

New Testament Theology

The Search for Essentials

DURING the last twenty-five years the science of New Testament criticism has produced a phenomenal amount of literature, directed at every level of readership. Excellent series of commentaries have been inaugurated or completed; comprehensive one-volume introductions have been written or revised; specialist literature has reached such volume and technicality that it can no longer be followed *in toto* except by those who have nothing else to do.

All this makes it the more surprising that so little has been done in what is increasingly recognized as a key area of enquiry—that of New Testament Theology. This statement needs both modification and explanation.

There has been great industry in particular areas of New Testament Theology—Christology and ecclesiology immediately come to mind. The deservedly popular S.C.M. *Studies in Biblical Theology* series indicates a widespread interest in the systematic presentation of key themes. The plethora of books on the concept of historicity and the disciplines of semantics and hermeneutics might appear to provide the incentive as well as the basis for theological reconstruction. Yet the comprehensive reconstruction has not been done.

The interest in theology has produced many excellent articles, some fine studies of individual books or themes and some remarkable theories and ideas. Strangely, it has produced only a handful of complete New Testament "Theologies". In the last twenty-five years we could mention Bonsirven, Bultmann, Grant, Meinertz, Richardson and Stauffer, but then the list begins to peter out.

With this modification we may turn to the explanation of the fact. It must be admitted that the writing of a comprehensive Theology of the New Testament is a task to be undertaken only by the most able, and possibly the most serious, *Neutestamentler*. The vast amount of background material to be assessed in relation to each individual document is enough to deter all but the bravest.

Another reason is that the question is seriously posed in many quarters, "Can there be a New Testament Theology?" Can there be any real hope of discovering cohesive patterns of thought in a collection of *ad hoc* writings such as we have?¹

It may be that a third reason, more powerful than the other two, prevents the writing of Theologies. Every writer must have a methodology and must make consistent use of it. Perhaps we are at a

stage where the common methodologies have been subjected to damaging criticism and no new approach has yet been delineated.

In particular, two once-promising types of method have now passed their most useful stage. Each has afforded valuable insights and some permanent gain. We may look briefly at these two kinds of approach.

The Methodology of External Presuppositions

Of course, it is impossible to write anything without presuppositions of some kind. Hence the nature of the presupposition in question becomes vitally important. This is particularly true in the realms of philosophy and history.

The studies of the sacraments fifty years ago reveal how frequently the very term "sacrament" was defined in accordance with the author's philosophical presuppositions and the definition then applied to the New Testament.² The same was true of studies of the word "miracle" or "church" and many another theological concept.

It is not surprising to find a New Testament Theology undertaken from roughly the same standpoint. Rudolf Bultmann's *Theology of the New Testament* is a classic example of a work written under the direct influence of external presuppositions. His highly distinctive understanding of history and his equally particular interpretation of the meaning of faith are normative to his entire theology. History, for Bultmann, cannot be studied; it can only be encountered.³ He does not wish to prevent a view of history but to be instrumental in bringing his reader to an involvement in it—"the meaning of history lies always in the present".⁴

Hence the object of faith is not the Jesus of history; rather it is the Christ of the Kerygma. To search for the Jesus of history is both inadvisable and impossible; to have existential encounter with the Christ of the Kerygma is both history and faith.

Like many other Biblical scholars, Bultmann has taken a current philosophical system—in his case the existentialism of Martin Heidegger—and has used it as a tool in a re-interpretation of Christianity. But philosophical systems, inevitably, are modified and are replaced. Others have already asked whether Bultmann is trying to give us *Geschichte* without *Historie*; a Christ of faith without a Jesus of history.⁵ The meaning of history may lie always in the present but this does not mean that the past is irrelevant or even impossible of access.

The crux of the problem for our purpose is in the query whether the discrediting of the presupposition invalidates the results of its application. The confused state of the present discussions on historicity suggests that no one will answer with an unqualified negative.

Another presupposition brought by Bultmann to the writing of his *Theology* was that there were extensive and powerful influences of Hellenism, both on St. Paul personally and on the early Christian

communities corporately. He tells us that Paul was won to the Christian faith by the Kerygma of the Hellenistic Church,⁶ and this opinion affects a good deal of the later appraisal of Paul's thought.⁷ Few scholars are prepared to allow this view of Hellenistic influence to the degree Bultmann wants. In fact, the normally generous Stephen Neill says of the essay in *Glauben und Verstehen* where Bultmann argues about the Early Church's self-understanding: "The essay bears the wrong date; it should be 1925, not 1955."⁸

So whatever gains we may have from Bultmann's work, and there are many, the presuppositions he uses, largely because they are not read out from the New Testament itself but brought to it, will not suffice as a methodology for a comprehensive Theology.

The Methodology of Language

The more recent presentations of New Testament theology have been influenced by the increasing interest in language and hermeneutics. This is one aspect of the contemporary concern with the New Testament for its own sake and in its own right. The excesses of philosophical speculation and historical scepticism have been abandoned, along with the conviction that a knowledge of the mystery religions and Gnosticism would suffice to explain most of the New Testament obscurities.

The intense linguistic study has had a direct influence on theology. The obvious examples are Kittel's *Theologische Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* and Alan Richardson's *Theological Word Book of the Bible*, although there are many others which are based on a similar methodology.

Of course, neither work is presented as a Theology, but both titles include the adjective "theological" and both have become a quarry from which the raw material of theological reconstruction has been mined. It is worth noting that so eminent a scholar as Krister Stendahl lists the *Wörterbuch* in the bibliography to his article on Biblical Theology with the comment: "By far the most significant contribution to N.T. theology—and, as background material, also to O.T. theology—is *TWNT*."⁹

The method employed is that all references to a particular word or idea are discovered and collated and then examined with a view to discovering the pattern which they present. Of course grammatical-historical questions must be asked and parallel versions of the same logion must be examined; but since the intention is a theological rather than an historical one, every text is valid, because it has a theological *raison d'être*.¹⁰

For example, to formulate the New Testament doctrine of the Church, every occurrence of the term *ekklesia* is examined, along with certain corporate metaphors and pieces of imagery. Each of the passages is fitted into a general picture. The question may be raised as to whether Matthew xvi. 18 and xviii. 17 represent the

ipsissima verba Christi, but the historical query need not be pressed; the very presence of the texts is of considerable theological import. The same approach may be taken to the doctrine of baptism, or forgiveness, or marriage, or any other theological concept.

This method may be described, without any necessarily pejorative implication, as a "jigsaw puzzle" approach. It appears to regard the New Testament as a kind of jigsaw puzzle, or rather as a box in which a number of puzzles have been mixed up together. The task of the critic then appears to be two-fold, first to identify which pieces belong to the puzzle he wishes to reconstruct, and secondly to fit them together.

The strength of this approach lies in its serious attitude to the New Testament language and literature, also in the degree of thoroughness with which it may be pursued. Biblical Theology is the legitimate offspring of this method and the gains to New Testament studies have been considerable.

The limitations, however, which are also the weaknesses of Biblical Theology as a whole, must be recognized.

In the first place, it may be questioned whether all exponents of the "jigsaw" method have recognized the hard-won gains of the grammatical-historical aspect of Biblical criticism. If a text includes the word in question it is often pressed into service without regard for its relative claim to authenticity. Historical judgments ought to precede, not follow, theological ones. In the same way, where more than one version of a saying exists in the gospels, the simplest form is presumably the one to be given most weight, even though the more elaborate versions may be theologically richer.¹¹

Secondly, it is hard to avoid the impression that the "jigsaw" making is based on the assumption that the whole picture is present in the New Testament, so that the pieces only need to be identified and fitted together for a complete picture to appear. Plainly, we have no right to make this assumption. The New Testament is not a work of systematic theology but a collection of writings each of which is designed to meet a specific situation. Some of the documents would be more accurately described as "despatches from the mission front-line" than as theological treatises. The result of trying to fit together into one cohesive picture pieces from such letters must surely be an admission that in almost every case the picture is incomplete. The gaps must be filled in by use of the imagination.

This particular aspect raises another issue. When the concordance work is done and all the references to the word in question are assembled, there may be some which are not relevant to the doctrine at all. To revert to our image, there may be some jigsaw pieces which look as though they ought to fit somewhere but do not.

For instance, if we consider the doctrine of baptism and assemble all the references to "baptize" and "baptism" in the New Testament,

there are some significant gaps and some uncertain evidence. What was the position as regards the children of Christian parents in New Testament times? Do the references in Mark x. 38, 39, Luke xii. 50 and I Cor. xv. 29 belong to the baptism jigsaw or are they part of some other picture or pictures?

Thirdly, the methodology of linguistics and biblical theology in general have engaged in a curious paradox. A great deal of attention has been paid to words and yet those very words have been a source of confusion.¹² As we have observed earlier, the New Testament is really a small library from the hands of several different authors, writing to different people, prompted by different purposes and writing over a period of at least fifty years. It is a gratuitous assumption that they had the same understanding of various theological concepts and that they used words in exactly the same way.

Nowhere is it more important to recognize these differences than between the Synoptics and the rest of the New Testament. Biblical Theology has not generally appreciated these differences; in fact it is now rather *passé* to stress the dissimilarities between the teaching of Jesus and that of Paul; the unity rather than the diversity in the New Testament dominates contemporary theological thinking.¹³

There is room for some serious thinking on the significance of the death/resurrection event in the New Testament story. It may be that the point of radical newness is here rather than with the birth narratives. Where does the Christian era begin—with the ministry of John, or the baptism of Jesus, or the resurrection of Jesus?

Jesus was a Jew of his time, speaking their language and observing at least some of their customs. His message was to Jews and would be in terms which they could understand. Had there been no resurrection, presumably he would have been regarded by some as a prophet within Judaism—a radical prophet no doubt, but still one of the line which included Hosea and Jeremiah.

Therefore, in so far as they give us his authentic words, the Synoptics must be understood against the background of contemporary Judaism, rather than against that of the Pauline churches. Since modern scholarship is prepared to regard a considerable amount of the gospel sayings as coming from the lips of Jesus, it follows that those words must be read in the light of the Old Testament and Judaism rather than in the light of Pauline theology.

One might even argue that it is with the non-Synoptic writings (including for our purpose the Fourth Gospel) that Christian literature, with a distinctive theology and language, comes into being.

To put the matter briefly, when we are convinced that we have an authentic word of Jesus we must interpret it by reference to what it would convey to a Jew of his own day, not by what the post-resurrection community would make of it.¹⁴

The methodology of linguistics, as normally employed, is not an adequate basis for a New Testament theology. By definition it must

take note of words, despite the fact that different authors may use the same word in different senses or use different words to convey the identical idea. Often the pieces of the jigsaw will not fit together in spite of superficial similarities for the simple reason that they belong to different puzzles.

However many objections might be raised against any particular methodology, we are not absolved from responsibility of trying to formulate a New Testament Theology. The particular reasons why this is imperative at the present stage are worth mentioning.

First, we are at a point where so much has been done in New Testament studies in so many different areas, that there must be some attempt to draw together the results of one hundred years of Biblical criticism.

Second, the new pressures upon the pastoral minister are such this his New Testament Theology needs to be articulated and as "economic" as possible—trimming down to the essentials of the gospel.

Third, the new emphasis on the role of the layman in both worship and evangelism has increased the demand for a theology which can be understood and taught by those who do not have specialist theological training.

Last, with the resurgence of some of the ancient faiths and new demands that Christianity state its case and summarize its doctrines, it behoves New Testament scholars to seek the essentials and distinctives of the gospel.

These considerations prompt us to the otherwise rash step of seeking to define another methodology for New Testament theological study.

The Methodology of Internal Presupposition

If we are correct in designating the present age as one in which the demand is for a concise statement of the essentials of the Christian faith, and if we are agreed that the New Testament itself must be the key evidence in such an enquiry, then a new approach opens before us.

We can begin by endeavouring to eschew any kind of external presupposition, seeking to read *out from* the New Testament rather than *into* it. No one can ever pretend to achieve this ideal in full but we may perhaps avoid the obvious pitfalls. At least we know that we may not bring presuppositions about historicity or the nature of faith or the nature of the Church to the evidence at our disposal. Nor are we concerned to find a place for every text and logion within some comprehensive pattern we feel obliged to construct.

Our method is simply to ask what ideas, if any, are common to every book, or nearly every book, in the New Testament. It may be (and here the danger of the method immediately becomes apparent) that we have to ask not only what ideas all the authors express in

common, but also what things they presuppose in common. Such ideas will comprise the essentials of New Testament Christianity, thus giving us a secure basis for theology without compelling us to regard as of permanent value each and every *obiter dictum* of the individual writers. If in this way we can discover certain universally accepted doctrines and experiences, we have given ourselves a new basis for the presentation of the Christian faith, whether from an educational or an apologetic point of view.

As we seek to apply this method we must give full weight to one fact—namely, that the theology of the New Testament is essentially a theology of *experience*. It is not expressed primarily for its intellectual cohesiveness, although certainly some cohesiveness may be observed; it is not expressed because of philosophical or sociological considerations, although these elements are discernible. Chiefly the theology of the New Testament is an attempt to understand and interpret experience. The experience inevitably precedes the statement of it. Realization of this should help us to avoid confusing the theology with the experience of which it is a formulation.¹⁵

In what follows we shall be speaking of the doctrines as the essentials; this is done with the prior recognition that the essentials of the Christian faith are not in expressions but experiences.

What then are the "essentials" of a New Testament theology? What constitutes the irreducible minimum of the Christian faith? In what follows we shall present an open-ended list of five elements; open-ended because, while hardly anyone would wish to argue that Christianity could consist of less than the five doctrines, many—probably the vast majority—would wish to have a fuller statement including several other items.

1. Belief in God

The cradle of Christianity was the theological vigour and security of Jewish monotheism. The God of the Bible is both Creator and Father, who gives life and controls history. The twin characteristics of the New Testament contribution are in the word "Abba" and the recognition that God is revealed in Jesus. According to Jeremias, the term "Abba", used by Jesus and given by him to the disciples, is at once the surest utterance of our Lord and one of his most distinctive sayings for although Jewish prayers used the term "Father" in a variety of ways, there is no known instance prior to the New Testament of this personal intimate form of the word. The evidence seems to indicate that its use in the Aramaic form was carried on in the early Christian communities.¹⁶

The content of the term is given by the teaching of Jesus, particularly the parables, wherein the Father appears as one whose love cannot be circumscribed and whose mercy is infinite.

Outside the gospels we encounter the phrase "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ", or variations of it, suggesting that

the life and teaching of Jesus has taken man to a new point in his understanding of God.

It may well be that any attempt to write a New Testament Theology will need to take account of the theological climate which prevails at the moment. Whereas the older school of liberalism took the existence of a personal God for granted but held radical views about the person of Christ, nowadays there is a small but vocal element which accepts the Jesus of history, his example and much of his teaching, while able to say with apparent seriousness, "God is dead". The impact of this type of thought on the North American church-goer has been considerable. Philosophers have criticized it and theologians have subjected it to careful scrutiny but there is a widespread feeling of vague uneasiness. New Testament Theology may have to begin, not with the Christological fact but with the fundamental presupposition of the teaching of Jesus himself—that God is, and that he is known as Father.

The result of beginning at this point will be to clarify certain issues and also, unavoidably, to brand some types of thought as un-Christian. No one likes to take such a step but it is inevitable. If the Christian faith can be defined at all then there will be beliefs which do not accord with the definition. Without judging those who perpetrate them, the beliefs must be described for what they are.

If our New Testament theology is to be read out from the internal presuppositions of the documents, belief in God must be our starting point.

2. Belief in the Resurrection of Christ

Underlying the whole New Testament and providing the radically new element in the Christian faith, is experience of and belief in the resurrection. Without this there would be no New Testament, although possibly some of the teaching of Jesus would have been preserved.

The gospels recount the resurrection as their culminating point, although with an almost unbelievable restraint when one considers what it was they were relating. The rest of the New Testament, with hardly any exceptions, is written from the explicit standpoint of men in whose experience resurrection had become a reality.¹⁷

It is surprising that Christian theology, particularly as it is presented week by week in sermons, has taken so much account of the sufferings and death of Jesus and so little account, comparatively speaking, of his resurrection. It would be interesting to see the results of a survey conducted among ministers and laymen, asking what the essentials of the Christian faith were. One wonders in how many lists the resurrection would appear at all.

It is surprising also how little attention is paid to the resurrection in standard "theologies", other than to observe that it is central.

Yet surely this doctrine is *the* distinctive Christian belief and ought to be the focal point of preaching and teaching.¹⁸

3. Belief in Atonement

An examination of the epistles of the New Testament to discover how much they tell us about the Jesus of history, whether in terms of his actions or quotation of his words, produces only meagre results. The historical figure appears as no more than the necessary basis on which to rest the achievements and revelation through and in him. The aspect of Christ's work on which most writers fixed their attention as they addressed themselves to specific practical problems, can be summed up in the word atonement. Against a background of constant recognition by man of his need for forgiveness and of sacrifices constantly offered to bring about this end, the New Testament authors stress a once-for-all atonement made by Jesus Christ. No longer was there a constant struggle to find peace with God, this was finally established and needed only to be accepted.

The experience is presented in a variety of images. It was like being condemned to death and unexpectedly set free; it was like being a slave and suddenly finding the money necessary to purchase freedom; it was like being impossibly in debt and finding the debt cancelled; it was like being a hostage held to ransom and hearing that the ransom money had been paid.

If this element of atonement is taken out what remains is less than the Christian faith, yet it may be questioned whether the new radical theology recognizes this fact. There appears to be a danger that the doctrine of the atonement may be replaced by a community ethic and that the sense of being set free may be replaced by the ability to get on with people. This is not to deny that atonement has a very definite practical outworking on the human plane; it is, however, to assert that if this is the only dimension we are no longer talking about atonement in the full theological sense.

It is precisely at this point that it is necessary to recognize the difference between the gospels and the rest of the New Testament. The doctrine of the atonement depends more on what can be said about Jesus than on what Jesus said. A theology which is really a Jesus-religion with the Synoptic Gospels as its Bible is therefore hardly likely to give us an adequate doctrine.

If this is the era of man-come-of-age, it is also the period when man is most desperately in need. The presentation of the fact of the atonement as a once-for-all act of God, needing only to be accepted, is an urgent requirement at all levels of theological communication.

4. Belief in the Incarnation

It is a matter of theological discussion whether or not the New Testament ever unequivocally calls Jesus "God". What is not open

to discussion is that the New Testament writers all saw Jesus as standing in a unique relationship with God and that they used many different images to express the closeness of that relationship. In Mark, Jesus is the Son of God; in John, the Word made flesh; in Hebrews, the very stamp of the divine nature; in Colossians, the image of the invisible God; and in Revelation, the first and the last.

In the New Testament as a whole Jesus is portrayed as the revealer of divine purposes and example of the divine will. Any systematic presentation of New Testament thought is forced to take note of this fact. Some of the recent attempts to circumscribe the person of Jesus in terms of strict humanity are based on a highly selective use of the evidence.

We are confronted in the New Testament with a man who had a clear sense of divine mission. In terms of that mission he spoke and acted. His whole life, therefore, was either evidence of the activity of God, or was based on a complete delusion. If we accept the first possibility, we are committed to some view of Incarnation and the evidence must determine exactly what that view is. If we accept the second possibility, we are then discussing a man whose word is not to be trusted as regards his motivation and mission. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that if Jesus was deluded on this central issue, then his words on other matters are of no particular value.¹⁹

5. The Christian Ethic

Clearly marked throughout the whole New Testament is the presupposition that there is a distinctive quality and pattern of life which is the natural outworking of the Christian experience of God in Christ. It is remarkable that even the most theological writings contain a considerable amount of practical instruction and exhortation, as a reading of Romans, Galatians, Colossians or I Peter will show. Just as in the teaching of Jesus the command to love one's neighbour follows the command to love God, so in the apostolic writings the moral instruction and appeal follows the theological argument.

Whether or not one endorses all of Archbishop Carrington's conclusions (in *Primitive Christian Catechism*) that there was a four-fold pattern of instruction, summarized under the terms Laying Aside, Being Subject, Standing Fast, Watch and Pray, both the amount and consistency of ethical instruction in the New Testament is impressive.

The early Christian communities were distinguished by their quality of life, at times a vigorous refusal to conform, at times a positive attitude towards the problems of new relationships created by the gospel.

In no area of Christian thinking is there so much confusion as in the realm of ethics. The traditional absolutes have been quest-

ioned, the concept of love for one's neighbour has achieved a new significance, the term "law" is suspect and "situational ethics" have been strongly advocated. In this situation, New Testament theology has an important part to play. For instance, it can always give positive content to the word "love" by reference to some external standard; it is at this point that the ethic of the kingdom becomes relevant; it can ask why "law" and "love" should not sometimes coincide; and it can counter "situational ethics" by some recognition of the necessity of moral growth and learning from the past.²⁰

One of the chief tasks of theology at present is the re-establishment of the link between faith and morality; this link is fundamental to New Testament thinking, but is in danger of being broken. Preachers, anxious not to identify religion and ethics, tend to leave congregations without the guidelines they are seeking, while certain moralists are advocating the ethics, but not the religion of Jesus.

These five themes—God, resurrection, atonement, incarnation, ethics—seem to find common expression throughout the New Testament in such a basic way as to merit the designation "internal presuppositions". As suggested earlier, few will wish to reduce them, although many may wish to extend the list. Some would doubtless seek a separate treatment of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. This may well be a justifiable demand, although the exact relationship of this doctrine to that of the resurrection might repay careful consideration. It is possible that the New Testament doctrine of the Spirit has been too exclusively interpreted in the light of Acts ii at the expense of other aspects of the total picture. If it is objected that the vital concept of the Kingdom has only been mentioned once in a passing reference, it could be pointed out that it links very closely with an understanding of incarnation and ethics.

Indeed it must be admitted that the examples given of internal presuppositions are offered less as a summary of the Christian faith and more as illustrations of a methodology which might be profitably developed.

The need for a simple presentation of the essentials of the faith is pressing, as on the one hand, radical views, lacking in certain vital elements, are being advocated in the name of Christian theology; while on the other and partly in reaction, a vigorous neo-fundamentalism threatens to ignore the results of 100 years of painstaking work in the field of Biblical criticism. The time is ripe in the sphere of theological education and preaching for a clearer emphasis on the central features of the gospel, with correspondingly less attention to some of its peripheral aspects.

The Christian faith does not consist of the acceptance of a large number of theological propositions; it consists of an experience and a response. The doctrines by which the experience and response may be described are comparatively few in number. What matters is not

how much is believed, but what is believed and how deep the commitment is.

The task of New Testament Theology at present is to seek, describe and declare the heart of the matter. At this point scholarship and proclamation become one.

NOTES

1. Cf. for example F. C. Grant, *Introduction to New Testament Thought*, p. 18 f, and Joseph Bonsirven, *Théologie du Nouveau Testament*, p. 7 f.
2. Cf. for example Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol I, p. 3 f (1915), and O. C. Quick, *The Christian Sacraments*, p. 1 f (1927); see also the comments in Neville Clark's *An Approach to the Theology of the Sacraments*, p. 72-3.
3. Bultmann, *Jesus and the Word*, p. 13.
4. Bultmann, *History and Eschatology*, p. 155.
5. For example, Stephen Neill, *The Interpretation of the New Testament 1861-1961*, p. 234.
6. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, Vol. 1, p. 187.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 63.
8. Neill, *op. cit.*, p. 222.
9. In *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. I, p. 431b.
10. Precisely because the articles are by different authors, there will be different attitudes to the texts assembled in connection with any given theme; in general the attitude is as described.
11. Exceptions are not hard to find. In the article on *pneuma* in *TWNT* Eduard Schweizer's conclusions would satisfy even the most radical critic—he finds only one indubitably authentic *pneuma*-saying in the Synoptics, Mark xiii. 11 and parallels. (See Vol. VI, p. 400, of the German edition.)
12. Reference should perhaps be made at this point to James Barr's *Semantics of Biblical Language*, particularly chapters 6 and 8.
13. It is doubtful whether British (in contrast to German) scholarship has ever taken this distinction seriously; the keen concern to display the unity of the New Testament has not brought unmixed gain in this particular.
14. The inherent dangers of this approach must be clearly recognized. From one point of view Jesus can only be fully understood in the light of what he began. All the same, his continuity with the Old Testament has been largely ignored, while the radical newness of his teaching has been frequently stressed.
15. The bare term "experience" may be open to some question. It is used on the one hand to underline that the New Testament is about *events* and it is the events which are important rather than any particular description of them; on the other hand it avoids such terms as "manifestation" or "revelation" which presupposes an attitude of commitment.
16. See Jeremias, *The Central Message of the New Testament*, Chapter I.
17. For fuller treatment of this theme see my *Resurrection in Theology and Life* (McMaster Theological Bulletin, No. 1).
18. See Neville Clark's recent *Interpreting the Resurrection*.
19. For a careful examination of a typical work of the "God is Dead" school, see R. F. Aldwinckle's critique of Altizer's *Gospel of Christian Atheism* in McMaster Theological Bulletin, No. 2.
20. See R. M. Hare, *Freedom and Reason*, p. 41, for a powerful expression of this last point.

J. R. C. PERKIN