

The Death of Christ and the Doctrine of Grace in John Wycliffe

ROBERT DOYLE

The contemporary assessment of the theology of John Wycliffe and its relationship to the 16th century reformation writings of the Church of England is complicated by the opinion that 'his preoccupations were largely different from theirs'.¹ With that in view this study will briefly review the well accepted Protestant trajectories in Wycliffe's writings. Then, in an attempt to explore what is seen to be a key difference, it will examine his understandings of the death of Christ and grace.

Protestant Trajectories

Those aspects of Wycliffe's theology which most readily have been found evangelical since the English Reformation include his doctrine of the authority of Scripture, preaching, predestination, assurance of faith, church, Holy Communion and the humanity of Christ.

In the context of specific doctrinal and moral charges against Rome and against monarchical papalism in principle, Wycliffe asserts 'that the Roman Church can err in articles of faith since it has done so ... the church advances by deteriorating with respect to faith in Scripture'.² Augustine, amongst others, is cited to show that the early church embraced Scripture as the ultimate authority on matters of faith.³ The recovery of the Bible, especially in an English translation, is seen as the basis of a thorough-going reformation of contemporary beliefs and practices from prelatical palace to village hovel:

That the Holy Scriptures may be more duly estimated, every truth which is not manifest to the Christian from the simple evidences of his senses should be adduced from Scripture, at least if the faithful are to place credence in it. And then the Scriptures would be held in reverence and the papal bulls superseded ... and the veneration of men for the laws of the papacy ... promulgated since the loosing of Satan will be kept within due bounds.⁴

Why may not all of the gospel be turned into English ...? This is especially so since all Christian men, learned and ignorant, who should be saved might always follow Christ and know his teaching and his life.⁵

If all the study and labour that men have now about 'Salisbury use' ... were turned into the making of Bibles and in studying and teaching

of them, how much should God's law be furthered and known and kept where now it is hindered, unstudied and unread!⁶

It follows that 'Christ advances more in his apostles by preaching to the people than by doing any miracle ... preaching the gospel exceeds prayer and administration of the sacraments to an infinite degree ... it is the most precious activity of the church'.⁷ Hindering the free course of the gospel is the mark of the anti-Christ and thus distinguishes his twelve agents 'commonly called popes, cardinals, monks, canons ...'.⁸

Wycliffe drew his predestinarianism not only from Augustine but also Bradwardine (1290–1349 Abp. of Canterbury) and Grosstête (1175–1253 Bishop of Lincoln), and in repudiation of some of the opinions of Fitzralph (1295–1360 Abp. of Armagh who greatly influenced Wycliffe's doctrine of dominion) and Duns Scotus (1265–1308 'Doctor Subtilis' in Wycliffe's writings).⁹ Characteristically, Wycliffe discusses the respective destinations of the *praedestinati* and the *praesciti* in the context of the doctrine of the church. 'So here in this church are some ordained to bliss and some to pain ... and so men commonly say that there be here two sorts of churches, holy church or church of God that on no account may be damned, and the church of the fiend, that for a time is good and lastest not, and this was never holy church nor part thereof'.¹⁰ The security of the members of holy church is further emphasized by appeal to Jesus Christ who 'prayed not for the world, for those men shall surely be damned but for men that shall be saved, for Christ's prayer must needs be heard'.¹¹ But Wycliffe backs off from concluding that the *praesciti* are beyond any recovery. 'Who knows the measure of God's mercy to whom hearing of God's word shall thus profit?'¹²

It is not so much philosophical theology or Biblical exegesis which pushes Wycliffe in this direction but the pastoral concern of preaching. Against those that might denigrate preaching by perjorative appeal to Election the reply comes that 'here true men say that as God hath ordained good men to come to bliss, so he hath ordained them to come to bliss by preaching and by keeping his word'.¹³ From this statement Wycliffe moves on to the virtue of preaching even to wicked men, who may yet profit by 'the measure of God's mercy'.

Consequently his doctrine of free-will has an indeterminist element. 'God giveth to each man free-will to choose good or evil and God is ready to give them grace if they will receive it, and in this life they (*praesciti*) do many good deeds of kind and because of them they shall have much reward in this world and at last a less pain in hell'.¹⁴

Again, pastoral and christological necessities dominate Wycliffe's understanding of assurance. 'While we remain here and do not know whether we shall be saved, we do not know whether we are members of holy church, but as each man shall hope that he shall be saved in

bliss, so he should suppose that he is a limb of holy church'.¹⁵ 'We take this as a belief, or truth that is next to belief, that no man that lives here knows whether he shall be saved or damned, all this he hopes below, a belief that he shall be saved in heaven, this only is man taught of God, "that he shall be saved in heaven", no, or a few men, are such; and to try him concerning himself for they shall have no¹⁶ evidence to say that God has told him thus.'¹⁵

This slightly ambiguous exposition is in the context of Popes who make wicked claims with great certitude and spiritual pride, and church members who know not whether to fear papal laws or God's. Certainty, Wycliffe is trying to say, lies only in Jesus Christ. Elsewhere the believer is described as a man who has given him by God a faith which is unmixed with hesitation.¹⁷ Thus 'that grace which is called the grace of predestination or a final perseverance cannot fall away from anyone', to which definition Wycliffe introduces some anthropocentric realism by adding 'for if so it could not be that grace'.¹⁸ But for all that, the Christocentric and preaching pole in his thought would appear to have the last word. 'Christian men are certain of belief by the gracious gift of Jesus Christ that the truth taught by Christ and his apostles is the gospel though all the clerks of anti-Christ say never so fast the contrary'.¹⁹

Following in a manner Augustine's division between the visible and invisible church, Wycliffe distinguishes between the true church consisting of the whole body of the elect, 'the congregation of all the predestinate'²⁰ without the reprobate,²¹ and the visible organised church of Rome. The former had a three-fold division: 'the overcoming' who are in bliss with Christ, 'the sleeping' who are in purgatory and sin not anew but purge old sins, and 'the fighting' who are true men who live here the life of Christian men.²² The visible Roman Church consisting both of sheep and goats includes the latter. On this basis Wycliffe quite happily engages in the polemical exposure of the error of many Roman claims.²³

This renegade will not be regulated by the mind of the church above nor by any authority but ... sets forth new laws ... so that anything determined therein shall stand as though it were a part of the gospel of Jesus Christ ... but arise oh soldiers of Christ! Be wise to fling away these things ... put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ ... and sever from the church such frauds of anti-Christ and teach the people that in Christ alone and in his law and in his members they should trust.²⁴

Although Wycliffe primarily appeals to philosophical realism²⁵ to deny transubstantiation in the Eucharist ('of all heresies ... none is more abominable than that which makes this venerable sacrament an accident without a subject'²⁶), nevertheless he grounds it in the ascension and heavenly reign of the real human nature of Jesus Christ, 'so it is not to be understood that the body of Christ descends

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to the host ... but remains above in the skies stable and unmoved ... here the body of Christ, and so Christ in his humanity, may extend spiritually to every part of the world'.²⁷ For this reason the gospel phrase 'this is my body' is neither formal or essential predication but figurative.²⁸ Likewise, consecration and sacrifice consist of spiritual praise,²⁹ such that 'a layman ... could perform the sacrament'. Fittingly so since 'every predestinated layman is a priest'.³⁰ 'Nor do we crush the body of Christ with the teeth but rather we receive it in a spiritual manner, perfect and undivided.'³¹ 'Believers receive the sacramental bread in fragments, it is afterwards watered by evangelical faith and kneaded in the heart and when baked by the fire of charity is spiritually eaten.'³² Thus it is an efficacious sign calling to memory the life of Christ,³³ and 'thereby one is incorporated into the members of the church and thus into Christ'.³⁴ Because of this stress on union with Christ, 'with his mystical body the Church',³⁵ or fellowship with each other in Jesus, an unworthy celebrant by his immoral example can deflect us from pious and gracious meditation on how Christ suffered from the human race and lessen the sacrament's efficacy.³⁶ 'In this Wycliffe was nearer to the truth of the matter than were the reformers, he understood the Lord's Supper as a sign of fellowship.'³⁷

Wycliffe, standing within the orthodoxy of the Catholic Creeds, laid great emphasis on the humanity of Jesus Christ:

This pain of Christ's passion passed all other, for he was a most tender man and in middle age and God by miracle allowed his mind to suffer else by reason of joy he might not have known sorrow. But in Christ's passion were all things that could make pain hard and to make it more meritorious ... and the despite was most, for men who should most have loved Christ ordained this most foul death against his surpassing kindness. We should believe also that Christ would shape his passion to answer to the greatness of man's sin.³⁸

For Wycliffe in the realist tradition Christ is the *homo communis*, the idea of Man, and by the incarnation he is objectively *unicus homo*, unique man. In the treatise *De Benedicta Incarnacione*, written around 1367 in the early years of his lectureship at Oxford, Wycliffe forcibly vindicates the reality of Christ's humanity and identification, membership or union by metaphysical and salvific necessity with this Jesus. Wycliffe's conviction here is intense.³⁹ Without equivocation or unreality Christ is one with all his brethren, *univoce homo cum aliis hominibus, frater cum fratribus suis*.⁴⁰ In the same way that Christ was tempted and suffered in his own person he went down into hell for us.⁴¹

His bodily ascension and subsequent heavenly session as intercessor and King, with its exaltation of the mortal into immortality, is the

basis of Christian hope. In plain terms Christ is our brother.⁴² Such is the reality of Christ's humanity and its identification with his divinity in the same person that 'we truly grant not only that Christ but that God was crucified, dead and buried'.⁴³ It is no surprise then that Wycliffe's ethical system is Christocentrically relational and not only philosophical in spite of his patent Aristotelian interests.⁴⁴ The true humanity and necessary humility of Jesus Christ becomes for us in our struggle incentive for faith, hope, love, that is, friendship.⁴⁵ 'Faith, hope and charity ... are in their essence the Lord Jesus Christ' for they mean living and dying for others.⁴⁶

To this point Wycliffe's thought is of the stuff we recognize in the later evangelical reformation, but at crucial points non-evangelical elements appear. Penance is defined in the usual tripartite way as *contritio, confessio, satisfacio 'et operis satisfactionem* (and satisfaction by deeds).⁴⁷ The first two parts Wycliffe redefines in what we would recognize as a more theocentric, and therefore evangelical direction,⁴⁸ but 'the sense of satisfaction by works is made up of the two former together with a confession made to the priest in private'.⁴⁹ Again Wycliffe qualifies this third part. It was introduced, or rather invented by Pope Innocent III, and it would be better for the church to concentrate on the first two parts of penitence; but if well conducted this third part 'may be by supposition necessary and so really necessary ...'.⁵⁰

At two other points Wycliffe's views are even more clearly unevangelical. He uncritically accepts the notion of purgatory,⁵¹ and while rejecting the idea of condign merit (*meritum de condigno*)⁵² embraces congruous merit (*meritum de congruo*) such that he accepts the existence of a heavenly treasury of merits based on the supererogatory merits of the saints and above all, Jesus Christ.⁵³ What he does vehemently reject is the claim that the pope or the friars are able to dispense these merits, and especially he attacks 'indulgences'. 'Against this rude blasphemy I have elsewhere inveighed. Neither the pope nor the Lord Jesus Christ can grant dispensations or give indulgences to any man except as the Deity has eternally determined by his just counsel'.⁵⁴ Wycliffe does appear to have some reservations about supererogatory merit and its possible transmission—'merit of no kind may be possessed except by the grace of God (*Dei gratia speciali* ...); and the merit remaining after these works, in the formal acceptation of the term merit, has no existence except in the man to whom the works themselves probably belong, and so every man has his own merit or demerit'.⁵⁵ However, the fact that these reservations are not developed, and that he never takes the opportunity to attack this core notion itself in the same way as he ruthlessly attacks papal and clerical claims to be the administrators of these merits conclusively, in my opinion, demonstrates Wycliffe's basic agreement with this medieval doctrine.⁵⁶

On this sort of evidence it is widely concluded that Wycliffe, while giving the highest priority to faith in Jesus Christ,⁵⁷ only anticipates, at best, the doctrine often viewed as central to the Reformation, *sola fide*, justification by faith alone.⁵⁸

In attempting to probe behind this impasse, and to see if in fact Wycliffe's preoccupations were different from the Reformers, we now turn our attention to his understanding of the death of Christ and grace.

The Death of Christ

'The whole world before and after is perfected ... the creation is restored to primary perfection through the Passion of Christ.'⁵⁹ God willed to assume manhood in place and time in order to complete his work.⁶⁰ Approached from the point of view of the Son's relationship to the Father, as the word is the image of the Father, and man is made in the image of God, it is congruous that the *form* should *reform* the *deformed*.⁶¹ Through Jesus' death human nature has not only been restored, but more gloriously than Adam.⁶² Such that the entire world is now vastly improved when considered from the point of view of Aristotelian physics.⁶³ Again, the appearance of the Saviour, his very incarnation, changed the relation of the world to man for the better.

With respect to the possibilities formerly offered in Adam the *praedestinati*, although having to endure tribulation now, are assured of eternal beatitude, which is the maturation or realization of the innocent state lost in Adam.⁶⁵ Because the second Adam is the new spiritual head (*primogenitus*) he does not restore man to 'original righteousness' like the first Adam had as the carnal head (*primogenitus*) of the race, but to grace, for grace is the gift of new birth and kinship to Christ.⁶⁶

The necessity for the incarnation and the cross to be the means of redemption and restoration flows from the fact that the price must be proportional to the fault, infinite.⁶⁷ The one redeeming must be of infinite worth, and therefore, God, and because the redeemer must be distinguished from the one who sets free, and also because the sin of a nature and a race must be made restoration for by merit in the nature which had sinned, it was necessary for humanity itself to be 'the mediator of God and man, the man Jesus Christ'.⁶⁸ The Passion is the means of redemption; for Jesus' humanity underwent all the experience in which the Christ gave his blood in redemption.⁶⁹ In that way the death of Jesus Christ can be described as 'both a satisfaction and a price, buying and bought, reconciling and reconciled (*sit et satisfaciens et precium, mercans et mercatum, reconcilians et reconciliatum*)'.⁷⁰

In response to this complete effacement of sin, this great act of redemption, we should make war on our spiritual enemies by

mediating on, speaking of and imitating in deed Christ's Passion.⁷¹ 'It is certain that bodily baptism or washing is of little avail unless there goes with it the washing of the mind by the Holy Spirit from original sin or actual sin ... It is a fundamental article of belief that whenever a man is duly baptized, baptism destroyed whatever was found in the man ... "We who are baptized into Christ Jesus are baptized into his death".'⁷² Spiritual eating of the Eucharist 'consists in the pious and gracious consideration of how Christ suffered for the human race'.⁷³ 'All who follow Christ, having been justified by his righteousness, (just as much as his own generation), will be saved (*omnes sequentes Christum iustificati ex sua iusticia tamquam sua generatione salvabuntur*).'⁷⁴

In writing on the death of Christ Wycliffe has lent heavily on the Anselmic theory of atonement which used the penitential system's ideas of satisfaction and merit to explain how 'righteous' or *rectitudo* has been restored to the disordered will of man (and thus to the universe) by the satisfaction of God's offended righteousness.⁷⁵ Wycliffe's description is full of the rich, social and commercial language of the middle ages. Civil suretyship is when one satisfied another's, one's brother's debt (*civilis autem fideiussio est nota seculo, sum quis facit ut satisfaciat pro debito fratris sui ...*). God contracts with us in like manner.⁷⁶ Christ's death satisfies the offended righteousness or honour of God, certainly, but Wycliffe goes further than Anselm. By laying stress, as we have already noted, on the real humanity of Jesus Christ, *homo communis, unicus homo*, Wycliffe identifies the redeemed more closely with the redeemer. His biblical expositions, especially on the Passion narratives in the gospels, help plumb the reality of Christ's humanity, but his philosophical realism, so apparent in all his work, creates an ontological dependence and inclusivity between the Man and man.⁷⁷ With Anselm, Wycliffe points out in the prevailing medieval currency that Christ's humanity is man's indenture, but not just for 'man' but for 'his brother' (*obligacione satisfactoria pro peccatis fratrum suorum*).⁷⁸

Further, Wycliffe's outlook is much more cosmic than Anselm's. By the passion of the one Man, mankind's restoration also involves 'the restitution of all things' as man was given dominion overall. Wycliffe's sweep is magisterial—Christ's Passion makes full satisfaction, restoring the glory of human nature, rectifying all the operations of nature across time and space.⁷⁹ It seems to me that we can attribute this cosmic strain in Wycliffe not only to his philosophy, but also to his sensitive employment of the images used in the Bible to describe this salvation—'the image of God'; 'Adam's disobedience, Christ's obedience'; 'dominion given in Eden, dominion lost in the Fall'; and especially the Passion narratives as they range across the tension and betrayal of individual to the cataclysm that darkens the cosmos and shatters ancient religious traditions. All elements of

Wycliffe's Christology and soteriology appear in his sermons, and especially the sermon on John 19:18, 'they crucified him'.⁸⁰ It is in effect an 'Irenaeus' view. But the absence of reference to Irenaeus, and to key elements such as recapitulation and the Fall as more an interruption in man's development than a loss of certain perfections, rules him out as a source. It will remain for Calvin through Erasmus' publication in 1526 to tap his fellow Gallican directly.

The Doctrine of Grace

As befits a Christian theologian Wycliffe makes constant mention of 'the grace of God', 'the help of God's grace', 'saved by the grace of God', 'the blessings of grace and nature', and the like. The New Testament in contrast to the Old can be called 'the law of grace',⁸¹ which given the feudal concern with order may mean little more than the 'order of grace'. Three characteristics stand out in Wycliffe's understanding of grace.

First, Wycliffe's theory of 'the dominion of grace', expanded upon from Fitzralph's version in *De Pauperie Salvatoris*, is a leading motif. Wycliffe wrote extensively about it in an early work, *De Dominio Divino*, and it has a logical and theological priority in all his other writings, especially those looking at the work of Christ and reformation of church abuses.

It is often been said that man holdeth things temporal under a two-fold title. Namely that of original righteousness and that of mundane righteousness. Now, under the title of original righteousness Christ possessed all the goods in the universe ... under that title or the title of grace, all things belong to the righteous.⁸²

But much more is all this true in respect to the primitive righteousness of Jesus Christ. Let temporal lords remember then how distinguished was the *favour* which our Lord showed them in his life-time, without doubt intending that they should make him a return of their service'.⁸³

Wycliffe's movement of thought here is two-fold. Everything we have in life is due to God's grace, not man's right. That gift is meant to lead to due, orderly, that is *righteous* service on the recipient's part. To live, to act unrighteously is to fail to render the honour due to God and especially to Jesus Christ who is God's revelation of his grace *par excellence*. Such unrighteousness disqualifies us from the gift, from grace.⁸⁴ Wycliffe's emphasis falls upon the grace given us in Jesus Christ whose righteous dominion, being not only exercised for our salvific benefit, but also in humility, stands as both imperative ('according to evangelical doctrine Christ's disciples dare not call themselves masters and lords but servants of our Lord Jesus Christ'),⁸⁵ and indicative ('it is not possible that Christ should withdraw assistance and defence for his people, and how then can

these men be said to follow God, who refuse to assist and defend their dependents ...').⁸⁶ It was of course Wycliffe's use of this doctrine to show that the church through its abuses had deprived itself of title to grace, and the state's responsibility to serve God as its due for gracious possession by reforming the church from without,⁸⁷ which was a major factor in his unpopularity with prelates and popularity with princes.

The second characteristic of Wycliffe's doctrine is that he affirmed the medieval understanding of grace as 'quality', by which the creature is well pleasing to God (*potest gracia accipi pro bona qualitate qua creatura est formaliter grata Deo*).⁸⁸ This grace is prevenient (*illa gracia dicitur preveniens ad merendum*),⁸⁹ justifying (*secunda dicitur gracia gratum faciens, peccato mortali opposita, que vel est iusticia vel ipsam concomitans*),⁹⁰ and of predestination or final perseverance (*tercia dicitur gracia predestinacionis ...*).⁹¹ Commenting on Grosstête's view of justification, Wycliffe again affirms his basic threefold schema, but more specifically with a view to final bliss—God's grace is preventing, justifying and perfecting (*preveniens, iustificans, consumans*).⁹² Further, these graces follow one another in turn.⁹³ In *De Civili Dominio* Wycliffe can give a practical example of this progression.

It is clear that if one who is in a state of original sin should be baptised without a super addition of merit he is restored 'by water' (*ex aequo*) to the minimum level of grace which through the minimum sin (that is, obviously, original sin) had been lacking to him. But if by perseverance and contrition he has earned for himself second grace, then by the divine law of mercy he is restored to a fuller grace ...⁹⁴

Wycliffe's rejection of grace *de condigno*, discussed above, firmly places him against the Pelagian error of supposing that we can merit salvation. The reward we elicit from God for works must be congruous not condign. *Congruum* means that God freely, by grace, ordains men having free will to merit reward by doing right (*de gracia sua ordinet creaturam liberi arbitrii ut propter observanciam liberam rectitudinis mereatur premium*).⁹⁵ Man can have merit not of works (*ex operibus*), but through works (*per opera*) of grace (*nemo meretur ex opere sed ex gracia preveniente*).⁹⁶ 'A man deserves blessing ... through prevenient grace ... a man does not deserve blessing because of himself, but because of the prior provision of grace'.⁹⁷

It follows closely from an ontological definition of grace that it is 'infused' (*dicitur triplex creata gracia vel infusa*).⁹⁸ Wycliffe never departs from this orthodox schema and understanding. In his later works, on the *Pastoral Office* and *Dialogus*, the same structure stands: 'grace is infused together with a compulsion of works'.⁹⁹ 'It behoves Christ ... to fulfil the claims of righteousness, and of that of

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the sinner whom it becomes him to effect, imparting grace to him that he may prove worthy of the divine assistance'.¹⁰⁰

Wycliffe then, for all the emphasis he places on faith and Christology, as we noted above, never really breaks away from the order of salvation inherited from his beloved Augustine.¹⁰¹ For Augustine, faith, although very important and pivotal, is inferior since it is fixed on the earthly Jesus. This faith, then, incites the love of God, moving man from *inferiora* to *superiora*, which love alone can properly embrace the righteousness which leads to final beatitude.¹⁰² It is true that Wycliffe does not structure an order of salvation in that precise way. But Augustine's position is implicit and holds him firmly in its grip. Faith is the act of believing (sometimes a believing habit of mind), the truth which is believed, and at maturation faith which becomes perfect is wrought by charity. This charity belongs necessarily to all who are true believers.¹⁰³ Justification then, is in the end, not *sola fide* but through following Christ, through the imitation of Christ, that is, through love.¹⁰⁴

The third distinguishing feature of Wycliffe's doctrine of grace, all the above notwithstanding, is that it does contain recognizably evangelical elements. Wycliffe's view of faith has a steady strain of assurance running through it. God bestows on man, a believer, a faith unmixed with hesitation.¹⁰⁵ 'Our faith assures that Christ is the mediator between God and man'.¹⁰⁶ Again, Wycliffe's practical outworking of the doctrines of grace and Christ in the sacramental practice of the church and the life of the individual believer is emphatically relational and not so much ontological or even epistemological. Satan's sin is unforgiven because, amongst other things, he refuses to repent.¹⁰⁷ The efficacy of the sign of the Eucharist depends on the relationship of both the celebrant and the recipient to Christ.¹⁰⁸ A godly layman better and rightfully celebrates the Eucharist than an impious priest.¹⁰⁹ Finally, against prevailing church abuses, in doctrinal treatises and in practical exhortations Wycliffe asserts the centrality of Jesus' life, death and resurrection above all else:

Had no such letters ever been dispensed, and had men depended simply on the graciousness of Christ, it would have been better than at present.¹¹⁰

Teach the people that in Christ alone, and in his law and in his members they should trust.¹¹¹

It behoved Christ to suffer the most bitter passion for the salvation of men ... Men attain to whatever happiness may be theirs by virtue of Christ's Passion.¹¹²

Satisfaction for sin cannot be made save by the death of Christ, so therefore, the Apostles saith, 'We who are baptized into Christ Jesus are baptized into his death.'¹¹³

For our faith assures us that Christ is the mediator between God and

man. Hence many are of the opinion that when prayer was directed only to the middle person of the Trinity for spiritual help, the church was more flourishing; made greater advances than it does now, when many new intercessors have been found out and introduced.¹¹⁴

Evaluation

That the evangelical elements in Wycliffe's doctrine of grace are only grafted onto his acceptance of the medieval schema is seen by his failure to demolish the whole system of infused righteousness, purgatory, and the like, in the way Luther did less than 140 years further on. Formally Wycliffe has improved on Occam's schema (which in turn was an improvement on Aquinas in an attempt to preserve human freedom),¹¹⁵ by reasserting with Augustine (and Aquinas) the priority of prevenient grace. Thus, doing away with Occam's moral effort on the basis of natural ability, it is prevenient grace which leads to effort and a consequent infusion of grace (*infusio gratiae*) as an appropriate reward (*meritum de congruo*). Following this, moral co-operation (doing the best one can with the aid of grace) finds its end in the reward of eternal life as an appropriate (not 'just'—as with both Aquinas and Occam) due. Of course, the grace of predestination as with nearly all the theologians of western Catholicism ensured the end. But that Wycliffe still eventually, and essentially, threw a man back onto his own efforts is seen in his uncritical acceptance for the need of purgatory to finish the purification of the believer's being so as to facilitate entrance into the divine presence.

Why did Wycliffe fail to grasp the full scope of evangelical faith? Comparison with Luther and Calvin yields two reasons.

First, although Wycliffe commented on the bible,¹¹⁶ and is marked by his preaching, he was not the biblical expositor that either Martin Luther, Professor of Biblical Studies at Wittenberg, or John Calvin in Strassburg and Geneva were. Wycliffe's expositions in Latin are thoroughly laced with philosophical theology. Unlike Luther he did not:

beat importunately upon Paul (in Romans 1:17) ... at last by the mercy of God meditating day and night I gave heed to the context of the words, namely 'in (the gospel) the righteousness of God is revealed, as it is written, "he who through faith is righteous shall live".' There I began to understand that the righteousness of God is that by which the righteous live by a gift of God, namely by faith. And this is the meaning: the righteousness of God is revealed by the gospel, namely the *passive* righteousness with which merciful God justifies us by faith ... Here I felt that I was altogether born again and had entered paradise itself.¹¹⁷

On the basis of this biblical discovery 'that Jesus Christ is our righteousness', that justification is not so much something done to us but outside of us for us, Martin Luther did not just fine-tune the medieval system of grace, but demolished it. Purgatory, *meritum de congruo*, *infusio gratiae*, justification by love—all go, to be replaced by faith alone in Jesus Christ.

Wycliffe's doctrine of the death of Christ, like Anselm's, was fundamentally ontological, not relational. The satisfaction of the righteousness of God was not as in the later protestant view of forensic justification so much the placation of the anger of the personal God, or, as in the classical theory of atonement the defeat of personal forces arraigned against this God and his people, but a restoration of *rectitudo*, or order to a universe in fundamental ontological disarray due to the fall. A relational understanding of atonement can accommodate the *sola* fideism of Paul. But a basically ontological outlook necessarily lays the stress on mankind moving step-wise up the scale of the restoration of being until the beatific engagement with Being itself is possible. It was Luther's biblical and therefore radical rethink about the death of Christ which moved him from a philosophical to a relational view of grace.

Of course, Luther's personal journey was not Wycliffe's. Wycliffe's evangelical perceptions of Christ, such as they were, did give him somewhat a priority of personal assured faith through the work of Jesus Christ. Also, Luther as did Calvin inherited the textual and investigative fruit of the Renaissance.

Calvin was to further develop Luther's biblicism by doing away with the Aristotelian *inventio* and *loci* method of exegesis used by the old German and replace it with the exegetical method the church has used ever since; a continuous exegesis and exposition of the language of the bible, *perspicua brevitatis*, because 'language is the *character mentis*'.¹¹⁸

Secondly and concurrently, Wycliffe had an optimistic view of the ability of philosophy to come to true conclusions about reality. As we have already noted, his works are replete with it. Wycliffe accepted the notion that proper philosophy, especially Aristotle's, provided a most useful and true prolegomena to understanding grace, and particularly 'the law of grace', the Bible. Such requisites included knowledge of universals, 'the quiddity of time, and other accidents, and how it is that accidents are nothing but dispositions formally inherent in their subjects', that God is an 'everlasting ideal', an 'eternal existence, in his own genus, and a necessary antecedent', etc.¹¹⁹ The relational, the evangelical elements in his theology were unable in the end to escape from the framework which natural philosophy provided.¹²⁰

A lot of history has to flow under the bridge before Luther can assert that 'Aristotle's *Ethics* is the worst enemy of grace',¹²¹ and

could crow, 'our theology and St. Augustine are forging ahead prosperously ... Little by little Aristotle is going down to the doom everlasting and near at hand.'¹²²

It is again Calvin who is to take this reforming ascendancy of grace, or the revelation of grace, over nature and turn it into an epistemological principle which is characteristic not only of all true theological thinking but of modern western science from Bacon onwards.¹²³ Against the speculations of the Schoolmen Calvin asserts that the basic theological method is not *Quid est?* ... *sed qualis sit?* Not 'What is God? Men who pose this question are merely toying with idol speculations, it is far better for us to enquire "Of what kind is he?"'¹²⁴ God 'is shown to us not as he is in himself but as he is towards us so that this recognition of him consists more of living experience than in vain and high-flown speculation ... Indeed, with experience as our teacher we find God just as he declares himself in his word (*quibus nobis describitur non quis sit apud se, sed qualis erga nos ... experientia magistra, Deum, qualem se verbo declarat*)¹²⁵ 'They do not apprehend God as he offers himself (*qualem se offert*), but imagine him as they have fashioned him in their own presumption.'¹²⁶ 'God is comprehended in Christ alone.'¹²⁷ 'We know no Christ except Christ clothed in his promises ... Christ clothed with his gospel.'¹²⁸

The first assertion about *qualis sit* replacing *quid est* Wycliffe would reject outright. The second assertion about God being comprehended in Christ alone, Wycliffe, I think we have shown, accepts. On the last assertion Wycliffe also failed, although he had a promising start. In theory he agreed and spoke elegantly, evenly truly about Jesus from the pages of the New Testament; but in practice he also gave Christ another garment, designed by pagan philosophy, and knitted and tailored by the giants of western catholic theology.

Thomas Cranmer was such an omnivorous reader, not only having a private library greater than that of Cambridge university in his under-graduate days, but also in later years a secretary to help with his annotations, that the 'tutors' involved in the formation of his evangelical theology can only be described *en masse* as the German and Swiss reformation writers and more. As to any possible input from Wycliffe, we do know from the remains of his library that Cranmer had a Latin copy of Wycliffe's *Triologus*, printed in Basel 1525.¹²⁹ Significantly however, he does not cite Wycliffe in his *Defence of the Lord's Supper*. The debt Cranmer owes to the continental reformation is clear. The Germans taught him justification by faith and the Swiss the theology of the Lord's Supper in particular, and liturgy in general.¹³⁰

Although Cranmer had a biblical and not a canon law background like his opponent Gardiner he was not a bible commentator. Neither did he make any great contribution to theological thought.¹³¹ But

from the comparatively few writings he has left us it is plain that unlike Wycliffe he gave no structural role to philosophy in his Christian thinking. Cranmer's arguments against transubstantiation are a good case in point. They are biblical, patristic and based on common sense. Philosophy is only adduced illustratively. In this way then he stands with Luther and Calvin and not with his fellow national John Wycliffe. If Cranmer inherited anything from Wycliffe it would have been love of the bible, 'spiritual eating', and distaste for monarchical papalism; but all that only indirectly and along the most tenuous route from Oxford to Bohemia to Germany and the Swiss confederation.¹³² The most obvious spiritual 'heirs' in the English reformation theology are at the end of the 16th century. Richard Hooker and William Perkins, both biblicists and protestants, and on different 'sides' on puritan issues, also have in common with each other, and Wycliffe, philosophy as a necessary (explicitly or implicitly) prolegomena to theological thinking. As it is Hooker and Perkins, establishment and puritan, who in an obvious sort of way stand as heads of the two major strains of English theology ever since, the contemporary applicability of Wycliffe's theological effort is twofold: read your bible, and beware of Greeks bearing gifts.¹³³

ROBERT DOYLE is a lecturer at Moore Theological College, Sydney.

NOTES

- 1 ODCC, p.1503.
- 2 'On the Eucharist', p.69, trans. F.L. Battles in *Advocates of Reform from Wycliffe to Erasmus*, ed. M. Spinka, LCC Vol. 14, (SCM, London 1953).
- 3 'Augustine ... enjoins it on his readers, that none should give credit to his writings or his words, except in so far as they have their foundation in Scripture', pp.129-30, 'Trialogues' in *Tracts and Treatises of John D. Wycliffe P.D.*, ed. R. Vaughan (Wycliffe Society, London 1945).
- 4 'Trialogues', pp.129-30, Vaughan.
- 5 'But the common people of England know it best in their mother tongue and thus it is the same thing to prevent such knowledge of the Gospel and to prevent Englishmen from following Christ and coming to heaven', pp.50-1. 'On the Pastoral Office', LCC Vol. 14. 'God commandeth generally to each layman that he should have God's commandments before him and teach them to his children', 'Office of Curates', p.27, Vaughan. This may in fact be by a follower of Wycliffe, but its sentiment is that of his master.
- 6 Vaughan, 'Feigned Contemplative Life', p.51, p.93 in *Select English Writings*, ed. H.E. Winn (OUP, London 1929). Pages xxix to xl have a useful if brief discussion on the genuineness of the English writings attributed to Wycliffe.
- 7 'Pastoral Office', p.49, LCC Vol. 14.
- 8 Vaughan, 'Trialogues', p.184.
- 9 John Stacey, pp.94-99ff., *Wycliffe and Reform* (Lutterworth, London 1964) has a more detailed treatment.
- 10 Sermon, Gospel for 20th Sunday after Trinity, translated from Winn p.97.

- 11 Winn, Sermon, Gospel on Vigil of Whitsunday, p.2.
- 12 Vaughan, 'Four Deceits of Anti-Christ', p.23; see also in *The English Works of Wycliffe*, Vol. V, p.111, ed. F.D. Matthew (English Text Society, London 1880).
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Winn, 'The Church and her Members', pp.120-1.
- 16 Op. cit., p.121 f.n.1, 'Of Confession' omits 'no'.
- 17 Vaughan, 'Trialogus', p.118. 'Fidelis autem est, qui habet fidem a Deo infusam, sine aliqua trepidatione fidei contraria, quae suae fidei sit commixta', G. Lechler, *Johannis Wiclif Trialogus cum Supplemento Trialogi* (Oxford 1869), p.135.
- 18 Vaughan, 'Trialogus', p.121.
- 19 Vaughan, 'Anti-Christ and his Clerke', p.61, although undoubtedly by a follower of Wycliffe it does express the sentiments of his master.
- 20 *De Ecclesia*, p.2, ed. I. Loserth (Wycliffe Society, London 1886).
- 21 Op. cit., p.3.
- 22 Vaughan, *De Ecclesia Dominio*, p.74; Lechler, *Trialogus*, pp.324-5.
- 23 See especially, 'De Christo et Suo Adversario Antichristo', pp.664-92 in *John Wycliffe's Polemical Works in Latin*, Vol. II, ed. R. Buddensieg (Wycliffe Society, London 1883).
- 24 Vaughan, 'Trialogus', p.198.
- 25 For a fuller discussion see J.A. Robson, *Wycliffe and the Oxford Schools* (CUP, Cambridge 1961), especially pp.171-95.
- 26 Vaughan, 'Trialogus', p.145. 'For the world God created they straight away destroy, inasmuch as they destroy what God ordained should be perpetual—primary matter—and introduce nothing new into the world save the mendacious assertion that it pertains to them to perform unheard of miracles, in which God himself certainly may have no share ... they make a new world', Vaughan, 'Trialogus', p.139.
- 27 Vaughan, 'Trialogus', pp.151-2; also 'On the Eucharist', p.83, LCC Vol. 14. D.B. Knox, *The Lord's Supper from Wycliffe to Cranmer* (Paternoster, Exeter 1983), argues for Wycliffe's 'Zwinglian' stance, pp.9-19.
- 28 Vaughan, 'Trialogus', p.148.
- 29 'Yet note that just as we bless God and our Lord because they are worthy of praise ... so also do we bless the body and blood of Christ, not by making it blessed or holy, but by praising and spreading abroad its holiness and blessedness which God has instituted in his body, and thus we sacrifice Christ and offer him to God the Father', p.65, 'On the Eucharist', LCC Vol. 14.
- 30 'On the Eucharist', p.84, LCC Vol. 14. Vaughan, 'Trialogus', p.155, where Wycliffe adduces Acts 2 as evidence of the practice.
- 31 Op. cit., p.63, also pp.65-6.
- 32 Vaughan, 'Trialogus', p.148.
- 33 'On the Eucharist', p.85, LCC Vol. 14.
- 34 Op. cit., pp.66-7.
- 35 Op. cit., pp.61, 85.
- 36 Op. cit., pp.84-6.
- 37 D.B. Knox, *The Lord's Supper from Wycliffe to Cranmer*, p.19.
- 38 I have taken this from Vaughan, pp.86-7, even though it has been known since the work of W.W. Shirley (*A Catalogue of the Original Works of John Wycliffe*, 1865, p.31) and R. Arnold (*Select English Works*, 1869, p.iii), that this collection of sermons cannot be attributed to Wycliffe. Justification for this lies in the fact that almost word for word and phrase for phrase the extract occurs scattered throughout acknowledged genuine Wycliffe sermons: Arnold, op. cit., Vol. 2, p.130 (see Winn, *Select English Writings*, 1929, pp.xxix-xxxix for a qualified defence of Arnold's collection), and pp.321-8 in the *Latin Sermones*, Vol. IV (Wycliffe Society, London 1890).

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- 39 Edward Harris, editor of the Wycliffe Society edition, 1886, gives a sympathetic overview of Wycliffe's position, pp.xx–xxviii.
- 40 Op. cit., pp.xxiii.
- 41 Op. cit., p.31, 'Si ergo Christus in propria persona passus fuerat et temptatus, quia in carne et anima ypostatice copulata: per idem in propria persona spoliavit infernum ...'
- 42 Op. cit., pp.27–8, 'Et hinc dicit apostolus ad Hebr. 7 "quod Iesus accedit per semet ipsum ad Deum, semper vivens ad interpellandum pro nobis" ... et sic Christum ire ad Patrem et recedere a nobis est mortale, quod ex nobis suscepit, levare in celum et facere immortale. Quis ergo non hinc gaudeat ut et suam naturam iam immortalem gratuletur in Christo, ac illud se speret esso futurum per Christum? ... sed verissime et univoce fratrem nostrum'. 'The body of Christ, and so Christ in his humanity, may extend spiritually to every part of the world ... he is king spiritually ... unto every part of his kingdom ...', Vaughan, 'Trialogus', pp.151–2.
- 43 Vaughan, 'Trialogus', p.151.
- 44 G. Lechler, pp.278–80 in his *John Wycliffe and his English Precursors*, (Religious Tract Society, London 1884), notes the priority of grace in Wycliffe's system.
- 45 *De Benedicta*, pp.26–7, '2^o suppono quod apostoli, quibus locutus est et alii sermones eius servantes sint nedum servi Domini sed amici ... 3^o suppono quod de ratione amicitie sit, sum amicus sit alter ipse, congratulari de prosperis coamici, specialiter si exinde speratur amicitie fructus uberior.'
- 46 'Pastoral Office, p.33, LCC Vol. 14, see also Vaughan, 'Trialogus', p.118.
- 47 Lechler, 'Trialogus', p.326.
- 48 'Penitence consists in the condition of the mind, and that these other things, which are called the parts of penitence, and its accidents ... contrition belongs to the mind alone ... as the contrite confess to the Lord ... Confession is made up of this feeling and of oral utterance made to God alone.' Vaughan, 'Trialogus', p.178.
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 Op. cit., pp.178–9. Compare Calvin's complete demolition of this ancient tripartite definition because of its ultimate dependence on works and law and not the grace and promise of God manifested in Jesus Christ—see *Institutes* 3.3–4; 'repentance is not the cause of forgiveness of sins', 3.4.3.
- 51 Refer to Endnote 22 above.
- 52 'et per consequens salvatur nobis liberum arbitrium cum potencia merendi de congruo ... quod non possumus mereri aliquid sine precedente gracia, et sic nihil simpliciter de condigno', p.242, *De Dominio Divino*, (Wycliffe Society, London 1890); see also p.227.
- 53 'The friars argue ... that the saints in heaven bestow on those who had formerly rendered them service in this life, good measures ... But the saints bestow such good objectively, not subjectly or efficiently like God', Vaughan, 'Trialogus', p.194; see also p.196.
- 54 Vaughan, 'Trialogus', pp.196–7.
- 55 Vaughan, 'Trialogus', p.194; Lechler, p.355.
- 56 Lechler, *John Wycliffe and his English Precursors*, 1884, pp.283–7, gives a fuller discussion on the question of supererogatory merit. However his attempt to show that Wycliffe pronounced 'the notion of a boundless treasure of supererogatory merit ... "a lying fiction"' finally has to rest on tenuous and partly inadmissible evidence. His citing of the Trialogus extract, as above, conclusively proves only Wycliffe's rejection of the papal claims to dispensation. *Contra rudem blasphemiam* could be adduced to cover the notion of *thesaurus* itself, but in the end the explanation which follows makes this unlikely. I am unable to locate in the Wycliffe Society *Sermones* Lechler's citation on p.287 of 'XXIV Sermons No. VII fol. 146, Vol. 2'. The same applies to evidence that can be adduced from English writings for and against Wycliffe on this point, e.g. Arnold, Vol. 3, p.101, on Luke 7:10.

- 57 'The apostles taught that it sufficed for Christian salvation, without ritual, to acquire a faith in the Lord Jesus Christ', p.132, Vol. 111, *De Veritate Sacrae Scripturae* (Wycliffe Society, London 1907). '... faith is fundamental to the justification of man before God', op. cit., Vol. 1, p.219.
- 58 Stacey, *Wycliffe and Reform*, pp.119–21, evaluates the main scholarly opinions on this aspect of Wycliffe's thought and concludes 'it was still an anticipation and did not possess the wholeness of the fully developed doctrine'.
- 59 *De Benedicta*, p.107, point 24.
- 60 Op. cit., p.80.
- 61 'Prima quia Verbum, quod est naturalis ymago Patris; per quod factus est homo ad dei ymaginem, per eandem ymaginem debuit reformari. Unde ex proprietate ymaginis fuit consonancia quod ymago ymaginem assumeret. quam potencia vel benevolencia alterius persone. Forme enim est reformare deformitatem', p.225. *De Benedicta*; see also pp.326–7, *Sermones*, Vol. 4, for another example of the contrast between the two Adams, the two images of God and two consequences.
- 62 'facta plena satisfaccione. sit natura humana gloriosius restituta', p.108.5–6, op. cit. In a lengthy comment on Romans 5:12ff. in Vol. 3 of *De Veritate Scripturae* Wycliffe details this as an increase in grace (which is of course for him an ontological quality), 'quod humanum genus est in maiori gracia per reparationem domini nostri Jesu Christi, quam fuisset posito, quod nemo a statu innocencie cecidisset. (p.205.17–19)', commensurate with the medicine brought by the second Adam to combat the infirmity caused by the first (p.204.11–26f.).
- 63 'Quoad compendiositatem patet quod eius brevis passio reduxit totum mundum post et ante ad maius temperamentum quam motus perpetuus primi mobilis sufecisset', p.108, *De Benedicta*.
- 64 'ubi ante incarnationem totus orbis terrarum pugnavit contra hominem, post incarnationem totus mundus servivit homini et adiuvit', p.32, *Sermones*, Vol. 3.
- 65 *De Veritate Scripturae*, Vol. 3, p.206.5–20.
- 66 *De Civili Dominio*, Vol. I, pp.219–20; see also references under Endnote 42 above.
- 67 *De Benedicta*, p.231.
- 68 Op. cit., pp.231 & 90.
- 69 'Ipse enim fuit passa omni passione, qua Christus dedit sanguinem in redemptionem ut Christus, et sic de positione anime ac commercio quo mercatus est Christus. ... per passionem et tales formas fiebat redemptio' p.183, *De Benedicta*. Wycliffe emphasizes that Christ really suffered at Gethsemane, p.354, *De Civili Dominio*, Vol. 3, at his trial and especially on the cross. Jesus was assaulted at every level of sensibility; see pp.321–7, *Sermones*, Vol. 4, for an extended treatment.
- 70 *De Benedicta*, p.231.
- 71 *Sermones*, Vol. 4, pp.327–8.
- 72 Vaughan, 'Trialogus', p.157.
- 73 'On the Eucharist', p.84, LCC Vol. 14.
- 74 *De Veritate Sacrae Scripturae*, Vol. 3, p.211.
- 75 Refer R.S. Franks, pp.164–85, Vol. 1, *A History of the Doctrine of the Work of Christ* (Hodder and Stoughton, London), n.d., and J. Pelikan, pp.139–44, Vol. 3, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (U.P., Chicago 1978).
- 76 *De Civili Dominio*, Vol. 3, p. 318.
- 77 'For if we affirm that immortality belongs to the nature of anyone individual the same property must necessarily be inherent in every individual of a like nature, otherwise it would not be inherent by nature but by chance ...', Vaughan, 'Trialogus', p.113.
- 78 *De Civili Dominio*, Vol. 3, pp.318–19, where he cites from Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo*.
- 79 *De Benedicta*, p.108, 'per passionem ... facta plena satisfaccione, sit natura

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humana gloriosius restituta; patet quod ista passio rectificat omnem operationem nature, que humano generi est subiecta: et cum omnis servitus post et ante facta humano generi, non interveniente ista redemptione, foret quodammodo cassata, patet quod compendiosius motu celi vivificat preterita et futura'.

- 80 *Sermones*, Vol. 4, pp.321–8.
- 81 Vaughan, 'Trialogus', passim.
- 82 Vaughan, 'Trialogus', pp.171–2.
- 83 Op. cit., p.173; see also p.214.
- 84 'How much more then should the king of kings confiscate the property of kingdoms if the service they owe him has been neglected?' Vaughan, 'Trialogus', p.176.
- 85 Op. cit., p.190.
- 86 Op. cit., p.214.
- 87 Op. cit., passim.
- 88 *De Dominio Divino*, p.237. Wycliffe has an extended and structured discussion of merit and grace, pp.224–9ff.
- 89 Ibid., see also op. cit., pp.590–1.
- 90 *De Dominio Divino*, p.237.
- 91 Ibid. 'It appears to me that grace, which is called the grace of predestination or of final perseverance, cannot fall away from anyone for if so it could not be that grace', Vaughan, 'Trialogus', p.121.
- 92 *De Dominio Divino*, p.246.
- 93 Op. cit., p.247; see also *De Civili Dominio*, Vol. 1, pp.72–3 where a practical progression is outlined.
- 94 *De Civili Dominio*, p.72.19–72.
- 95 *De Scientia Dei*, cited from J.A. Robson, p.212 f.n. 1, *Wycliffe and The Oxford Schools*, 1961. Robson has a fuller discussion on this issue, pp.209–12.
- 96 *De Dominio Divino*, p.244.
- 97 *De Civili Dominio*, p.590.
- 98 *De Dominio Divino*, p.246.
- 99 'On the Pastoral Office', p.60, LCC Vol. 14.
- 100 Vaughan, 'Trialogus', pp.197–8.
- 101 Citations from Augustine far outweigh all other sources, sometimes being greater than the sum of the others.
- 102 'Grace heals the will whereby righteousness may be freely loved', p.236, 'Letter and Spirit', LCC Vol. 8, 1955. In *De Trinitate*, 4.18.24 and 14.2.4ff. Augustine limits faith to the earthly Jesus, thus making it mere prolegomena; e.g. 'We then now put faith in things done in time on our account and by that faith itself we are cleansed; in order that when we have come to sight, as truth follows faith ...', p.81, *NPNF*, Vol. 3.
- 103 Vaughan, 'Trialogus', pp.117–48.
- 104 *De Veritate Scripturae*, Vol. 3, p.211.
- 105 Vaughan, 'Trialogus', p.118. Lechler, pp.144–5; and the earlier discussion under 'Protestant Trajectories'.
- 106 Vaughan, op. cit., p.128.
- 107 Op. cit., p.127.
- 108 'On the Eucharist', pp.66–7, 85–6, LCC Vol. 14.
- 109 Vaughan, 'Trialogus', p.155. 'On the Eucharist', p.84, LCC Vol. 14.
- 110 Vaughan, 'Trialogus', pp.193–4.
- 111 Op. cit., p.198.
- 112 Op. cit., p.197.
- 113 Op. cit., pp.156–7; see also p.178 for Wycliffe's emphasis on penitence.
- 114 Op. cit., p.128.
- 115 S. Ozment, *Age of Reform 1250–1550* (Yale UP, New Haven 1980), pp.233–4.
- 116 'He fulfilled his doctrinal obligations by an unprecedented if unoriginal series of lectures commenting on the bible', O.D.C.C., p.1503.
- 117 L.W. 34, pp.336–7.

- 118 Com. 1 Cor. 2:11, pp.58–9, T.H.L. Parker, *Calvin's New Testament Commentaries*, 1971, see especially pp.26–68.
- 119 Vaughan, 'Dialogus', p.130, pp.242–3, Lechler, cf. *De Veritate Sacrae Scripturae*, Vol. I, p.34, on the worth of Aristotle.
- 120 While never departing from this priority Wycliffe very carefully and consistently defends the ascendancy of the biblical text against those who would impugn it as inferior, e.g. *De Veritate*, Vol. I, pp.22–57ff.
- 121 W.A. 1.224–26.
- 122 LW. 48.41.
- 123 Refer T.F. Torrance, *Theology in Reconstruction* (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids 1965), chapters 4 and 5 for a fuller discussion.
- 124 *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. F.L. Battles (SCM, London 1961), 1.2.2., p.41. The Latin is from *Opera Selecta*, ed. P. Barth and G. Niesel, Vol. 3, 1957, p.35.
- 125 *Institutes* 1.10.2., Battles, pp.97–8; O.S. Vol. 3, p.86.
- 126 *Institutes* 1.4.1., Battles, p.347; O.S. Vol. 3, p.41.
- 127 *Institutes* 2.6.4., Battles, p.347; O.S. Vol. 4, p.13.
- 128 *Institutes* 3.2.6., Battles, p.548; O.S. Vol. 4, p.13.
- 129 P. 356, *The Work of Thomas Cranmer*, ed. G.E. Duffield (Berkshire, Sutton 1964).
- 130 E.g. Martin Bucer's influence is widely detectable in the 1552 Lord's Supper and the Ordinal.
- 131 'Yet that is not the whole truth for Cranmer is responsible for a tremendous amount of what we are forced to describe as indirect theology'. G. Romiley, p.7, *Thomas Cranmer Theologian* (Lutterworth, London 1956).
- 132 See J. Stacey, *Wycliffe and Reform*, pp.156–8f.
- 133 'Do not trust the horse, Trojans. Whatever it is, I fear the Greeks even when they bring gifts', Vergil, *Aeneid*, ii.48.