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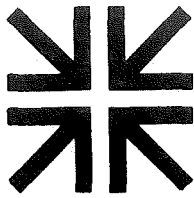
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TSF News and Reviews

OCTOBER, 1979

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Editor: Mark R. Branson
(TSF General Secretary)
Advisory Editors: Clark H. Pinnock
(Toronto School of Theology)
Paul A. Mickey
(Duke Divinity School)
Managing Editor: Edwin Blum
(TSF Director)

Associate Editors: Stephen T. Davis
(Claremont Men's College) *Philosophy*;
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Donald Tinder (New College, Berkeley),
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Contributing Editors (Students): Douglas
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William Linder (Fuller Theological
Seminary); Nancy Roberts (Harvard
Divinity School); Gregory Youngchild
(General Theological Seminary, New
York).

CONTENTS:

Open Letter No. 2	1
by Mark R. Branson	
News and Comments	2
(TSF Personnel; Across the Atlantic; AAR Consultation; Jewish Theological Defends the Resurrection; Urbana TSF Seminars)	
Exploring Spiritual Formation	6
by Gregory Youngchild	
Book Reviews	7
TSF Research, Monographs and Forum Tapes (Order forms)	14

TSF News & Reviews is published five times during the school year (October-May). Membership in TSF (\$5/yr.; \$9/2 yrs.) includes both N&R and THEMELIOS (3 issues), the theological journal of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. Separate subscription rates are: N&R — \$4/yr.; Themelios — \$3/yr. Bulk rates are available on request. All subscriptions and correspondence (except as noted on special order forms) should be sent to Theological Students Fellowship, 233 Langdon, Madison, WI 53703. TSF is a division of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship.

OPEN LETTER #2 *

By Mark Branson

Are seminary years solely for gathering tools? Does preparation for ordination involve only a degree and denominational exams? Will one automatically be ready for a pastorate upon graduation?

The purpose of TSF is to help students prepare for ministry. I see three major concerns: scholarship, spiritual formation and "works of faith" (both personal and corporate obedience). Most seminaries offer classes which give you tools for gaining knowledge (Bible, theology, etc.) and for ministry (preaching, counseling, administration, etc.). Students have made me aware (as did my own seminary years) that one needs help gaining resources and guidance to make the most of these years.¹

SCHOLARSHIP

Scholarship involves integrating what one receives from professors and texts with one's previous understanding and the peer dialogue on the campus. Does your school frequently see professors and students openly struggling with questions outside or inside the classroom? Do professors demonstrate for students how they go about their studying and writing? Are discussions within the seminar-community defensive "position statements" or times of tentative, freeing exploration? Does scripture act as a norm? Do some participants offer the helpful insights from church history? Do discussions tend to build walls or create understanding? While some professors and students only wish to force their views onto others and avoid critical, biblical discussions, I have found that most individuals are in genuine pursuit of understanding the gospel. They know such an accomplishment comes through prayerful, scholarly, self-critical study and dialogue. Paul Hanson (Professor of Old Testament, Harvard) helped many of us last year at the Society of Biblical Literature in saying that the responsibility of biblical scholars is "to subject to an ongoing criticism the sources of the various presuppositions which underlie both scholarly and popular uses of the Bible, be they derived from dogma, current cultural fads, national ideologies or philosophical positions."² Within TSF we offer *News and Reviews* along with *Themelios*, bibliographies, special papers, cassette lectures and conferences to aid the seminarian's pursuit of scholarship. TSF chapters are encouraged to meet for purposes of discussing student papers, class lectures, journal articles

and books--and to invite professors into that informal process. Students in a particular area may wish to set aside a weekend for theological reflection with a resource person. The TSF office can help coordinate such activities. We also welcome student contributors for our publication. You will notice the addition this year of "contributing editors" to provide this opportunity.³

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

The most often heard complaint from seminarians concerns the lack of resources which help one grow spiritually. Gregory Youngchild (M.Div. Yale Divinity School, now studying at General Theological Seminary in New York) has become a regular contributor to *News and Reviews*. Greg's article in this issue outlines concerns in the area of spiritual formation. TSF chapters are encouraged to sponsor seminars and "Silent Retreats" for their seminary communities.⁴ Such a service will not only be growth producing for members but will benefit many others.

WORKS OF FAITH

While personal piety needs to regain a positive image, biblical concerns for political and economic justice also needs to continue being renewed.⁵ European *HOKHMA* members met with Samuel Escobar this summer. Toronto TSF invited Jim Wallis (editor of *Sojourners*) to speak to them last winter. Seminarians need to explore opportunities within various outreach projects of churches and schools. Scholarly pursuits and personal spirituality cannot be legitimately segmented from the "living it out" required by our Lord. Seminarians are talking more and more about justice--yet that matters little without practice. TSF members could organize not only learning opportunities for their classmates⁶ but also mission activities. Remember to provide time for personal and theological reflection/discussion following activities.

TOO MUCH?

How do such additional reading and activities fit into class schedule and church involvement? Perhaps a carefully planned three year exposure needs to be implemented. Individual members need to insure learning/growth/discipline in these various areas. TSF chapters can help discern the needs of their seminary community.⁷ Work closely with deans and nearby churches. A few students and professors can have a profound impact on this generation's graduates. Let us know how our services can be improved. I hope this year our prayers will continue to unite with our Lord, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth..."

TSF PERSONNEL

A number of changes become effective this fall for TSF. Mark Branson will become General Secretary--allowing him to move beyond a volunteer status and commit full time to pastoring members and editing publications. He will remain at the Los Angeles office and work with a new secretary, Julie Dart. Glenda Meyer will continue to cover TSF concerns (subscriptions, mail-orders) in the Madison office. Edwin Blum will be working with

*Open Letter #1 appeared in the October, 1978 *News and Reviews*.

¹ Helmut Thielicke's *A Little Exercise for Young Theologians* should be required reading for all seminarians. (Eerdmans, 1962, 41pp).

² Hanson's entire address is available from TSF Research.

³ Some of the best recent scholarship includes: Bloesch, *Donald Essentials of Evangelical Theology, Vols. I & II* (Harper and Row, 1978); Bromiley, *Geoffrey Historical Theology: An Introduction*, (Eerdmans, 1978); Bruce, F.F. *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free* (Eerdmans, 1978); Childs, Brevard *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*, (Fortress, 1979. Reviewed in this issue of *News and Reviews*.); Marshall, I. Howard (ed.) *New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Principles and Methods*, (Eerdmans, 1977) and *Origins of New Testament Christology*, (Inter-Varsity Press, 1976); Oden, Thomas *Agenda for Theology: Recovering Christian Roots*, (Harper and Row, 1979); Rogers, Jack and Donald McKim *The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible*, (Harper and Row, 1979)

Through special arrangements George Ladd's *New Testament Criticism* (Eerdmans) and Colin Brown, ed., *History, Criticism and Faith* (Inter-Varsity Press) are available at discounts. See the order forms.

⁴ For good books on this subject I can recommend: Kelsey, Morton *The Other Side of Silence*, (Paulist); Foster, Richard *Celebration of Discipline*, (Harper and Row) and Nouwen, Henri *Pray to Live*, (Fides/Clairtain).

⁵ Sider, Ronald, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*, (Inter Varsity Press) is available from TSF--see the order forms.

⁶ *Evangelicals for Social Action* continues to offer the best resources and contacts in this area. Discipleship workshops would be very worthwhile on a campus. Personal membership and formation of chapters would also benefit the seminary community. Write to Evangelicals for Social Action, 300 W. Apsley St., Philadelphia, PA. 19144.

⁷ Help other seminaries by keeping me informed of your plans and activities. By printing such news we have discovered other groups find a great deal of encouragement.

IVCF Vice-President Peter Northrup as Director of TSF and Managing Editor of *TSF News and Reviews*. Ed is a teaching Elder at Trinity Fellowship in Dallas and is Associate Professor of Historical Theology at Dallas Theological Seminary. Clark Pinnock, (Professor of Theology in Toronto) is joined by Paul Mickey (Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology, Duke Divinity School) as Advisory Editors for TSF publications. They also serve as Associate Editors for *Themelios*.

Across The Atlantic

(These reports were written for *TSF News and Prayer Letter*, published by British TSF.)

REPORT ON EUROPEAN THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS' CONFERENCE

HOKHMA, the European TSF, held a 5-day conference in Belgium. Martin Hallett, the TSF Vice-Chairman for Britain, filed this report.

"The Conference was attended by over 70 theological students from seven different countries in Europe-Belgium, England, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Norway, and Switzerland. The TSF secretary from the USA was also there, just to complete the 'international' flavour! The four speakers were also drawn from different parts of Europe - Pastor Berge from Brussels, Herr Hafner from Marburg in Germany, Mr. de Jong from Amsterdam, and Dr. Howard Marshall from Aberdeen.

During the Conference, each speaker gave two talks, with some time for discussion afterwards. Pastor Berge spoke powerfully on the theme, 'The Fear of the LORD is the Beginning of Wisdom,' which is the 'motto' of the *FOURMA* group; while Herr Hafner presented some thoughts on the nature of the conflict between Biblical Faith and what he called 'Scientific Empiricism.' Mr de Jong tackled an extremely difficult but important area for theology today, namely that of 'materialist hermeneutics' - the question of what the Bible means when it speaks of 'the poor' and the 'oppressed,' and the ways in which modern political ideas have crept into certain patterns of Biblical exegesis and interpretation. Howard Marshall completed a very varied programme with two talks on 'The Development of Christology,' with particular reference to the titles used of Jesus in the New Testament.

Each of the talks was translated into English, French and German. Once or twice the translators (mainly drawn from the theological students themselves) became painfully aware of the difficulty of expressing certain concepts in another language, and there were occasional pauses while one or another of the translators sought words which would accurately convey what the speaker had just said! For general conversation during the Conference, I soon discovered that most people were more prepared to use their English (which was generally very good) than to struggle to understand my very rusty French!

We learnt a great deal at the Conference, not only from the speakers, but also from our conversations (and our games of football!) with the other students. There is nothing like the amount of Evangelical scholarship in the rest of Europe that there is in England and the USA; but this Conference was evidence of an increasing number of Evangelical students in University departments, Theological Colleges (almost all church-controlled), and the few Independent faculties which have sprung up in recent years. The situation in each country is different, and we learnt much from seeing how others tackle similar basic problems to ours, but in very different situations."

A REPORT OF THE ANNUAL TSF CONFERENCE AT SWANWICK, DERBYSHIRE

Some 60 of us met together over the weekend April 6-10 to think about the mind-stretching topics of the Beginning and the End: Creation and the Fall, and Eschatology.



Tri-lingual football

Geoffrey Thomas, minister of Alfred Place Baptist Church, Aberystwyth, opened the Conference with the first of his three expositions on the implication of Creation and Eschatology, stressing the importance of Praise in our response to the sure hope of the Lord's return.

Our second speaker was Dr. David Hanson, General Secretary of the International Association for Reformed Faith and Action. His first address introduced us to the figure of Abraham Kuyper, and his second and third to the theology of creation and fall drawing considerably from the works of Kuyper and his followers. Dr. Hanson explained the influence of Kuyperian thought on the Dutch resistance movement against the Nazi's in the last war.

Donald Guthrie of the London Bible College, well-known for his New Testament Introduction, took us on an amazingly comprehensive tour of all the relevant material on eschatology in the New Testament. He divided up his material by looking at the gospels in lecture 1, Paul in lecture 2 and the rest on the New Testament in lecture 3. Then within each lecture he looked at the material dealing with (i) the Second Coming of Christ (ii) Life after death and (iii) Judgment. The result was a very striking picture of how inextricably woven into every part of the New Testament is its teaching about the End.

And fourthly John Wenham spoke on the early chapters of Genesis, especially the Creation and the Flood. Throughout the lectures Mr. Wenham brought home the *wonder* of creation, in whatever form it took place, and hence the greatness of the Creator-God.



John Wenham addressing students

The conference center was shared with a UCCF Colleges conference, so that we were able to borrow Michael Griffiths, one of their main speakers, for an informal session on Theological Education Worldwide. In it he contrasted the stress on *content* in British theological training, with the emphasis on *goals* in theological training in other countries where the aim was much more specifically to equip prospective pastors for the work of ministry. The meeting stirred those present to see how exciting theological education overseas could be.

Then there were seminars led by TSF exec members on Science, Education, Ethics, Male and Female Roles, Politics, Ecology, Work and History. Each day started with a meeting for prayer, and on Sunday morning we met for a communion service at which the retiring chairperson, Gordon McConville, preached on the use of Sunday.

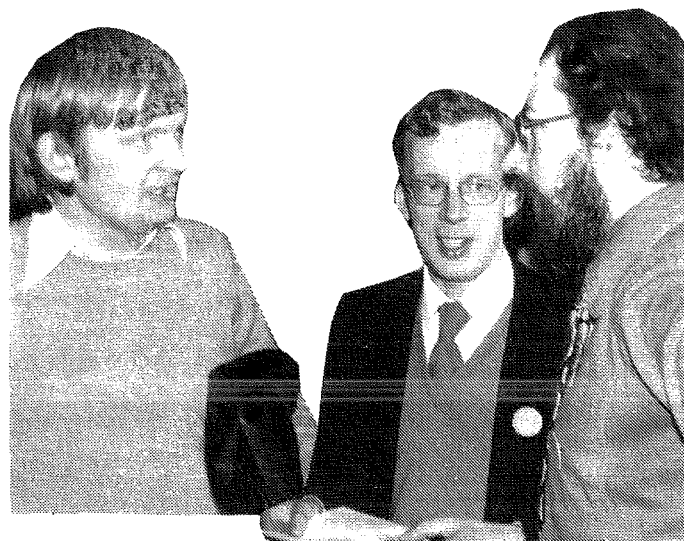


M.B.J. Berge, I. Howard Marshall and HOKHMA Secretary Gerard Pella

Altogether, therefore, we had a full conference programme with a number of valuable opportunities to learn. But, as is true at conferences, almost as valuable was the opportunity for informal conversations between sessions. The conference members came from a wide variety of places—some from places where they were maybe one of only two or three TSF members, and others from large, flourishing groups. Two came all the way from Princeton, New Jersey, USA and seemed to feel their long trip had been well worth it; and the American TSF Secretary, Mark Branson, had come even further—from Los Angeles, bringing a display of literature and reading lists published by TSF there.



Jan Schep (The Netherlands)



Peter Read (incoming Secretary), Jim Mynors (outgoing Secretary) and Michael Smithson (new TSF Chairman, student at Trinity, Bristol)

(Comment from the Editor:) My ten days of European conferences were enlightening and thought-provoking. The British conference mainly drew "undergraduate" students who were majoring in various religion areas. HOKHMA is composed more of students preparing for the pastorate. I discovered that Europeans especially look to the US for contemporary evangelical scholarship. Americans, including John H. Yoder, Ward Gasque and James Parker are contributing to their journal (a French-language publication). The PBU (French Inter-Varsity Press) is publishing a special series of HOKHMA books.

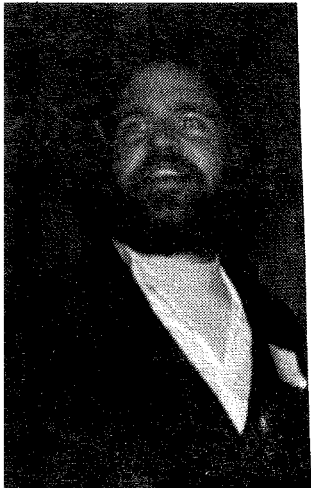
After five years of service in England, Jim Mynors is passing the Secretary job to Peter Read. Gerard Pella has served as the first Secretary for HOKHMA for two years. Now he will finalize his preparations for pastoring and sharing HOKHMA responsibilities with several students.



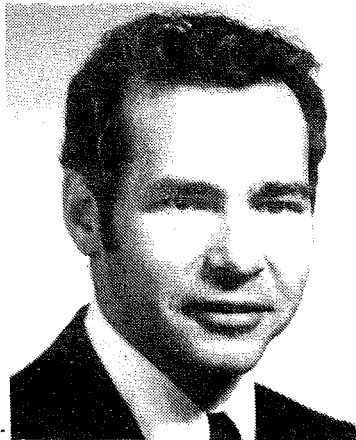
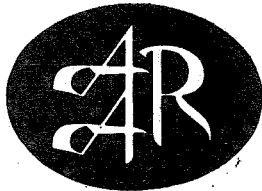
Mr. Reidar Strand and Miss Solveig Skrogrand (Normay)

AAR Consultation On Evangelical Theology

On November 18 from 9:00-12:00 a.m. Mark Branson will chair a Consultation on Evangelical Theology at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion. The conference runs November 15-18 in New York City. The four papers to be presented are: Ray Anderson (Fuller) on "Theological Anthropology: A New Look at Human Rights and Responsibility;" John A. Yoder (Goden College and Notre Dame University) on "Reformed Versus Anabaptist Social Strategies: The Limits of a Typology;" Paul Mickey (Duke Divinity School) on "A Process Perspective as an Option for Theology of Inspiration;" and Paul Holmer on "Evangelicalism: Theology and/or Experience." Respondents are Noel Erskine (Candler School of Theology), Donald Dayton (Northern Baptist Theological Seminary), Gerald Sheppard (Union Theological Seminary, New York) and David Wells (Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary). Scheduling information and abstracts are available from TSF Research.



Mark Branson



Paul Mickey

JEWISH THEOLOGIAN DEFENDS RESURRECTION

(Grand Rapids) At a Jewish-Christian dialogue held for 120 teachers of religion in the North-Starkenburg district of the Evangelical Church in Germany, Christian scholars and a Jewish theologian from Israel found themselves in unlikely opposite camps. In the dialogue, liberal Christian scholars took the side of the late Rudolf Bultmann of "Demythologization" fame and declared the Easter event a myth. The actual happening of the resurrection was defended by Dr. Pinchas Lapida, religious science and theology professor at Jerusalem University. "Without a factual historical event there is no act of faith," according to Professor Lapida. "Just as there would have been no Judaism without the Sinai event, so there would have been no Christendom without the Easter event." The Jewish scholar found factual proof of the reality and fruitfulness of the Easter faith "in the explosive spread of Christianity in the populated world, where more than a billion people became Christians." (from The Reformed Ecumenical Synod News Exchange 5/8/79).

TSF SEMINARS AT URBANA '79

During the upcoming Inter-Varsity Student Missions Convention (December 27-31) TSF will host three afternoon seminars. The Reverend John R.W. Stott will speak and answer questions during one of the seminars and the topics of "universalism" and "liberation theology" will receive the attention of panel discussions at the other meetings. We will be able to benefit from the comments of theologians from other nations as they dialogue with North American professors. The enclosed Urbana brochure and registration form provide you with further information on the convention. You will need to register immediately - the conference will soon have the capacity 17,000 registrants.

Urbana 79

Pray Urbana 79
December 27-31 1979
 12th Inter-Varsity Student Missions Convention

That All Nations Might Believe And Obey Jesus Christ

Inter-Varsity Urbana 79
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 Madison, Wisconsin 53703
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Exploring Spiritual Formation

WORKING OUT OUR SALVATION
An Exploration into Spiritual Formation

By Gregory A. Youngchild

In recent years, "spiritual formation" has received increasing attention within evangelical circles. In some, though, the term still evokes images of monks and nuns who meekly submit their will to an authoritarian superior who, in turn, demands the performance of austere penances and unquestioned obedience to legalities as a way of "winning heaven." To a few, "spiritual formation" seems to have overtones of austerity and self-abnegation, perhaps necessary but hardly inviting; to a few among those few, it might even seem vaguely connected with "that Eastern stuff"-- yoga and yogis, macrobiotic diets and chants of "OM" and bearded gurus.

Behind each of these caricatures lies a legitimate caution, born of someone's or some era's well-intentioned but ill-conceived and improperly-implemented idea of what spiritual formation is really all about. Perhaps it is a caution against an overly-Pelagian view; perhaps it reminds us of the importance of flexibility and sensitivity to individuals; perhaps it brings back into view the place for affirmation and celebration. Whatever the case, the fact that errors have happened in its practice is no reason for us to neglect its central importance in our life as Christians. For in simplest terms, it *is* our life as Christians: it is our life as we live it out under the constant shaping and refashioning by the Spirit of the risen Lord Jesus Christ. Spiritual formation is the living re-creation day-to-day by and under the aegis of the Spirit of the one who declares, "Behold, I make all things new." (Rev. 21:5) To neglect spiritual formation is, in essence, to refuse to participate in the creative and reformative process into which we are called as Christians, to refuse to allow grace to conform our lives ever more to that of our Lord and Master, to refuse to enter fully and boldly into the inheritance of the saints--the children of God.

It may be obvious that this is what "spiritual formation" really means. But again it may not be so self-evident. It seems to me that spiritual formation has very often, albeit not invariably, been couched in terms of *what we must do*; so put, it is difficult to avoid the implications of "earning salvation" or "meriting God's love" or the like. To be consistent with Scripture, we must place the emphasis not on what we must do but rather on what *God has already done*. So shifting the accent to its proper place, spiritual formation takes on whole new levels of meaning. It ceases to be seen as formulae we practice in order to "catch God's eye" or to "make God listen" or to "prove we're worthy." The implicit manipulative intentions suddenly have no basis in fact and, gratefully, downward fall all our petty illusions about who is actually the sovereign master of our lives. In place of those intentions and illusions can be formed solid hope and genuine confidence which can give birth to new courage and Christianly-grounded action. To "work out your salvation..." as Paul calls the life of spiritual formation from the perspective I have suggested, can be understood and lived as the appropriation of what God in Jesus Christ has already accomplished and now offers to us through the Spirit. Paul's phrase ceases to be thought of as a command to *work toward* salvation in a meritorious and burdensome way, and comes to be seen as an invitation to *manifest* the salvation we have already been given in a challenging and joyous way.

None of what I have said about the difference in perspective should be understood as suggesting that spiritual formation is not hard work, that it does not involve personal acts of free will, that discipline can be divorced from true discipleship. But this perspective changes what our own attitude can be in the face of that hard work. Instead of despairing over what seems and indeed is impossible for us on our own and in our own right, we can be optimistic at the sight of what Christ has made possible for us to do and be in the Spirit.

Furthermore, this perspective permits a more wholistic view of the spiritual life. Rather than allowing us to describe the spiritual life as one compartment or subset of the Christian life, it urges us to understand that the spiritual life encompasses and embodies the entire Christian life, that every facet of our being--body, soul and spirit--and every aspect of our lives--private, corporate, professional, devotional and all the rest--can be touched by the Spirit, can become for us instruments of God's grace, can be transformed into an infinite variety of means for our own expression of our love for God and for our witnessing to the saving love of God for us in Jesus..

In coming issues, I wish to explore the connection between spiritual formation and a few central aspects of the Christian life like prayer, scripture marriage, community, and social action. How can each of these function for us as contexts for spiritual formation? How does the particular understanding of spiritual formation that I have herein outlined "flesh itself out," so to say, in each of these contexts? Finally, in a longer article, I wish to explore the role of a spiritual director in the process of spiritual formation. Throughout the series, I hope to provide some cognitive "monkey pins" by which we can link together the various aspects of our lives which might not be seen at first glance as truly connected, so that we may begin to develop a more unified view of our lives in Christ. And through these brief essays, it is my prayer that all of us may discover new ways to grow more vulnerable to the Spirit who desires to make true and incarnate in each of us Paul's declaration: "Therefore, if any one of us is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come." (2 Cor. 5:17)

Book Reviews

Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture by Brevard Childs

reviewed by Gerald Sheppard

The Law and the Fourth Gospel by S. Pancaro and *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* by J.L. Martyn

reviewed by Don Carson

The Sermon on the Mount, An Evangelical Exposition of Matthew 5-7

by D. A. Carson

reviewed by H. Wayne House

The Study of Theology by Gerhard Ebeling

reviewed by Clark Pinnock

Invitation to Faith: Christian Belief Today by Paul Jersild

reviewed by Gabriel Fackre

An Evaluation of Claims to the Charismatic Gifts by Douglas Judisch

reviewed by J. Rodman Williams

God, Power, and Evil: A Process Theodicy by David R. Griffin

reviewed by Stephen Davis

Service Evangelism by Richard Stoll Armstrong

reviewed by David Watson

Living Together Alone (The New American Monasticism)

by Charles Fracchia

reviewed by Gregory Youngchild

Recently received books and worthwhile articles

-Mark Branson



Book Reviews

*roduction to the Old Testament as
ipture by Brevard Childs.*
ress, 1979. 28.50.
iewed by Gerald Sheppard, Assistant
fessor of Old Testament, Union The-
gical Seminary, New York.

a student, friend, and now a col-
gue in a nearby institution, I owe
e of my scholarly training to Prof-
or Childs than to any other mentor.
efore, I must admit difficulty pre-
ding cold objectivity about a book
se formulation stimulated so much
my own development as a young schor-
r. Although this book would be a
ninal contribution to Old Testament
udies solely on grounds of its com-
ehensive scholarship, its genius lies
the new vision of the biblical text
ich Childs proposes.

r that reason it is a serious mistake
r a reader to see in the book merely
new "method." Childs has always had
slightly antihermeneutical streak in
m. There is no talk of "canon criti-
sm" (James Sanders' term) because
Childs suspects that great interpreta-
on always exceeds clever proposals
methods. The problem for Childs is
en more basic than finding a method,
is as basic as finding a text!
onsequently, the thrust of this new
ntroduction is to describe the "shape"
the biblical text when it is viewed
"Scripture"; that is to say, Childs
eeks to delineate the functional sig-
ificance of each book's composition
ithin the "canonical context" of the
ld and New Testament.

erversing the modern tendency to put
atters of canon and text at the end,
Childs begins his work, after reviewing
e history of Old Testament introduc-
ions, with lengthy chapters on "The
roblem of Canon," "Canon and Criti-
ism," and "Text and Canon." The
remainder of the volume treats each
ld Testament book in terms of three
hings: a) the books historical-criti-
cal problems, b) its canonical shape,
nd c) its theological and hermeneuti-
cal implications.

ne of the most frequent criticisms of
Childs is that he might inadvertently
ive legitimation to fundamentalists
y such an emphasis on the final pro-
duct or that he might feed the anti-
istorical passions of the "literary"
heorists who want to read the Bi-
le, we are told, "on the flat."
leither of these fears is realis-
ic. Childs is not a conservative
istorical critic, and he thinks
hat one of the more character-
istic aspects of canon is that it
nvites a reading of older texts
ver against the original inten-
ion of the author who composed
hem. Ancient authors rarely set out
o write "Scripture" and the new
eading which the canonical context

imposes on their work vastly exceeds
their own pretensions. Their words
do not become the Word of God to all
generations by good intentions. So,
fundamentalists with the conviction
that the meaning of a text resides
simply in the resurrection of the
inspired writer will be more than a
little annoyed at Child's formula-
tion of the matter.

Moreover, this introduction does not
follow a strictly literary ap-
proach. After all, Bible as a re-
ligious canon is quite removed from
emphasis on Bible as "literature
like any other literature." An assess-
ment of "canonical" litera-
ture begins with an understating of
the formation of the literature and
its function within the community
of faith and then asks the ultimate
questions of history. Consequently,
there is no general literary rule
which defines rigidly and at every
place the relationship between
history and the meaning of the
text as Scripture.

For evangelicals this book offers
an alternative way of viewing and
using Scripture, one which can
legitimately value so called
"pre-critical" exegesis. It is
a "post-modern" critique, one
among many other options such as
structuralism, rhetorical
criticism, the revival of new lit-
erary approaches, Walter Wink's in-
ternalization of the text, and so
forth. Like these others, Childs'
proposal rejects the terms as set
by the older fundamentalist-liberal
debates. However his unique advan-
tage lies in his ability to re-
assess the role of historical-
critical methods from within the
critical camp rather than from with-
out. Consequently, he avoids the pit-
falls of conservative apologetics and
still offers to evangelicals a con-
firmation of Scripture as the sac-
red common text which both pastor
and laity compete to illuminate.
For evangelicals, I believe Pro-
fessor Childs should signify for
Old Testament exegesis what Barth
signifies for dogmatics. If all the
answers are not here, I still sus-
pect Childs teaches us, as have few
other scholars in our generation,
how to ask the right questions.



*The Law in the Fourth Gospel by S.
Pancaro.*

E. J. Brill, 1975

*History and Theology in the Fourth
Gospel by J. I. Martyn.*

Abingdon, 1979.

Reviewed by Don Carson, Professor of
New Testament at Trinity Evangelical
Divinity School.

Pancaro's volume, 571 pages in length,
is an abridgment (!) of a doctoral dis-
sertation done at Münster in 1972 under
J. Gnilka. It is surprising that, be-
fore Pancaro, no major monograph had
been written on the concept of law in
the Fourth Gospel. Pancaro's study
fills that niche.

Pancaro divides his work into five
parts. The first, titled "The Law as
a Norm Which Jews Vainly Try to Use
against Jesus in order to Judge and Con-
demn Him," is a close study of the char-
ges against Jesus concerning alleged
Sabbath violations, blasphemy, false
teaching, and being an enemy of the
Jewish nation. In the second, Pan-
caro focuses on a number of passages
to show that, according to John, the
law testifies against the Jews and in
favor of Jesus. Part Three examines
the trial before Pilate as the "dè
nouement" of the confrontation of Je-
sus with the Jews and "their" law.
In Part Four, Pancaro outlines what he
calls the metamorphosis of "nomistic
termini" and the transferral to Je-
sus of symbols for the law -- rather
akin in concept to the replacement
theme, with respect to "holy space,"
marked out by W. D. Davies, but now
applied to the "nomistic termini."
In the last part, Pancaro offers a sys-
tematic summary, and relates his con-
clusions to John 1:17.

The basic thrust of Pancaro's argu-
ment is fairly simple. He argues that
the Jewish Christians who constitute
John's community observe the law, but
in a sense quite different from the syn-
agogue Jews. The Jewish Christians
hold that the role of the law has
changed with the coming of Jesus; but
they virtually relate the "law" to the
Scriptures and see Jesus as the fulfill-
ment of these Scriptures. The syna-
gogue Jews, by contrast, interpret ad-
herence to the law in terms of the
Jamaian authorities -- so much so that
the Johannine community can disparag-
ingly refer to the law, so inter-
preted, as "the law of the Jews" or
"their law."

Pancaro has mastered the secondary
literature and brought together a
great deal of useful material. Much
of his exegesis is stimulating and
suggestive. His over-arching thesis,
however, cannot be adequately sup-
ported by his exegesis. To picture
the Johannine community as so exclu-
sively *Jewish* Christian, to conclude
that John is writing exclusively for
Jewish Christians, is to overlook
some immensely important themes in the
Fourth Gospel. Not the least concerns
the "Greeks" in John 12:20, whom
Pancaro takes without proof or dis-
cussion to be Greek-speaking Jews of
the diaspora. On the face of it,
John's Gospel aims in more than one

direction; and it is reductionistic to isolate a general theme and treat it as if it were the whole.

Pancaro's volume reflects another problem; but because the same thing occurs in the second book to be discussed, I shall postpone mentioning it.

Martyn's book was first published in 1968. Now, substantially revised and somewhat enlarged, it still takes up a mere 176 pages; but it has exerted an influence out of all proportion to its size.

The title of Martyn's book is the sort of thing likely to grab the attention of those students who have been trying to treat John's Gospel as *both* authentic history *and* distinctive theology. But then it is disconcerting to read in the Preface that by "history" in the title Martyn refers *not* to the history surrounding Jesus of Nazareth, but to the history surrounding the Fourth Evangelist and his community.

Martyn's study is very largely an examination of John 9. He begins with form-critical observations on John 9:1-7. These verses seem at first glance to reflect three elements common to the miracle story: a) description of the illness; b) the sick person healed; and c) the miracle confirms. a) is found in 9:1; b) in 9:6f.; and c) in 9:8f. Closer inspection, however, reveals to Martyn a decided shift in 9:8f.: the original form has been changed to accommodate a dramatic expansion of the story, which runs from vv. 8-41. This entire section, which Martyn divides into five scenes, does not really refer to Jesus and synagogue conflict in his own day. Rather, under the guise of Jesus it refers to a Christian preacher who performs a healing (Martyn cannot decide whether or not it is a physical healing) on a poor Jew in the Jewish quarter of the city; and in so doing he sparks a controversy between church and synagogue. The controversy lends to the conversion of the Jew, and culminates in a Christian sermon (John 10). The Jew himself, in the process of becoming a Christian, is excommunicated from the synagogue according to the dictates of Jamnia, the *Birkath ha-Minim*.

The book is attractively written; and no small part of its influence stems from the fact that its main thesis has considerable merit: *viz.*, at least one of John's purposes is to encourage Christians in the ongoing church/synagogue conflict of his own day. The detailed argument, however, is singularly implausible. There are no demonstrable clues that John intends vv.

8-41 to be taken in the way Martyn wants; Martyn's form-critical arguments have serious inconsistencies; and his arguments for identifying the excommunication in John 9 as post-Jamnian are not convincing. I have detailed some of these objections in an article to appear in the Spring of 1980, and will not repeat them here.

Many stimulating and useful things can be learned from Pancaro and Martyn; but both of these scholars betray a too-ready acceptance of one of the foibles of much modern Johannine study. Although they are right to point out that John is speaking to his own day, they systematically overlook the fact that John purports to speak to his own day about events that happened in an earlier day. No evangelist is as careful as John in distinguishing between what the disciples understood in the days of the historical Jesus, and what they came to understand only later.

Any approach to the Fourth Gospel which does not take this persistent distinction seriously is methodologically deficient. There is much more work to be done in his area; but the most profitable lines to pursue are not going to be those which overlook distinctions which John himself insists on.



The Sermon on the Mount, An Evangelical Exposition of Matthew 5-7 by D. A. Carson.

Baker, 1978, 157pp., 6.95.
Reviewed by H. Wayne House, Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies, LeTourneau College.

Don Carson is presently a professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School; he was formerly dean of Northwest Baptist Theological Seminary in Vancouver. The occasion for the formulation of the material in the present book was a series of addresses given to the Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union in 1975. He received his PhD from Cambridge University.

The author recognizes the numerous books and other studies on this Biblical section yet believes there are several reasons for one such as his: (1) The work is shorter than most that are intended for the general reader; (2) He endeavors to be freer from the categories of systematic theology than some of those who have before written on this subject; (3) He includes two appendices, which are not usually included in expositions for the popular audience; (4) He gives as his major reason however, "I am offering these

studies to a larger circle because I am deeply convinced that the church Christ needs to study the Sermon on the Mount again and again." (10).

His approach is a mixture of fine exegesis of each portion of the Sermon has timely, often very piercing, applications to the reader's life. This latter trait is in the tone of a sermon -- to be expected since the work was first produced for public address -- with the reader and author both admonished to live in light of the exposition or to recognize spiritual poverty in view of not following the kingdom's standards.

This combination is what impressed the reviewer as the real value of the book. There are more thorough exegetical studies and more full devotional or hortatory ones, but none, to this reviewer's knowledge, that exercise the balance as one sees in this work.

There are two appendices concluding the book. The first discusses some important critical issues that arise in the study of the Sermon. The author does not sidestep the problems that are in the section but he conveys a high regard for the integrity of the text. The last appendix concerns theological perspectives on the time framework for the implementation of the kingdom teaching. He gives fair presentation of each, then opts for an eclectic position.

In order to give the reader a proper feel for the book an example of his approach seems appropriate. In discussing the narrow road into the kingdom he says: "It is not for nothing that the Sermon on the Mount begins with the demand for poverty of spirit. It begins by demanding that kingdom hopefuls acknowledge their spiritual bankruptcy, their need. . . I insist that if the Sermon on the Mount be construed merely as legal requirement to kingdom entrance, no one shall ever enter: can any meditate long on Matthew 5 and remain unashamed? . . . Nothing could be more calamitous than to meditate long and hard on Matthew 5:1-7:12 and then resolve to improve a little. The discipleship which Jesus requires is absolute, radical in the (etymological) sense that it get to the root of human conduct and to the root of relationships between God and men" (121-22).

The book has easy to read type and apparently is relatively free of typographical errors. This reviewer experienced spiritual growth in the reading of the book and highly recommends it.

The Study of Theology by Gerhard Ebeling.

Doubtless, 1978, 9.95, 196pp. Reviewed by Clark H. Pinnock, Professor of Theology at McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ontario.

Gerhard Ebeling is a professor of theology at Zurich and a noted European theologian, a recognized authority on Luther. In this book he attempts to develop an introduction to the principle disciplines of theology and point up the connections between them as well as their basic character. The effort leads him to write chapters on the Old and New Testaments, church history, philosophy, dogmatics, ethics, and the like -- twelve chapters in all. We need a book that does this, so Ebeling is a good idea in writing it.

Unfortunately the result is disappointing from the viewpoint of an evangelical reader. Over and above the heavy eutonic style which one can tolerate, here is the additional pressure on clarity of Ebeling's problem-dominated position. Everything is a crisis and a problem for him. His first sentence reads, "The study of theology is beset by a crisis in orientation" and I cannot honestly say he does much to resolve it. The fact is, Ebeling is afflicted with the doubt so typical of modern theology because it operates out of a rationalism out of line with biblical faith, and therefore he cannot offer clearly articulated solutions. All you have to do to see my point is to read the *Postscript* in which he offers a piece by Luther on the study of theology and you will perceive at once the difference between the Reformer, who unlike Ebeling was an evangelical and knew what a beautiful and basically unproblematic discipline theology is, and this book. Ebeling would do well to read Luther himself and start rebuilding from the ground up. Unfortunately that leaves us still needing a book that provides us with a reliable guide to the study of theology.



Invitation to Faith: Christian Belief Today by Paul Jersild.

Augsburg Publishing House, 1978, 3.95 Reviewed by Gabriel Fackre, Professor of Theology at Andover Newton Theological School.

Paul Jersild's effort to set forth basic beliefs is an encouraging development in mainstream Christian thought. It is a response to the college classroom need for texts that "put it all together," but also to the widespread interest of church people in the fundamentals.

The author's intention is to state and interpret the "catholic (universal) substance of Christian faith which unites all Christians..." (10). This goal is a departure from the assumption of much contemporary theology that our social location does, or ought to, control our thought, and therefore the search for catholicity is either futile or an ideological smokescreen. The author knows that perspective shapes performance -- he is a self-conscious Reformation thinker -- but his role as a Lutheran teacher on a Roman Catholic faculty gives impetus to his quest for the commonalities.

Because Jersild wants to communicate with the modern inquirer, he organizes his material around "essential issues of human life" that include "our identity as human beings, the struggle involved in the human predicament...the question of human destiny...the basis for a community of reconciliation and renewal." (201). The major doctrinal sections are correlated with these questions: anthropology, Christology, the doctrine of God, ecclesiology.

As befits his method of correlation, the author situates his anthropology in a discussion of current views of human nature and destiny that include Darwin, Skinner, Marx, and Freud. After acknowledging the partial insights of each, he sets forth a Christian view of being human which treats the *imago Dei*, the nature of sin as pride and apathy, the unity of the self in biblical thought, the existence of the demonic, and the hope for human fulfillment. The influence of a tradition that runs from Augustine through Luther to Kierkegaard and Pannenberg is manifest.

The Christological section begins with a modest portrait of Jesus' message and deeds painted with the brush of critical scholarship, and a review of the resurrection traditions with Jersild taking the position that "the appearances of Jesus resulted in the resurrection faith; it was not the faith that produced the appearance" (89). In a succeeding chapter the author reviews the classical formulations of Incarnation and opts for a conception of the Person as "fulfilled humanity" rather than the traditional Logos view. Alternatives in Atonement theory are canvassed with Abelardian and Anselmian motifs rejected in favor of a view close to Donald Baillie in which the tension between God's holiness and compassion is resolved through the suffering Love active on the cross.

Doctrinal exposition moves from the human quandary through the datum of Christ to "the ultimate mystery," God. Following an examination of

theological language, Jersild states his belief in a personal God. discusses the modes of revelation (general and special), and explores the dogma of the Trinity. In this section on the doctrine of God there is also some investigation of creation, providence, and theodicy, and a short assessment of process theology and the theology of hope.

The treatment of the church focuses on the four traditional marks. While organizationally fragmented the church is one in Christ and might someday be empirically one with appropriate freedom of structures. The church is not constituted by the moral purity or piety of its members but by the presence of the Spirit in the Body, indeed One always calling the community out of its torpor and into mission. The apostolicity of the church consists in the faithfulness of its witness, although "the church is known to God alone" (169). Worship is integral to its life and its center is the sacramental union with Christ and the bold proclamation of the Word.

The doctrinal sections are preceded by an introduction on issues of authority and definitions, and are followed by a conclusion on the life of prayer and ethic of love and freedom, though not the lawless love of an uncritical situation ethic.

This ambitious effort to set forth the essentials of an ecumenical faith must be judged on the basis of whether it does in fact tell the old, old story in modern translation. In this reviewer's opinion there is a faithfulness to many of the major Christian convictions. Of particular merit is the treatment of Christian anthropology, some critical themes in the Atonement touching the divine participation, the picture of the historical Jesus, the Trinity, the ethics of Agape, the church and sacraments. Further, the author has sought to take his signals from the christological center in his discussion of theodicy, his critique of process thought and liberation theology and elsewhere.

However, there are some problems with regard to other matters. They are traceable to the perspective, overt and covert, from which Christian teaching is viewed. This perspective that skews is not the self-conscious Reformation heritage but in large part the perception of Christian doctrine through the grid of four "essential" questions. It's effects are discernible in two pages devoted to the "afterlife" and the amorphous hope there mentioned, and thus the absence of any of the

Classical themes of resurrection of the dead, return of Christ, final judgment, and everlasting life. The influence of existentialism and a modest secularization thesis is at work here in this minimal eschatology since it is more important to ask about the personal meaningfulness and moral effects of a belief than it is to explore what in fact has been said in the biblical tradition. These constraints are also present in the interpretation of the Incarnation as "fulfilled humanity" a notion that is closer to long-standing ideas about the perfection of Christ's human nature ("Proper Man") than to the Nicene and Chalcedonian declarations of the deity of Christ.

The manner in which the issue of the finality of Christ is treated illustrates the impact of the existentialist framework. Hence, these sentences: Christians recognize in Jesus the definitive revelation of God... Nowhere in history do they find a more powerful expression of divine love and grace; nowhere else do they encounter a Word which generates such hope in the face of guilt and death." (47). This assertion is ranged alongside another: "The message of grace, or the positive message of liberation is also conveyed in various ways in the religions of the world. . . Too often the church has been guilty of a graceless imperialism when it has claimed an exclusive truth in Jesus." (46-47). These declarations seem to be flat-out contradictions. But this is not so for the author has substituted a descriptive confessional statement for a normative one: This is the way we Christians look at things. As such, it is allowed that others might have an equally good view from their own angle of vision. This relativism does not do justice to the universal truth claims made in the "catholic substance of Christian faith." How these claims must be held--in modesty and charity--and what ways can be found to honor truth wherever found (general revelation, the uncovenanted mercies of God, etc.) is high on the agenda of Christians in an increasingly pluralistic society, but claims there are are for the scandal of particularity.

A puzzling omission, given the prominence of the theme of faith in title and text, and Jersild's Lutheran heritage, is the absence of any in-depth attention to salvation from sin and guilt by grace through faith. Yet perhaps this is not so puzzling if theology is construed as answering the questions people ask, and modernity does not concern itself with these matters.

This book is a courageous effort to do theology in the round, rather than

settle for the piecemeal tracts with which we have become familiar. Yet the framework in which it is cast makes for selectivity rather than the intended catholicity. But those who make such a criticism, including the reviewer, had best do it in fear and trembling conscious of our own tendency to cut the full cloth of Christian faith to fit our own sizes and shapes.



An Evaluation of Claims to the Charismatic Gifts by Douglas Judisch.
Baker Book House, 1978. 3.95.
Reviewed by J. Rodman Williams,
President and Professor of Systematic Theology, Melodyland School of Theology

This book, written by Professor Judisch of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, has one central thesis, namely, that it is contrary to Scripture to claim charismatic gifts in the postapostolic period. Judisch does not question the miraculous character of the gifts (prophecy, tongues, healing, etc.); he only insists that they ceased with the passing of the apostles.

Judisch argues his thesis variously: the means of authentication of the gifts is that of the personal sanction of an apostle (e.g. in Acts and I Corinthians, according to Judisch, only apostles distribute the gifts), the purpose of the gifts is that of proving the authority of the apostles. Hence, from each perspective--sanction, distribution, and purpose--there obviously can be no occurrence of the gifts since the time of the apostles. Consequently all claims, for example, to continuing prophecy, are spurious--or, worse yet, demonic in origin.

Judisch holds that his thesis is supported by I Corinthians 13, wherein Paul speaks of the cessation of prophecy, tongues, and knowledge when the "perfect" or "complete" (verse 10) comes. The "complete," according to Judisch, is none other than the completion of apostolic revelation--"and if the apostolic revelation be complete, then prophesying, tongues-speaking, and prophetic knowledge can no longer exist" (p. 49).

I would have to disagree basically with Judisch's central thesis of locking the charismatic gifts into apostolic dispositions. It was *not* the apostles who distributed the gifts, but the Holy Spirit who "apportions [note the present tense] to each one individually as he wills" (I Corinthians 12:11); the basic Purpose was not that of proving apostolic authority but is that of edi-

fying the body--"to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (I Corinthians 12:7); Paul is not speaking of "complete" (or "perfect") as the completion of apostolic revelation but the completion that comes when we see the Lord "face to face" (I Corinthians 13:12).

Judisch's critical error is that he confuses the completion of the apostolic witness and its inscripturation with the continuing occurrence of charismatic gifts. I heartily agree that the apostolic witness is both normative and complete--nothing is to be added thereto; however, that same biblical witness undoubtedly calls for continuation of gifts. For example, Paul's words to the Corinthians, "earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy" (I Corinthians 14:1) surely apply to more than the church at Corinth [if not, why not also exclude Paul's teaching about the Lord's Supper in I Corinthians 11:23ff from having significance for any postapostolic generation?]. If Paul's words are deemed by Judisch to have only first Christian generation significance, what will he do with the words of Jesus, "And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues" (Mark 16:17). Unless he argues (as some do) that Jesus did not really say this, it would be hard to confine his words to the first generation. Further, there is nothing in these words of Jesus to suggest that such gifts are only available through apostolic sanction and distribution.

There is much strange reasoning in Judisch's book. Two further examples: first, "we limit the Spirit if we insist that he conduct himself in the same way in every age--if we argue that, because he bestowed miraculous powers on men in biblical times, he must bestow miraculous powers on us today: (p.16). An extraordinarily bizarre statement! It is Judisch himself who has placed the limits on the Holy Spirit by insisting that the Holy Spirit cannot bestow gifts in our time. Second, "the absence of these gifts today assures us that salvation is truly ours and that its full revelation draws nearer day by day" (p. 73). Equally weird! For though indeed salvation is not dependent on the presence or absence of the gifts, one would think that their presence--"the manifestation of the Spirit" (I Corinthians 12:7)--would be much more assurance than their absence.

The book is an unfortunate attempt to keep the blinders on so that neither the biblical witness recognized nor the reality of what God is doing in our t-

Power, and Evil: A Process Theology by David R. Griffin. Westminster Press, 1976, 17.50, 336pp. Reviewed by Stephen T. Davis, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Belmont Men's College.

In a few notable exceptions, Evangelical scholars have largely ignored Process Theology. But the movement seems to be growing in influence. Perhaps it is becoming the main theological option for American Liberal Protestants. Serious Evangelicals ought to read the works of Process thinkers.

Such work is *God, Power, and Evil: Process Theodicy*, by David R. Griffin, Associate Professor of Philosophy of Religion at the School of Theology in Belmont, California. I recommend this book for two reasons. First, it substitutes an excellent introduction to Process thinking, avoiding as it usually does abstruse Whiteheadian terminology. Reading Griffin's book is a good way for a seminary student, minister, or scholar to become familiar with main Process themes. Second, the book seriously wrestles with the problem of evil, a crucial intellectual and practical problem for all Christians, Evangelicals included.

Griffin's book has two main aims -- first, to expose the failure of traditional theists to solve the problem of evil, and, second, to solve the problem from a Process perspective. Accordingly, Parts I and II of the book are primarily devoted to a historical survey of various theodicies. The general moral is that traditional theodocists fail to solve the problem of evil because they have a defective view of God's power. Part II is entitled "A Nontraditional Theodicy." Here Griffin argues for his own view of God and for the theodicy it naturally leads to.

Griffin's response to the problem of evil revolves around the notion of divine power. He claims that the traditional view of omnipotence (whereby God either actually or potentially controls all created things) is fallacious. He does hold that God is omnipotent in the sense that he has all the power anything logically can have. But it is impossible for God to be omnipotent in the sense of having all the power that there is. Why? Because, Griffin replies, all created beings must have at least some power of their own over against God. This is a crucial principle for Griffin. It is based on Whiteheadian metaphysical intuitions, but a serious defect of Griffin's book is that the principle is merely assumed rather than argued for.

This principle is crucial to Griffin's theodicy because it allows

him to conclude that God could not unilaterally (i.e. intentionally, not by luck or accident) bring about an actual world without genuine evil. There must be an actual world (on Process thought there is no creation *ex nihilo*), and all actual worlds must contain self-determining entities with power over against God. So God could not prevent evil even if he tried. What God does, according to Griffin, is try to persuade people to follow his ideal aims for them. So God is not indictable for evil -- both because he could not have prevented evil no matter what he did and because even now he is doing his best to overcome our resistance to his purposes.

Griffin's theodicy fails, in my opinion, for two main reasons. First, the basic metaphysical principle on which it is based (above) is highly implausible. It seems to me quite possible for God to control every decision made or action taken by every created thing (though I do not in fact believe God does this). Second, the God of Process theology is not powerful enough to guarantee that good wins out in the end. Griffin makes it clear that God *aims, intends, seeks, works* and *tries* to overcome evil. But does God have the power, influence, or persuasive ability to succeed? We do not know, on Process principles. All we can do is *hope* that God will emerge victorious. This both leaves the problem of evil unsolved (evil *may* win out over good) and raises the question whether Griffin's God is worthy of worship.

Evangelicals believe that God foresees the future of the world, i.e. the coming Kingdom of God, and reveals to us that his decision to create this sort of world was wise. God is powerful enough to ensure that in the end good will outweigh evil. But on Process thought we do not know whether God's decision was wise, for we do not know how the world turns out, and neither does God. All Griffin is left with, then (since he does not believe that either eschatology or survival of death are essential to theodicy or Christian theology) is the claim that the great goods that now exist outweigh any possible evils that may exist. But this seems naively optimistic. Thus, if in the end evil outweighs good, it follows that God *is* indictable for creating this sort of world. God will be shown to be something like a mad scientist who creates a monster he sincerely hopes will behave but cannot control: if the monster runs amok the scientist

will be indictable.

God, Power and Evil is in many ways an impressive book. Griffin has skillfully analyzed the thought of most of the great theodocists in Western thought, and he has energetically presented what I believe is the only theodicy that is open to Process thinkers. Those who agree with me that this theodicy fails will draw the moral that, failing to solve the problem of evil, Process thought is not a tenable theological option.



Service Evangelism by Richard Stoll Armstrong.

Westminster, 1979, 5.95.

Reviewed by David Lowes Watson, Assistant Professor of Evangelism at Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas.

Those familiar with Richard Armstrong's *Oak Lane Story* (United Presbyterian Board of National Mission, 1971) will welcome this amplification of his principles for visitation evangelism. The aim of the book is to provide the biblical and theological groundings as well as the "nuts and bolts" of this particular evangelistic model. It succeeds admirably in its objectives, and can be warmly recommended as a text for ministers and students as well as a practical guide for congregations seeking to evangelize by faith-sharing.

Mr. Armstrong argues persuasively that door-to-door visitation is an essential for contemporary evangelism, given the social patterns of our North American culture, yet acknowledges that it is a ministry which many church members resist-- especially, he observes, those in relatively affluent areas who consider themselves "too sophisticated." If this style of evangelism is to be undertaken it must therefore be clear in method and purpose, and as a touchstone the book adopts the Pauline maxim of II Corinthians 2:14-17. Christians are ambassadors for Christ, witnesses to the living Word, the aroma of Christ to God -- not, like so many, peddlers of God's word -- and some important inferences are drawn from this for the manner in which we should share our faith. The secular world demands empirical evidence for the *evangel*, but it is a mistake, Mr. Armstrong suggests, to try to establish rational proofs for its content. What we should rather attempt is to establish the integrity of our faith. For Christians to tell *what* they believe often amounts to tautologies which are in no way logically compelling for the non-believer. But when Christians share their faith as a relationship with God, not only is this logically incontrovertible: it is non-threatening to the person with whom it

is being shared. "As Christian witnesses and evangelists, our task is not to prove that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. That we can never do. Our task is to show by the way we speak and act that we believe he is. That, by God's grace, we can do!" (37).

By regarding faith as something we receive from God as a gift (desirability) but which also is a "grasping for God" on our part (response-ability), the process of faith-sharing becomes one of mutual self-awareness. The one who witnesses is testifying to a work of God which has engendered personal faith assumptions, while helping to identify through open dialogue the assumptions of the other person. This "leaves the focus, the responsibility, the ultimate credit for revelation to God alone" (32).

The model for this sharing is given in the appropriate acronym *PROOF* (Probing Responsibly Our Own Faith), and in the practical chapters of the book there are some excellent instructions for its implementation in the local church: how to conduct a home-visit; how to listen (with compassion, concentration, control, comprehension, clarification and commitment); how to converse without imposing one's own agenda; how to witness in dialogue without wasting time of fruitless encounter with religious bigotry, perhaps most important of all, how to avoid the stumbling block of "selling the church." The criteria for a successful evangelistic visit are those of meaningful faith-sharing--something which Mr. Amrstrong feels cannot take place when assumptions are incorrectly made about the other person's beliefs. He regards the introductory questions of *Evangelism Explosion*, for example, and the Four Spiritual Laws of *Campus Crusade* deficient in this area, precisely because they assume that the other person has already accepted the idea of a personal God (100-101). This cannot be taken for granted in the world we are commissioned to evangelize.

The author's sound understanding of this reality proves time and again to be the underlying strength of the book, and his pragmatism is just as perceptive in dealing with the realities of the pastorate. The guidelines for conducting a *PROOF* seminar are not presented without subsequent chapters on preparing the congregation and on follow-up procedures, while an important chapter on the definition of evangelism brings into sharp focus the mistaken concepts which so often cause church members to be confused

about their responsibilities. There are distinctions to be made, for example, between the meaning and the means of evangelism, between its setting and its style, between reaching out with the Gospel and merely living a Christian life. Evangelism must also be defined in relation to associated concepts, such as witnessing, evangelicalism, communication, social action, Christian nurture and church renewal. In short, there is much here which contributes to the growing discipline of evangelism as a distinctive feature of ministry.

If witnessing means the presentation of one's faith rather than the proving of what one believes, then Christians and the church must have integrity. We must take seriously what it means to be ambassadors for Christ and this requires nothing less than becoming a servant church. Thus the title of the book. We are not to "revel in being children of God, jealously clinging to our select status as members of the Christian church, and (making) the church community an end in itself" (39). The church is rather on the offensive, on the attack, "and the gates of hell, says Jesus, shall not prevail against it" (46).



Living Together Alone (The New American Monasticism) by Charles A. Fracchia. Harper & Row, 1979, 186pp, 5.95. Reviewed by Gregory Youngchild, graduate student at General, New York.

If one were to judge a book by its title, it is safe to say that evangelicals would not immediately be attracted to *Living Together Alone*, subtitled *The New American Monasticism*. Yet, as is often the case in such prejudgement, a very interesting and enlightening piece of research would be overlooked in by-passing Fracchia's book.

Writing in the style of a participant-observer sociologist, Fracchia herein gives an account of his sojourns among more than a dozen religious communities in the United States. It is the common life, usually under a set of vows, and following a prescribed pattern for worship, study, and private prayer, that constitutes their basic "monasticism," although in some instances the communities do not conform to the popular or conventional image one associates with that label. Their "newness," in some cases, is literal in that the group is a fledgling foundation of a parent community or organization; in other cases, "new" refers to the recent vitality being experienced by the religious tradition out of which the community is living and of which

it is a manifestation. What makes these communities particularly "American," however, is harder to define; this label identifies not only the nationality of the majority of members in these communities and the place where they are located, it also implied a kind of adaptability and "spirit of democracy" that pervades their intracommunal interactions and attitudes. Even though a group may live under a very strict and inflexible set of rules, they do so as people aware of issues of equal rights, human liberation, the struggle for social justice, and so forth, and this awareness in turn affects how they live out their communal rules and religious observances.

What makes this book particularly interesting and enlightening is not its explication of the Buddhist, Catholic or Protestant principles and heritages underlying these communities. Indeed, if one had hoped to find out some of this background, Fracchia's book would be disappointing; his descriptions of the religious traditions which constitute the *raison d'etre* for such communal ventures are uneven in depth and quality, and are for the most part quite thin, although he does append "A Bibliographical Essay" to guide one in a search for the absent information. Rather, its strength and appeal lie in its "walking one-through": a day in the communities' life, activity by activity, so that one gains some sense of what goes on in the course of their days together. He interviews a number of the members of these groups and gives brief sketches of their personal life-journeys that brought them to the community of which they are a part. These reveal a variety of backgrounds and individual interests yet all with the common factor of having had, at some point, a decisive religious experience which set them into a search for a community to support and sustain and nurture their new vision. A curious fact--and in some sense an indictment--is that with astonishing frequency the members of the communities are themselves converts from another tradition than that which constitutes the community. For some people it means the changing of denominations; for others it required the adoption of completely different thought-worlds; the complaint was almost invariably the same: "I looked into my own tradition/denomination first, but I couldn't find what I was looking for." What comes through to the reader therefore is the complete sincerity and genuineness of conviction of the members; the comprehensibility and credibility of their deep desires for community and a life lived in accordance with their

ligious aspirations and ideals; the clear sense that for themselves their answers -- or at least a context for continuing to ask the questions -- lie in the underlying beliefs and the daily life of their communities.

If this reviewer would not claim that everyone ought to read this book, it is one that evangelicals would find informative, perhaps helpful to ministers fielding questions about religious communities and lifestyles, and maybe even challenging and provocative to consider appropriate, authentically evangelical alternative to the models which academia examines and describes.

Recently Received Books

Thielicke, Helmut, *Theological Ethics*. Eerdmans are to be congratulated and thanked for issuing Thielicke's great *Theological Ethics* in paperback.

Volume I, Foundations, considers secularism and humanism, the relation between dogmatics and ethics, and the foundational principles of ethics. Also included in this volume is a discussion of man's relation to the world, in which Thielicke develops his views of Christian freedom, the conflict situation of compromise, and the idea of the borderline situation.

Volume II, Politics, considers political ethics in the modern world, the nature of the state, and the theological debate on church and state. The major part of this volume takes up the borderline situations of resistance to state authority and war, including discussions of revolution, military obedience, nuclear war, pacifism, and conscientious objection.

Volume III, Sex (previously published under the title *The Ethics of Sex*), considers the duality of man, Eros and Agape, marriage, divorce, and remarriage. Also discussed here are such currently controversial issues as the equality of the sexes, homosexuality, artificial insemination, and abortion.

(Grand Rapids: Eerdmans). *Volume I* 197 pp. \$10.95.; *Volume II* 696 pp. \$10.95; *Volume III* 338 pp. \$6.95.

Carson, D.A., *The King James Version Debate: A Plea for Realism*. Contrasting the claim that the KJV is superior to all other English translations, Carson pursues textual questions and non-textual questions (translation issues, public opinion). An appendix answers W.N. Pickering's defense of priority of the Byzantine text. (Grand Rapids: Baker). 123 pp. \$3.95.

Pelikan, Jaroslav, *The Growth of Medieval Theology (600-1300)*. Following two volumes concerning Western and Eastern theological developments during the first 6 centuries (in the series *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*), Pelikan here turns to the 7th-14th century story of the Catholic tradition. From a foundation on Augustine through questions of the Charlemagne era, the issues of the Reformation begin to take shape. Pelikan indicates those doctrines which are shared with Protestant traditions and those that are held in common with Eastern Orthodoxy. Finally, 13th century theologians are covered as churchmen (not philosophers) who summarize the Medieval Age. (Chicago: University of Chicago) 333 pp \$17.50.

Piepkorn, Arthur C., *The Religious Bodies of the United States and Canada: Volume III, Holiness and Pentecostal; Volume IV, Evangelical, Fundamentalist, and Other Christian Bodies*. Piepkorn completes his survey of Protestantism which began in *Volume II*. (*Volume I* covered *Roman Catholic, Old Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Bodies*.) This book (containing two volumes) includes not only well known church and parachurch organizations, but also many lesser known ones. After careful preparation by the author, a member of each group was asked to verify the accuracy of the "profile." My own scanning indicates a solid understanding by the author of the bodies discussed here. John Tietjen (Seminary) ably completed this book after Arthur Piepkorn's death. (New York: Harper & Row) *Volume I* 262 pp., *Volume II* 191 pp. \$23.95.

Worthwhile Articles

Christianity Today:

"Bibliomania: Eight Ways to Avoid It", Walter A. Elwell. May 4. p.30.

"Church Management: The Architecture of Ministry", Norman Shawchuck. July 20. p. 19.

"Ten Significant Books of the Past Year", Donald Tinder. September 7. p. 30.

"Annual Book Survey". September 7. p. 33.

Occasional Bulletin:

"Statement of the Asian Theological Conference of Third World Theologians". July 1979. p. 99.

"Theological Trends and Issues in the Christian World Mission As Seen from a North American Perspective", Harvie M. Conn. April 79. p. 53.

"Liberation and Evangelization- Some Historical and Theological Footnotes", Gabriel Fackre. April 79. p. 58.

New Oxford Review:

"The Chicago Call: An Appeal to Evangelicals". Respondents include Robert E. Webber, Donald G. Bloesch, and Thomas Howard. May 1979. p. 4.

"A Christian Political Response to Modern Psychology", Paul C. Vitt. June 1979. p. 12.

"Is Fighting Social Injustice the Main Business of the Church?", Michael E. Smith. July-August 79. p.4.

"The Authority and Power of the New Testament", Philip Edgcumbe Hughes. September 1979. p. 8.

Gospel in Context:

"The Social Status of Early Christianity", Frederick W. Norris. Respondents include Escobar, Kirk, Krass, Newbiggin, Wagner, and Webber. January 1979. p. 4.

Eternity:

"Crisis in Christendom: An Appeal to Evangelicals from a Catholic Layman", Kevin Perrotta. July 1979. p. 22.

The Reformed Journal:

"Chicago Revisited" (editorial on the ICBI), James Daane. June 1979. p. 3.

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- Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* by Ron Sider. \$3.00 (we pay postage).