association, is a thrice-yearly updating on literature relating to the OT. This is a must for anyone seeking to be on top of articles and books in OT studies. Edited by Bruce Vawter (De Paul University, Chicago), *OTA* is available for \$11/year (3 issues) from *The Catholic University of America*, Washington, DC 20064.

*Gospel in Context: A Dialogue on Contextualization* sets its own agenda as an "international, cross-cultural, inter-disciplinary and interdenominational dialogue." Editor Charles Tabor works with associates including Scott Bartchy, William Pannell, C. Rene Padilla and Peter Savage. Students can subscribe for \$7.50/year (4 issues)--others pay \$11/year or \$17/2 years. Their address is: P.I.M., 1564 Edge Hill Road, Abingdon, PA 19001.

*Agora* is "a magazine of opinion within the Assemblies of God and the wider Pentecostal ministries." Working from the theological and historic roots of the Penecostal movement, the editors seek to provide a medium for expression of theological, prophetic, discipleship and fellowship issues. Of special value has been a two-part article by Gerald Sheppard (Union, New York) on "Word and Spirit: Scripture in the Pentecostal Tradition." Sheppard traces both the role and the directions of the doctrine of inspiration within the Assemblies. He writes with keen insight into the history, politics and significance of current debates as they relate to traditional Penecostal values and theology. *Agora* is available \$5/year (4 issues) from P.O. Box 2467, Costa Mesa, CA 92626.



The editors of *News & Reviews* decided last year to invest considerable energy on the recent release by James D.G. Dunn entitled *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament* (Westminster). In this issue we will view the book through the eyes of two reviewers: Clark Pinnock will focus on the theological implications and Paul Byer will cover concerns for the practical theologian. In the November *N&R* reviews will come from two other directions: critical NT questions and the issues of historical theology.

### Issues in Practical Theology

*By Paul Byer, Adjunct Professor at Fuller Theological Seminary and on Inter-Varsity staff in a special teaching ministry with Western Regional staff and students.*

In his preface to *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament; an Inquiry into the Character of Earliest Christianity*. James D. G. Dunn states, ". . . the book has undergraduates primarily in mind . . . (albeit) third year undergraduates who have already completed two years in NT studies." (The book actually springs from a series of ten university lectures). But do not be deceived--this is not a book for the *kids*. It is expansive and wide ranging in its investigations, and many readers will be pressed to follow Dunn as he rapidly strides across the NT landscape. For me, the experience was somewhat like trying to follow a guide in a scramble up a mountain. You are not sure of some of the guide's immediate

decisions, but because of the rapid pace, you cannot stop to question each turn for fear of losing sight of him altogether in the rocks and trees ahead. Perhaps only time will tell if you have actually scaled a new peak, or only circled through the trees.

The book is in two sections. First "Unity in Diversity?" is investigated in nine topical themes. Dunn concludes that, although there is diversity in how each of these is handled within the sub-sets of the NT writings, in each case the unifying core is, "Jesus the man is the Lord exalted." Dunn states that unity is only to be found in the person of Jesus, in His life, death/resurrection, and exaltation as Lord.

This reaffirmation that Jesus the exalted Lord is the core of New Testament belief is welcomed. But there are questions, such as, "Why were these nine areas of investigation selected?" and "Do Dunn's historical pre-suppositions and methods determine his conclusions?" But even so, what appears is that, although there may be various ways to slice an apple, if the cut is deep enough, a part of the core will be revealed because that is the nature of an apple. For Dunn, that which determines the nature of early Christianity is the common core, Jesus, the man exalted.

The second section of the book is "Diversity in Unity?" Dunn identifies four streams of development in early Christianity within the NT writings;

Jewish; Hellenistic; apocalyptic, and Early Catholicism. He follows the development of each, highlighting their differences, and concluding that each was accepted as valid as long as it retained its commitment to "Jesus the man, the exalted Lord." These distinctives did result in tension and conflict, but this diversity was accepted if there was a core commitment to the unity of belief in Jesus. Dunn's investigation is now like the slices across an orange--each segment has its own separate identity, but it is a part of the whole because of its contact with the stem, and because it does not attempt to make its segment into a whole orange.

Some practical implications of this study are apparent to those who work in a cross-cultural and/or para-church ministry. These ministries almost always have a very particularized objective, such as Young Life and Youth for Christ among high schoolers, Inter-Varsity and Campus Crusade among collegians, and, for example, the North Africa Mission, seeking to plant churches among North African Muslims. Such specific objectives give opportunity to develop specific methodologies. Sometimes those in a parish ministry seek to establish their particular structure and form of ministry as the only valid one, based upon the "early church." Dunn's analysis starts with a premise that there was considerable diversity within early Christianity; that this was acceptable as long as they held that their unity was in Jesus Christ, and love fulfilled the law, and that no one segment of the early church could claim to represent all that Jesus Christ meant in faith and practice.

Most would agree that there are limits to diversity, and Dunn deals with this. Although he states, "We must conclude . . . that *there was no simple normative form of Christianity in the first century*" (Dunn's emphasis, p. 373), he argues that the NT canon now sets the criteria for both the essential unity in Jesus Christ, and sets the limits of acceptable diversity. Thus, his conclusion that the NT canon is not a unity in itself, but reflects a diversity held together by the unifying truth of Jesus Christ, may essentially be a restatement of the premise he started with. He seems to have based his whole investigation upon "The fact . . . that no New Testament document as such preserves or embodies Christianity as it actually was in the very beginning; rather each shows us Christianity in a different place and at a different time, and consequently in a different and developed form" (p. 380). For this reason, by the time I finish, I'm not sure if I have climbed a peak or circled a mountain . . .

An example of this is Dunn's treatment of James. He states, "*The letter of James is the most Jewish, the most undistinctively Christian document in the New Testament.*" (Dunn's italics) The name *Christ* appears in only two places--at points where it could easily have been added (1:1; 2:1). Otherwise, absolutely no reference is made to the life, death or resurrection of Jesus." (p. 251). True, but put in context, each usage of Christ is preceded by "Lord Jesus"; in the first usage James states he is a servant of God *and* of the Lord Jesus Christ while in the



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second usage it reads, "as you hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory" (RSV). With the Lordship of Jesus Christ so firmly established, if you then follow how James uses "Lord" throughout his letter, it may be that he is very carefully developing a very high Christology, not through references to his "life, death or resurrection," but in a manner which is specifically targeted to his readers. Thus, although Dunn sees each NT document as unique, he may not allow its distinctive. It is the author's own intention to determine how each text is to be understood.

If I sense this in James, I'm even more aware of it in the usages of Mark. The index of biblical writings list 349 references to Mark in the book. Obviously, some are incidental, but in a number of significant places, I do not fully agree with Dunn's conclusions. I realize that he is using the interpretations generally accepted, and following it to its conclusions. But this is the point. To recognize the diversity within the NT documents is only the first step. To take this diversity seriously a significant amount of work may be required in uncovering the uniqueness of what each writer is saying and how he is saying it. Only then can a fair survey be made of the significance of the differences and their meaning within the NT. Since this meaning seems to be what Dunn want to move to, I suggest that those who read his book start with Chapter XV and thus have a better basis for understanding his methodology.

A quick scramble up a mountain is often exciting and stimulating, but usually it is no substitute for the pick and shovel work if the treasures within it are to be uncovered and put to the use of men and women.

### Reflections from a Theological Standpoint

*By Clark Pinnock,  
TSF Coordinator.*

This book, which may prove to be one of the most important in its implications for Christian theology to appear in recent years, demonstrates what many had been suspecting that there is now a new master in the house of NT theology and one who attained this position of honour having come up through the ranks of British evangelicalism. Because of limitations of space, I will leave to the *NT* reviewer the important question of how accurately Dunn plots the precise focus of NT unity and how fairly he assesses the extent of its diversity, and content myself with the theological issues that arise out of the closing pages of this abundant volume where the author reflects upon the *continuing function of the NT canon*, a subject most crucial to the nature and possibility of any systematic theology in the evangelical direction.

But, first, let me applaud the practical implication which Dunn sees in his careful dissection of NT material with its impressive concentration upon the Lord Jesus Christ, as the one foundation, and its marvelous diversity on a range of accompanying Christian themes, namely, the implication that we who stand

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beneath so rich a canon of Scripture must be prepared to grant a considerable degree of freedom and affirmation to other styles of Christian faith and practice than our own. Even if we differ with Dunn over the extent of the unity and the diversity found in the *NT*, as I do, feeling there is more unity and less diversity, and this fact demands openness on our part to the possibility that the cherished conviction of the other party may be sheltered beneath a canon which is more tolerant than we have been accustomed to think. For example, we cannot read I Corinthians and not grant legitimacy to charismatic Christianity, nor Luke and not recognize truth in the catholic development.

My hesitation with Dunn's book does not even have to do with his concluding remarks about the function of the *NT* canon in the church today. I welcome enthusiastically his insistence that Christians today must do their theological reflection within the canonical context and let the Scriptures judge all their efforts. And I would defend him against the charge some will undoubtedly lay, that in his view the *NT* is a *complexio oppositorum* and unable to agree with itself about anything. On the contrary, I hear him affirming a quite considerable unity of concepts making up the *NT* message, and not merely an undefined Christological centre. Nevertheless, precisely at this important point a question arises, and I am left fearful about what Dunn means to imply. In commenting on the fact that whereas in John we find a developed theology of incarnation, but not in Luke or Mark where we encounter a less developed Christology, Dunn draws out the

(possible) conclusion that we should not allow the more developed formulation in John to overshadow less developed concepts in Luke or Mark, because that would make John the real canon and effect deny true canonicity to them (p. 380) Now surely this is a point worth reflecting on. What *does* it mean when a doctrine is developed in Paul more than in Matthew, or in James less than in John? I suppose that one reason we have not thought about the problem very much is that we have assumed that, for example, James did not write about everything he believed and probably held the ideas taught by Paul, even though he had no cause to set them down in his brief occasional letter.

But my difficulty with Dunn is at a deeper level than any argument from silence, and has to do with the way the *NT* canon functions for him here. With Dunn I can see why we should not read Luke on Christology as if he were John or Paul so that the important distinctiveness of Luke is lost, but against Dunn I cannot see how it can possibly be right for anyone consciously to choose a less developed doctrine over a more developed one within the canon itself. To make it concrete, I cannot see how to justify choosing a modern form of adoptionist Christology, for example, just because it suits us and happens to fit with a possible reading of the *NT* material when the strong testimony of John and Paul to the deity of Christ booms out so loudly out of the canonical witness. I agree, let us not deprive Luke or James of true canonicity, but *also* let us not deprive John and Paul of it. It worries me that Dunn leaves the

door open for interpreters to search the canon for the doctrinally minimalist position they prefer, even on Christology, and to ignore the witness they need to hear. Surely by Dunn's own principle of hearing the *whole* canon we must oppose this point of his. And, since Dunn himself often uses adoptionist language both here (p. 56) and in *Jesus and the Spirit*, my concern about this particular case hardly seems exaggerated.

And what, finally, does Dunn think of the truth value of *NT* doctrinal statements? When John tells us about the pre-existent deity of Christ, for example, is he telling us the truth in the sense of metaphysical reality? Or, when Matthew and Luke report the miraculous conception of Jesus, are we not justified in believing them, even though it is only part of the total canonical testimony? Dunn leaves us up in the air on this important question. Yet it is important to understanding the ongoing function of the canon in the church today. Certainly we want to hear each of the biblical witnesses in their individual integrity and diversity, but, if *all* Scripture is 'God-breathed,' we also want to hear them together, and hearing them together cannot mean shutting our ears to what some of them say on topics presented in the others.

It may be that Dunn will clarify his meaning on what seems to me an important nuance in his final argument so that this really excellent and influential book will become even more helpful and pertinent to evangelical theologians.

## NEW TESTAMENT

THE ORIGIN OF CHRISTOLOGY  
By C.F.D. Moule  
Cambridge University Press  
187 pages. \$17.95  
*Reviewed by*  
Larry W. Hurtado,  
Assistant Professor of  
Religion, University of  
Manitoba (Winnipeg).

This book, by the well-known and recently-retired Cambridge NT scholar, is important for several reasons. For one thing, the book appears in a time when Christology is, and deserves to be, a major item for discussion. *The Myth of God Incarnate* (ed. J. Hick), has brought a great deal of popular attention to the subject, but the theological student will learn that a mass of literature and results confronts one on this topic. (See I.H. Marshall, *The Origins of New Testament Christology* Inter-Varsity Press, 1976 and my own forthcoming essay, "Beyond Bousset: Recent NT Christological Study," scheduled for the March, 1979 issue of *Theological Studies*). Secondly, Moule's book is important because it comes out of a distinguished career of NT study. Finally, this book is important because it aims to treat the overall phenomenon of the expression of faith in Jesus in the first-century church.

Moule's major reason for writing is his conviction "that there are unexamined false assumptions behind a good deal of contemporary New Testament scholarship" (p. 1). Here he refers particularly to the kind of work flowing from the "history of religions school," popularized for most contemporary students by Bultmann

and his pupils. Rather than the evolutionary and syncretistic process of christological formulation posited by some scholars, Moule argues that the process was a "developmental" one, in which "what was already there from the beginning" unfolded in stages. That is, Moule wishes to show what was in all points decisive for the formulation of New Testament christology was the impact of Jesus Himself, rather than such things as mystery cults.

Here Moule takes sides with M. Hengel (*The Son of God*; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976) and others in rejecting conclusions forcefully put forth by Bousset, and many others since. Moule reflects an awareness of the latest research available to him at the time of writing, and yet he moves into the New Testament text itself wherever he can, so that the reader has exposure to primary data, as well as secondary literature.

In Chapter 1, Moule discusses four christological descriptions--Son of Man, Son of God, Christ, *κύριος*--and shows how in meaning they all derive from Old Testament categories, not Hellenism. Chapter 2 is heavily exegetical, treating "the corporate Christ" in Paul's writings. Here Moule by-passes the christological titles to provide other New Testament evidence that Jesus functioned, in the thinking of Paul, as a divine figure. Chapter 3 deals with "Conceptions of Christ in writers other than Paul," in which Moule argues that Paul's conception of Christ was not unique in early Christianity. This chapter is

so brief (10 pages) that the reader has little more than Moule's conclusions, however.

In Chapter 4, Moule discusses the death of Christ, seeking what may be distinctive about the way it was regarded in early Christianity. His conclusion is that the distinctiveness of the early Christian claim about Christ's death has to do with the universality and accomplished nature of the redemption provided by it. Chapter 5 treats "the fulfillment theme in the New Testament." Here Moule wants to show that it was Jesus' own sense of fulfilling Old Testament patterns that was the basis of the New Testament concept of prophetic fulfillment.

In Chapter 6, Moule summarizes his case and deals very quickly with the question of Christ's pre-existence as a "legitimate way of describing an aspect of 'what was there from the beginning'" (p. 140).

In the final chapter, Moule turns to the ultimate revelation of God in history. Here Moule's answer takes a dialectical form-- ". . . it is precisely because God is revealed by Christ as a God who became incarnate that he is able to save those who sought or who seek him in other ways . . ." (p. 158). This chapter concludes with an interchange between Moule and Haddon Willmer dealing with this question of Christ and other faiths.

After this résumé of its contents, a few criticisms of the book are necessary. The main problem with the book is that it was clearly not composed as a monograph, but as occasional lectures. It is

something like a collection of essays, and not all of equal value and scholarship. This is particularly annoying in view of the price for the book! Further, though Moule says his intent was to show continuity "between the undoubtedly historical Jesus and the New Testament experiences of him" (p. 136); in fact, much of the book is concerned with the continuity between the very early post-Easter faith and later Christological development. Despite these criticism I believe serious students of NT Christology will find the book well worth their attention.

## OLD TESTAMENT

### OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS FOR PASTOR AND TEACHER

By Brevard S. Childs.  
Westminster Press, 1977.  
118 pages, \$3.95.

*Reviewed by Robert L. Hubbard  
Associate Editor.*

This book is the answer to an Old Testament professor's prayers! In his handy paperback Professor Brevard Childs of Yale Divinity School, one of America's leading Old Testament scholars, answers the question which plagues all Bible teachers: "What are the best OT books to buy for my library?" Further, the book's conversational, narrative style is more readable than an annotated bibliography while serving the same function.

However, do not be misled: this book is no hastily-thrown together grocery list of academia's "top forty"; rather, it clearly follows on the author's earlier clarion-call for a renewed understanding of the Bible as Christian Scrip-

ture. Hence, the book intends to facilitate that understanding by guiding "the pastor in the purchase and use of books" (p. 9) whose "excellence" (a recurring word in Child's statement of purpose) in homiletical and theological content--in Childs' opinion--opens up the Bible's message. However, scholars and other advanced students are not left out, for Childs lists many titles of value to them as well.

This is not just a book about commentaries. On the contrary, Childs begins by evaluating other theological bibliographies, basic exegetical tools (Gesenius' *Hebrew Grammar* is still best, English concordances like Strong's and Young's are recommended as are other Hebrew Bibles besides Kittel), English translations (none singled out as best), Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias (he praises multi-volume sets like *Interpreter's Dictionary* and the older one by William Smith over one-volume ones, hedges on the value of G. Kittel's NT theological dictionary), and OT introductions (none are satisfactory though ones by evangelicals Harrison, Young, and Archer are listed).

As for books on Biblical history and background, Childs slightly prefers Bright over Noth and recommends atlases by H.G. May and Wright and Filson, Wright's *Biblical Archeology*, and deVaux's *Ancient Israel*. Both the OT theologies by Eichrodt and von Rad are suggested, although Childs also likes the older one by A.B. Davidson. A chapter on books surveying the history of exegesis is also included.

The major portion of the book, however, is about commentaries. Among commentary series, Childs applauds the *Old Testament Library* and even Keil and Delitzsch, cautiously praises *The Anchor Bible*, criticizes the *Interpreter's Bible* (later he tells us which parts are considered valuable). As for one-volume commentaries, he recommends *Peake's Commentary* and *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* but for some reason omits mention of *The New Bible Commentary, Revised*.

As for individual commentaries on Bible books, space limitations dictate that our comments be limited to some general observations. First, we applaud Childs' aim of selecting volumes with theological and homiletical value. His comments enable the evangelical student to invest wisely in books suitable for his interest. But the advanced student benefits from the book also, for Childs not only mentions books suitable for him but also evaluates non-English sources as well.

Observable also in this book is an idiosyncrasy of the author evident also in his other writings, namely, his appreciation of pre-critical commentators (church fathers like Augustine, Reformers like Luther and Calvin, medieval Jewish scholars like Kimhi), as well as great preachers (Spurgeon and Blackwood, for example). Such a breadth of approach enhances the value of Childs' book by exposing the reader to a host of valuable commentaries which are otherwise overlooked this side of the dawn of biblical criticism.

Finally, we applaud the fact that Childs mentions titles from a wide theological spectrum. Hence, Childs lists with respect though not with agreement works by Kidner on Genesis and Proverbs and Feinberg on Ezekiel. He praises Joyce Baldwin's volume on Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi as "the best all-around commentary on these prophets" (p. 87). On the other hand, we note that some books popular among evangelicals (Craigie on Deuteronomy, Young on Isaiah and Daniel) earn but "faint praise" from Childs, while others (*The New Bible Commentary, Revised*, *The New Bible Dictionary* and the recent multi-volume sets published by Zondervan) are entirely omitted. All this suggests that Childs' evaluations must be considered in light of his theological and critical stance. The old rule of thumb still applies when purchasing books: "Try before you buy!"

Nevertheless, we are all in Professor Child's debt for this invaluable guide to OT books. The concluding bibliography which conveniently lists all titles cited by Childs and their publishers is a great improvement over other lists which frustrate the prospective buyer by leaving out the publisher's name. Used with discretion, this little volume will aid the student in building a useful library. I've already started my own shopping list!

THE BIBLE IN ITS WORLD:  
THE BIBLE AND ARCHAEOLOGY  
TODAY

By Kenneth A. Kitchen

IVP, 1978.

168 pages; \$3.95.

*Reviewed by Robert L. Alden,  
Conservative Baptist Theological  
Seminary, Denver, Colorado*

This tidy little paperback has to be one of the better bargains available today. As Kitchen himself might say, it is "chock-a-block full" of information: dates, places, sherds, inscriptions, monuments, tablets and tells. Sometimes the reader gets the impression that he is reading the teacher's classroom notes--the mere bones with but the leanest of meat on them. In other words, there are no wasted words, no pictures, and very little white space anywhere in the book.

The author, the Lecturer in Egyptian and Coptic in the School of Archaeology and Oriental Studies at the University of Liverpool, takes us from 10,000 B.C. to the close of the first century of our era although the New Testament receives only two pages. Being a specialist in Egyptian literature, Kitchen probably gives more attention to things Egyptian than is commonly found in general archaeology texts. That is good because to ignore it is to create an imbalance. The Levant, after all, had two powerful neighbors throughout antiquity, one to the northeast and one to the southwest.

The blurb on the back cover touts this volume as "the first book on Bible archaeology to make full use of the spectacular discoveries at ancient Syrian Ebla." That is true. Kitchen offers not just a few scattered details

from Ebla appended to an already written text, but devotes his second longest chapter to this recent, spectacular discovery. It is apparent that Kitchen has read the various articles in Italian, French, English and German (mostly by Pettinato the excavator and Matthiae the linguist) relating to Ebla. As with all the chapters, there are bibliographical references and notes in the back of the book. The Ebla chapter e.g. has 57 such notes. In addition, p. 156 lists about a dozen works on the subject and p. 159 has a simple map of the city.

Other appendices include three pages of synchronized charts from the earliest period to New Testament times, a select bibliography, three simple maps, a general index and an index to biblical references. So all this makes for a lot of information for the money.

On the negative side of the ledger, it must be said that the text is hard to read. The print is tight, and one is blitzed with so many facts that if he didn't have a fairly good background against which to put all this information, he might be overwhelmed. And Kitchen's style is not the best. Many sentences go on and on with very complex structures (a la older German works). While there is a certain freshness, e.g. as in referring to Shoshenq's victory stele as a "'jumbo' visiting card" (p. 110) there is also a certain tartness in dealing with alternate opinions, especially those espoused by liberal scholars. Typical of those more colorful remarks which exemplify the apologetic character of this volume is this one directed to the tendency to date the Old Testament

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books late: Speculations by T.L. Thompson in terms of 'Maccabean or post-Maccabean' (!) chronology imposed on the Hebrew text simply beggar belief as a species of cabbalistic gematria." (p. 57).

So, all in all, the book is a strong defense of the Bible as it has been traditionally understood, including its miracles, large numbers, and countless historical and geographical references.

## THEOLOGY

ESSENTIALS OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY, VOLUME I: GOD, AUTHORITY, AND SALVATION  
By Donald G. Bloesch.

Harper & Row, 1978.

264 pages, \$12.95

*Reviewed by*  
*Clark H. Pinnock*  
*TSE Coordinator.*

I will not try to conceal my delight about the appearance of the first volume of a two volume systematic theology by Dr. Bloesch. It fills an enormous gap in evangelical publishing in that it constitutes the *only* up to date systematic theology that affirms the range of our convictions strongly and interacts with today's theological leaders, all within a reasonably brief compass. It is especially welcome because it does not endorse some narrow confessional stance, but is catholic in its openness to Lutheran and Calvinist, pietist and charismatic, anabaptist and orthodox traditions. It is helpful too in its constructive criticism of the 'bane' of evangelicalism when it undercuts its own credibility by concentrating on peripheral and nonessential

matters. I believe Bloesch sets the course for a new alignment in evangelical theology which will recover its roots both in Reformation and renewal movements, and can present a viable theological alternative to the contemporary options. This book, better than any other, articulates the *TSE* vision of a scholarly, non-partisan evangelical theology which promises to unite a wide cross-section of people on a common doctrinal platform.

Let me offer a few preliminary comments on this first volume, leaving until later a review of the completed work. The second volume, by the way, is scheduled to appear in December, 1978.

1. Bloesch chooses to treat the large topics of Christian theology in an orderly manner rather than pursuing a central 'systematic' principle through the entire work.
2. Though open to a reverent use of historical criticism, Bloesch sees a danger in allowing theology to come under the scrutiny of the criteria of 'general reasonableness', insisting that its validity is detected by faith through the witness of the Spirit. This is the theme in the work which pleases me the least.
3. On the doctrine of God, Bloesch shows his respect for Barth's great chapter on the subject in *Church Dogmatics II/1*, and settles upon a happy middle ground somewhere between omnicausal and process theism, interacting with both. There are details in this chapter in particular which



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will need to be expanded in future writing, for example, the difficult question of God's foreknowledge in relation to the issue of determinism.

4. Regarding Scripture, it is newsworthy to note that Bloesch is content to speak of the infallibility *and* the inerrancy of the Bible, while correctly insisting that these terms be defined biblically and not be taken to close the door on respectful biblical criticism. Here too Bloesch endorses the moderate position *TSE* has taken in the past.

5. On the deity of Christ and the substitutionary atonement, the writer is admirably orthodox and compelling. He defends both the virgin birth and the bodily resurrection of Jesus, and is sympathetic with efforts to think through kenotic Christology in a traditional framework.

6. Three of the chapter deal with soteriology: with total depravity, salvation by grace, and faith alone. From the titles one can see that Bloesch is oriented to the Reformed camp; indeed, he is professor in a Presbyterian seminary and comes out of the Reformed churches. But we ought not to miss a significant shift from historic Calvinism in his theology at this point. For, although he argues strongly for the radical fallenness of man and his inability to respond to the gospel in his own strength, he also insists that the scope of the atonement is universal and that all stand under the sign of election. I

for one deeply appreciate Bloesch's willingness to revise Calvinistic orthodoxy at the point where, for me, the shadow falls most darkly.

In closing, I would recommend that all evangelicals and members of *TSE* secure this systematic theology because it best articulates in my judgment the path to follow as we bear testimony in the context of contemporary theology.

## PHILOSOPHY

### GOD, FREEDOM, AND EVIL

By Alvin Plantinga

Harper & Row, 1974

112 pages; \$3.45.

*Reviewed by Stephen T. Davis*  
Associate Editor.

Alvin Plantinga is one of the top Christian philosophers in the world today. Professor of Philosophy at Calvin College, he is well known in Christian and secular philosophical circles for his logical skills, his rigorous arguments, and his energetic defense of full-blooded Christianity. This book covers some of the same ground as his more technical *The Nature of Necessity* (Oxford University Press: 1974), but unlike most of Plantinga's works, it is aimed at the general reader rather than at the author's professional colleagues. Seminary students *can* understand this book; they must only be willing to think as hard as they read.

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*God, Freedom and Evil* is a discussion of two main topics in the philosophy of religion, viz. the problem of evil and the ontological argument for the existence of God. There are also excellent but brief discussions of the problem of divine foreknowledge and human freedom and of the cosmological and teleological arguments for the existence of God. Plantinga's overall conclusion from his discussion is that theism is a rationally acceptable world-view.

Critics often say that the problem of evil shows that theism, which affirms the following statements, is self-contradictory:

- 1) God is wholly good
- 2) God is omnipotent
- 3) Evil exists

The problem, they say, is that 1), 2), and 3) cannot all be true; the truth of any two of them implies the falsity of the third. Plantinga rebuts the charge by means of the "free will defense." Following Augustine, he argues that moral evil came into the world through the free choices of created beings. God cannot logically create a world of morally free creatures and guarantee that they will never sin. If they are free, it is up to them whether they sin or not. Furthermore, a better world might well result from God's having created a world of free creatures who sometimes sin than would result from any other sort of world he might have created. It is logically possible, then, that God has a good reason for allowing evil to exist. Thus 1), 2), and 3) are consistent and theism is not contradictory.

Plantinga also argues that God's omnipotence and goodness are compatible both with the huge *amount* of moral evil that exists in the world and with natural evil, i.e., pain and suffering not caused by human beings. Of particular interest here (and a point that has caused much comment) is Plantinga's crucial use of the figure of *Satan* in his argument. Finally, Plantinga argues against the claim that the existence of evil makes God's goodness and omnipotence (not demonstrably false but) improbable.

Plantinga is also known for his interest in the ontological argument for the existence of God. Invented by Anselm in the 11th century, this argument is one of the most fascinating in the history of philosophy. Unlike most philosophers, Plantinga believes that the ontological argument has never decisively been refuted, although he places little or no religious emphasis on it. Plantinga skillfully discusses Anselm's own version of the argument, the criticisms of the argument that were raised by Gaunilo and Kant, and the contemporary modal version of the argument of Charles Hartshorne and Norman Malcolm. Finally, he criticizes the standard Anselmian argument and offers his own version. It relies crucially on the notion that the greatest possible being exists if it is logically possible that the greatest possible being exists.

I disagree with Plantinga at two points, but even if I am correct, these are minor imperfections in a first-rate work. Although I agree that Kant fails to refute the arguments, I do not think his remarks are at bottom irrelevant to it. It is quite correct that

Anselm does not "define God into existence," as Kant may have thought Anselm tried to do, but Anselm does indeed treat the term "exists" as if it were a "real predicate" in that premise of the ontological argument that says, "Existence in reality is greater than existence in the mind alone." That is, he thinks existence "adds something" to the concept of a thing, viz. increased greatness.

Another minor point. In response to Plantinga's own criticism of the Anselmian argument (pp. 101-104), I don't see why we can't say that the greatest possible being has unsurpassed greatness (if it exists) in all worlds--otherwise a greater being is possible, viz. one that has unsurpassed greatness in all worlds. This is to say that the greatest possible being is a necessary being--which is surely what Anselm means anyway, since he makes it clear in *Proslogion III* that it is greater to be a necessary being than a contingent being.

This is a book which no seminarian should miss. It is not often that the evangelical world has a spokesman who is recognized as a seminal figure in his field by Christian and non-Christian alike. My advice is: take advantage of this fact, read the book carefully, enjoy some first-rate philosophy of religion, and discover a truly definitive reply to the problem of evil.

IF THERE IS A GOD, WHY ARE THERE  
ATHIESTS?

By R.C. Sproul.

Bethany Fellowship, 1978.

166 pages; \$1.95.

Reviewed by Stephen T. Davis.

R.C. Sproul is Visiting Professor of Apologetics at Gordon-Conwell Seminary. His book, which was originally published in 1974 under the title *The Psychology of Atheism*, appears to have two main aims. First, Sproul tries to answer the classic criticism of religion based on the "projection theory" of Feuerbach, Marx, and Freud. Second, he tries to "turn the tables" on such critics by producing an analogous argument against religious *unbelief*. In general I believe Sproul succeeds admirably in achieving the first, but not the second.

Theologians should address themselves to the projection theory of religion for nearly every believer--scholar or not--has been exposed to it. You believe in God, it says, not because God exists, but because you *need* to believe in God; you long for there to be a kindly, powerful ruler of the world who will assuage your guilt and promise you paradise, and so you project these longings onto the universe; Accordingly, God is nothing but a human invention. Feuerbach invented this critique of religion; Marx gave it a socio-economic twist; Freud interpreted it psychologically.

Without using this term, Sproul correctly points out that this argument fails because it is an almost perfect illustration of the "genetic fallacy." No theory about the origin of *any* belief, be it a religious belief or not, is relevant to the question of the belief's truth. Sproul admits that the projection theory is at least partially correct as a theory of the *origin* of religion. Religion *is* a wish-fulfilling opiate for some people--but fortunately this does not apply to the Christian God.

This is Sproul at his strongest. His point is that the Christian God is not the sort of being we would expect people to invent were he merely a projection of their deepest desires. God does indeed have some "comforting" qualities--he is loving and forgiving and he promises eternal life. But these properties are outweighed by his truly threatening qualities--his power (which intimidates us), his holiness (which makes us ashamed), his omniscience (from which no secret can be hidden), his wrath (which threatens us with hell), and his sovereignty (which prevents us from being autonomous). Thus far Sproul's work is quite incisive and provides a genuine service to Christianity.

Sproul is on shakier ground, however, when he attacks religious unbelief by offering a causal explanation of it. Relying on an extended exegesis of Romans 1, Sproul argues that it is clear to everyone that God exists; the problem is that we rebelled against God and refuse to acknowledge him. Lost in sin, our minds are darkened by our bias against God. Unbelief exists, then, because of sin. The upshot is that believers who feel threatened by the attacks of critics can relax: the burden of proof is now on the unbeliever to justify his position, not on the believer to justify his.

But nagging questions about this approach come to mind which Sproul does not answer. For example, in precisely what sense is it "manifestly true," as Sproul claims, that God exists (see pp. 71, 152)? Unsophisticated believers, of course, can be comforted by such claims, and there is a well-known line of Christian apologetic, with which evangelicals are familiar, which blithely assures us that the

available evidence, if weighed fairly, must lead any rational person to Christianity. Each time I encounter this line of argument, I confess I patiently await the expected irrefutable argument for the truth of Christianity. Unfortunately, it is never forthcoming. "It sounds good, folks, but it just ain't true" that unbelievers are all intellectually incompetent and only Christians are rational. To imply that the existence of the Christian God is "manifestly true" is *at the very least* misleading; certainly it would be oversimplified to say that Paul makes this claim. Sproul should have explained himself much more thoroughly than he has done.

One other critical point: while I agree wholeheartedly that God's threatening qualities make him a poor candidate for status as an anthropomorphic projection, it may be that Sproul leaves himself open to criticism because of his heavy reliance on the analysis of religious experience of people like Otto, Eliade, and Sartre. For example, how would he answer a believer who simply said: "Well, encountering God is in no sense a trauma for me"? Do all believers experience in God an ominously threatening trauma which must be repressed? Sproul seems to be saying yes, but this is hard to believe. I suspect he is either generalizing from the experience of God some believers admittedly do have or else is confusing a *theological* analysis of our relationship to God with a *descriptive* analysis of what people in fact experience when they encounter God.

Despite these caveats, Sproul's book is definitely worth reading. Above all, his reply to the "projection" critique of religion seems to me decisive.

**Practical Theology:**

LIBERATION AND CHANGE By Gustavo Gutierrez and Richard Shaull (Knox) *Reviewed in Occasional Bulletin (Vol. II, No. 3) by Alan Neeley (Southeastern Baptist Seminary, Wake Forest)*

THY WILL BE DONE: PRAYING THE OUR FATHER AS SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITY By Michael Crosby (Orbis). *Reviewed in Occasional Bulletin (Vol. II, No. 3) by Thomas Clark (Woodstock Theological Center, Washington, D.C.)*

THE EMERGENT GOSPEL: THEOLOGY FROM THE UNDERSIDE OF HISTORY By Sergio and Virginia Torres (Orbis) *Reviewed in Occasional Bulletin (Vol. II, No. 3) by Richard Shaull (Princeton)*

**New Testament:**

PAUL: APOSTLE OF THE HEART SET FREE By F.F. Bruce (Eerdmans) *Reviewed in Christian Century August 2 - 9, 1978 by Paul L. Maier (Western Michigan Univ.)*

**Theology:**

FUNDAMENTALISM By James Barr (Westminster) *Reviewed in The Christian Century (July 19-26) by Donald Dayton (North Paul, Chicago) and in Christianity Today (June 2) by William Wells (University of Hawaii) and 3 part essay review in Christianity Today (June 2, 16 and July 21) by Carl F. H. Henry (theologian, author)*

JESUS IS THE VICTOR! KARL BARTH'S DOCTRINE OF SALVATION (Abingdon) By Donald Bloesch *Reviewed in Reformed Journal, August 1978 by Frederick Trost (UCC, Chicago)*

PAUL AND PALESTINIAN JUDIASM By C.P. Sanders (Fortress). *Reviewed in Christianity Today (April 21, 1978) by David Aune (St. Xavier, Chicago)*

THE BETRAYAL OF THE WEST By Jaques Ellul (Seabury) *Reviewed in the Christian Century (Aug. 30-Sept. 6) By Donald Bloesch (Dubuque)*

**ARTICLES WORTH READING:**

Walter Vogels, "'It is not Good that the 'Mensch' Should be Alone; I Will Make Him/Her a Helper Fit for Him/Her' (Gen 2:18)," *Eglise et Theologie* 9 (1978), p. 9-35.

R. E. Murphy, "Toward a Commentary on the Song of Songs" *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 39 (1977) p. 482-496.

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B.S. Childs, "The Canonical Shape of the Prophetic Literature," *Interpretation* 32 (1978) 46-55.

Elmer A. Martens, "Tackling Old Testament Theology," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* (1977) 123-132.

Richard J. Baukham, "The Rise of the Apocalyptic," *Themelios* 3/2 (1978) 10-23.

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ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to  
TSF RESEARCH, 16221 Mulholland Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90049

FORUM TAPES ORDER FORM

<u>#</u>	<u>Speaker</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>Individual Cassette or Series Price</u>
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TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to FORUM TAPES, 8301  
Bruton Rd., Dallas, TX 75217.

MONOGRAPH ORDER FORM:

<u>CODE #</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
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TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_ POSTAGE \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: TSF Monograph, 233 Langdon, Madison, WI 53703.