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| TSF | News and Reviews

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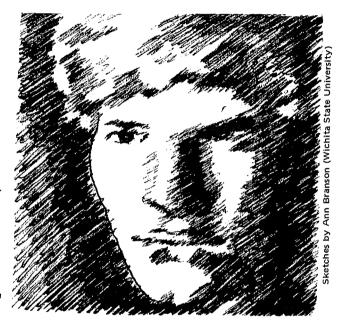
JANUARY 1979

JOURNEYING THROUGH THE WILDERNESS A Reflection on Developing a Contemplative Life in Academia

By Gregory A. Youngchild

In a recent issue of the TSF News and Reviews, Mark Branson wrote "An Open Letter to Seminarians" in which he made a number of important observations and suggestions concerning the difficulties which students for the ministry encounter during their university and graduate school years. He remarked. "One should be concerned not only for the spiritual lives of future parishioners, but more immediately for one's own spiritual formation. In our rejection of legalistic structures we too often give up the very God-given means for grace!" This insight deserves further elaboration, and at his invitation I would like to offer a brief reflection on the what-and-how-andwhy of undertaking that spiritual formation within the academic life context.

The journey through academia is like the Israelites' journey through the wilderness. The university or school, like the desert, is an interim place; it has little resemblance to the "promised land" where we will carry on our ministries, and even less resemblance to the familiar and relatively comfortable contexts of home and church from which we have come. Like the "forty years," it is also a time of wandering, searching, and frequent challenges to us in many respects; it is a time of confrontation with alien and sometimes alienating values and priorities, a time of confusion, darkness and inner turmoil intellectually, emotionally and spiritually, when old ties are severed and new ones yet to be established.



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

Eyangelically-oriented students--although this is true for students of all backgrounds to some degree--feel this sense of "wilderness" very keenly. Even seminaries seem to be predominated by "secular" concerns, such as goal-orientation, competition and achievement. We as students, very much like the Israelites, experience a great frustration with the consequences of life in such an environment--consequences such as not enough time for prayer, courses that are more head-knocking than faith-building, not enough zeal for the Gospel nor enough opportunities for deep fellowship. We become easily discouraged; our life context seems to us to be nothing more than a wasteland that must be endured. We begin to idealize our earlier days-in-the-faith, longing for "the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic" of past times "when I had such good fellowship, when I felt the Lord's power on me so strongly, when God's presence was so tangible and constant." We entirely forget about the difficulties and trials of those former days and remember only the "high" moments. Our present situation is utterly opaque; we no longer see God's hand that is now upon us with a lighter touch, we no longer see the bounty in the more subtle "manna" with which we are now being fed. All we can think about is how good the past was and how bad the present has become. And we begin grumbling: We become preoccupied with fault-finding and blame-laying; we criticize our "Moses-figures"--the institution, the professors, the chaplains and the like--for failing to make the situation better or at least different. Finally we are even led to despair: "Why did I come here in the first place? I shouldn't have listened; I should've gone elsewhere or just stayed where I was."

I think that if we are honest with ourselves we will see that behind our complaints about others and the circumstances is a dissatisfaction with ourselves, a failure within ourselves more than within the environment; behind our accusations of inadequacy is a deeper desire for someone else—be it the institution or its various officials—either to hand us effortless spiritual attainment or to do our painful growing for us.

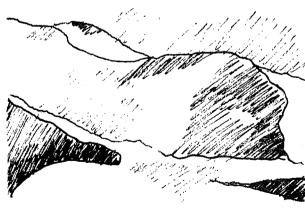
Considering the account in Numbers, we find that there are two ways of journeying through the wilderness: One way is that of the Israelites, the way of "looking back;" the other way is that of Moses, the way of "looking ahead." The Israelites could not see where they were going, nor could they see even the reality of where they were at the moment. Everything was opaque to them, on account of their obsession with looking back. They were trapped by the compulsion to compare, overwhelmed by the seemingly insurmountable problems of their present situation. Moses, however, was a man with vision; a vision which allowed everything to be transparent for him, a vision which allowed him to see both where to go and where he was at the moment. He was free to see the promise already being fulfilled in God's guidance and acts, he could view the whole of the journey as a movement into the mystery of God. It was the Israelites who were lost and who, therefore, could not guide even themselves. It was only Moses, the one who looked ahead on account of the vision, who had the capacity to lead others.

How can we presume to take up the work of guiding others' spiritual lives if we have not first taken up the work of developing our own? How can we guide others if we ourselves do not have the vision?

I speak of developing a contemplative life in our academic life-context. What else is a contemplative but one who sees things as they really are, one who knows where she/he is and is going on account of a continual dialogue with God? "'Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the Lord make myself known to him in a dream...Not so with my servant Moses...With him I speak

mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in dark speech; and he beholds the form of the Lord, " (Num. 12:6-8). The difference between Moses and the Israelites is that he maintained a level of communication—of communion—with God that they did not. He spoke with God, while they only muttered among themselves. He had the vision precisely because of this sustained communion with the Lord God. What else is prayer but such a communion? And where did this powerful encounter take place? In the privacy of the "tent of meeting" and alone on the holy mountain. To become a contemplative, to become a person who—though in the wilderness—has the vision which derives from communion, there is absolutely no way to avoid the development of a personal, private prayer life, alone with God in the solitude and silence of our hearts.

In case the accent in the words above has fallen heavily on the words "personal, private, alone, solitude and silence," as I have intended, a word of explanation is in order. I am deeply convinced that we cannot be real Christians alone. We need fellowship, not only for practical reasons, but as an accurate reflection of the true corporate nature of the Spirit and of Christ's body-church. At the same time, I am equally convinced that we cannot be real Christians if αll we have is fellowship but no solitude, vocal group prayer but no private silent listening, shouts of joy and praise but no stillness of voice and heart. Why? Let's turn to the New Testament and look at the Lord: It is impossible to read the Gospels and not be struck by how often Jesus went off to a deserted place to pray alone. Have you ever wondered why Jesus, the very Son of God, needed to set aside time to go away from the fellowship of his disciples to pray, why he exhorted his disciples to do the same, why he urged us to "pray in secret"? Was that a mere gesture done for show? Or did Jesus himself discover that the only way for him to carry on his mission of doing the Father's will--which included teaching, preaching, instructing others in prayer, and all the rest--was to remain fully in touch, in communication and communion with the Father, through the regular practice of private prayer? I invite you to by-pass the questions of christology and Christ's self-consciousness that my questions might raise, and instead simply consider Jesus, and then to consider yourself.



Assuming we agree on the need, value, precedent and purpose of becoming contemplatives, the obvious next question is "how to?" It is, of course, not a question that can be answered adequately within the scope of this article. But a few general statements can be made. The answer in short is "simply." We must begin by simple steps, not because they are the easiest--often far from it!--but because all must be done with a gentleness and solidity: A gentleness that gives reverence, not does violence, to our status as beginners; and a solidity that insures our footing on our journey deeper into Christ, as, analogously, our faith insures our grounding on the Rock.

We need to accept the discipline of a regular prayer time, a modest half hour, ideal-

ly the first after waking. "Neither more nor less" is a form of asceticism that is both gentle and solid, and can prove a very great challenge to maintain. Apply it to this small matter, and remain faithful to the schedule, bending all other appointments, arrangements and the like around it, not vice versa. It is easy to

be like the rich young man of the Gospel who obeyed all the laws; it is our fidelity in small matters as well, however, that tests whether we are indeed the good servants in whom the master can have complete confidence.

During this prayer time, read one psalm or one passage (a logical unit) from the Gospels; for lack of another order, begin at the first psalm, or, say, chapter one of Matthew, and daily move on one step at each prayer time. Have ears that hear and eyes that see. Praying with the Scriptures is not an exegetical exercise; still less is it an undisciplined drifting in the sea of our arbitrary sentiments. We are encountering and being encountered by God in the Word/Logos. We are meeting God face to face, meeting God as God really is, being ourselves as we really are; it is truth meeting Truth. What we want to begin to develop is a sensitivity to where and how we are encountering and are being encountered. We want to note, and record daily in a journal kept only for this purpose, the simple facts of that meeting: what took place, what did we feel, what does that seem to mean or indicate to and for us. Gradually we will see patterns emerge as some texts touch us and others do not, and we will come to perceive how the Spirit is leading us.

This discernment process can be greatly aided if we undertake the further discipline of entering into spiritual direction with one who is qualified to do this particular form of pastoral work. I know from experience—both as one receiving direction and as one whose ministry has become increasingly devoted to giving direction—that this on—going practice often proves to be the most important part of a person's spiritual formation, precisely because the focus of the relationship between the director and the directee is simply on helping the directee to learn to discern for him/herself how to know the Spirit's leading, first specifically in prayer and later in the whole of one's life. Finding a director is not an easy task, as they are yet scarce; clergypersons do not automatically have the gift for that special work, and the art itself is all but lost in most Protestant traditions. But inquiries, coupled with a patient search, eventually will prove fruitful, and if a Protestant can be open to it there are real masters to be found among the Catholic religious order of the Jesuits.

In adddition to--definitely not instead of--the inner and outer discipline of quiet prayer, there is the discipline of spiritual reading. This is not a reading of books about prayer, as if intellectual knowledge would substitute for the lived experience. Rather, this is a particular feeling of the intellect and the heart with the literature of spirituality. Whether it is a classic work by a renown church father, such as Gregory of Nyssa or Augustine, or a contemporary work by writers such as Thomas Merton or Henri J. M. Nouwen or Watchman Nee, will depend on our own persuasion and personal tastes. Whatever the work, the approach in reading it must be, again, simple: This is a reading for nourishment, inspiration, consolation that requires of us on openness and an attentive ear, rather than a critical eye or conquering attitude that we maintain when reading books in the course of academic studies.

Further disciplines, whether personal or interpersonal, would be easy to list but must be carefully chosen on the basis of our personal development and needs. The very important guideline in deciding what and how much is appropriate for us either to "take on" or "leave off" is that it ought to be continuous with our inner life, it ought to flow naturally—indeed graciously—from our lived union with God in our hearts. It should come as a response to our experience of the Spirit's leading, not as something we impose on ourselves in a pietistic or militaristic way.

In all these disciplines, the common factor is a movement toward greater clarity of vision in faithful response to the vision gained. We are striving--with

the help of grace and by the use of instruments of grace—to become contemplatives, to become people with the vision of how things really are. None of these disciplines supplants the formation gained through the *koinonia*, its chores as well as its celebrations, its extraordinary love and support, its union lived in the sharing of bread and Word. Rather, these disciplines supplement our common life. They allow us to gain a vision that, in turn, allows us to celebrate the ordinary, to see God face to face in the daily events and people we meet while on our journey through the wilderness.

Youngchild received his M.Div. from Yale Divinity School and is now studying at General Theological Seminary (New York). He was a teaching assistant for Dr. Henri Nouwen in a course entitled, "The Spirituality of Compassion" at Yale. Currently he ministers as a "spiritual director" to students.

The author of several articles on prayer, spiritual direction, asceticism, marriage, etc. Youngchild has written an article on vocational choice and discerning the will of God which is now available from TSF Research.

EDITOR'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

Henri Nouwen: Intimacy, Pray to Live (on Merton), Reaching Out, The Wounded Healer, Creative Ministry. Thomas Merton: Seeds of Contemplation, Contemplative Prayer, No Man is an Island, Confessions of a Guilty Bystander. Richard Foster: Celebration of Discipline. Elizabeth O'Conner: Search for Silence. St. John of the Cross: The Dark Night of the Soul.

Next month's issue will contain an article contributed by James Parker on the seminarian issues of justice.

TSF News & Reviews will be published five (5) times during the 1978-1979 school year. The subscription price (\$5.00/one year, \$9.00/two years; add \$1.00/year outside N. America) includes three (3) issues of Themelios, an international student theological journal (subscription for Themelios costs \$3.00/year). All subscriptions begin in the fall and end in the spring. Bulk rate available on request. Published by the Theological Students Fellowship, 233 Langdon, Madison, Wisconsin 53703.

At the Madison office of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, Glennda Meyers oversees TSF Monographs, book orders and subscriptions. As the TSF membership has grown to 1200 subscribers, Glennda took on the task of computerizing the membership list. Several volunteers and other office staff help Glennda in serving TSF members.

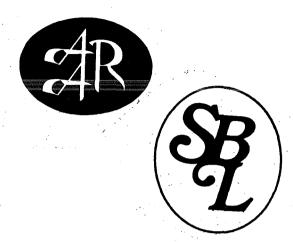
In the Los Angeles office of TSF Research the editing of *News & Reviews* and correspondence with chapters has been accomplished with the help of Barbara Brooks for the past one and a half years. Barbara, a UCLA student has performed miracles in a very limited time of 10 hours/week. We bid a fond farewell and express our appreciation to Barbara for all her help as she returns to the UCLA campus.

Taking Barbara's place as Mark's assistant will be Laura Ikehara. In addition to her work with TSF, Laura is on part-time staff with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship at UCLA.

COMMENTS FROM THE EDITOR

...ON NEW ORLEANS MEETING OF THE AAR/SBL

To clarify the unending use of initials, I'll begin with some explanations. The American Academy of Religion (AAR) is a professional society of professors and researchers engaged in the academic study of religion. The Society of Biblical Literature (SBL), also a professional society, seeks to stimulate the critical investigation of the classical biblical literature together with other related literature. The annual joint meeting was held November 18-21 in New Orleans. Over 250 separate sessions, including papers, discussions, panels and business meetings filled those four days.



One section of the Academy met six times to deal with the "Academic Study of Religion." Topics included: "Christology: Redefinitions of 'God'"; a session on using Ira Progoff's Intensive Journal Process; and various papers concerning "case study" approaches These meetings always waver between claims to "detached objectivity" and individualistis subjectivity. Only some case study approaches appear to be open to seeing the intertwined reality of often segmented particulars like history, transcendence, personal faith, communal responses, literary and philosophical studies and non-judgmental openness between professors and students. [TSF members who are studying in fields of religion could help us by writing about various texts and approaches. This would guide TSF editors and staff in the preparation of materials and in prioritizing the importance of campus visits.]

Eberhard Bethge, the nephew of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the leading authority on his life and theology, delivered a paper titled "Bonhoeffer and the Uses of Violence:



TSF Associate Editors Grant Osborne and David Gill with TSF staffer David Jones at the recent AAR/SBL meeting.

The German Conspiracy and Modern Terrorism." A response from Dale Brown (a Mennonite scholar) and the discussion following focused on the issues of (1) the self-identity of those who use violence, i.e. "freedom fighters" or "terrorists"; (2) the Christian role of deputeeship; (3) the realization that we are all involved in violence because of our association with institutions that are forces of death; and (4) selective actions which minimize violence, like kidnapping, which draw at tention to system problems. As one who identifies with the 400 year old pacifist stance of the Anabaptists, Brown opposes any kind of violence while avoiding any hypocritical clai of being divorced from violent systems. He a so would sometimes identify with the protest movements, even those that may use violence which he opposes. This regular meeting with the Bonhoeffer Society at the AAR promises to continue being a very valuable service on the logy and discipleship.

Paul D. Hanson (OT, Harvard) delivered a paper entitled "Biblical Theology's Responsibility to the Communities of Faith." Hanson spoke of the responsibility of bi-

blical scholars "to subject to an ongoing criticism the sources of the various presuppositions which underly both scholarly and popular uses of the Bible, be they derived from dogma, current cultural fads, national ideologies or philosophical positions." While affirming the value of the "detached" scholar, Hanson commented on the dangers of marketing criticism "under the claim of pure scientific objectivity." The open discussion of presuppositions within the community of faith is a necessary ingredient because "when left to exercise their influence apart from criticism and refinement within the context of the community's life, faulty assumptions can degrade the quality of life, narrow vision to self-serving ends, and lead to a sense of malaise which festers because the courage is lacking to delve to the heart of the difficulty."

Two examples, a "biblicist position" on one hand and an uncritical use of a modern "technological worldview" were discussed. On the first,

The tendency of a biblicist position to create an ontological and epistemological chasm between biblical event and contemporary happenings, leading to a compartmentalization of spiritual and secular life, has led to a powerful reaction against a biblically based reliion among many thoughtful moderns, a position which has received considerable support from a large number of biblical scholars.

Concerning problems with much modernizing, Hanson stated:

I find the heights of arbitrariness reached when the facile dismissal of the "primitive" Hebrew worldview becomes license for the importation into the Bible of a contemporary philosophical system, be it derived from Heidegger, Whitehead, or any other source. For example, the narrow, asocial, personalistic existentialism which emerges from Bultmann's demythologizing and Heideggerizing, though marketed as biblical theology, must be held up against the richness of our biblical heritage and judged for what it is, a reduction of an incredibly rich scriptural heritage to a brittle asocial, ahistorical personalism.

The second major area of the presentation focused the need for scholars to have a "genuine commitment to a religious community":

To belong to a community of worship, reflection and service involves a commitment of time and energy, and is thus a test of one's priorities. But the enrichment which enters not only one's personal, but also one's scholarly life when one's reference point is a living community of faith can spell the difference between study in the abstract, and study which is sensitive both to the ancient materials and to the contemporary world. The scholar who takes "pot shots" at the assumptions of a religious group without entering into the life of that group is both arrogant and lacking in an essential methodological tool, engagement in a living communal experience. When a community of faith becomes acquainted with the biblical scholar in worship, prayer and social outreach, a climate of trust is cultivated which is usually very open to criticism and challenge and growth.

A final insight provided a stimulating conclusion:

I shall add a final argument in favor of a biblical theology which sees in involvement an essential aspect of its responsibility. If it is cor-

rect that happenings in biblical times become revelatory events within the dialectical arc between historical happenings and the confession—al responses of the community of faith, then the biblical theologian functions fittingly as the interpretor of the confessional heritage only if he or she lives within a community of faith which construes its mission in terms of a corresponding dialectical relating of heritage and event.

[The complete text of Paul Hanson's lecture is available from TSF Research. See the order form.]

Other meetings included the Karl Barth Society of North America and the Institute of Biblical Research (IBR). The IBR is an academic society of evangelical biblical scholars which is patterned after the British Tyndale Fellowship. Many of these professors are available to help TSF students with research. Specific questions can be sent to TSF Research (16221 Mulholland Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90049) and are then forwarded to a professor who has specialized in that area of study.

...ON AN "EVANGELICAL CONSULTATION"

As first discussed in the January, 1978 issue of N&R, many of us have hoped for a section on Evangelical Theology, to be held at the AAR. At a December planning meeting, the Program Committee approved such a session for the November 15-18 New York Annual Meeting. I have been appointed as chairperson for this consultation which will include several papers and discussion on the current situation and future directions of evangelical theology. The opportunity for doing systematic theology within the context of a pluralistic society should provide a better understanding of evangelical thought by those who are not involved in this tradition. Also, creativity among evangelicals can be encouraged by accountability to the larger religious community.

...ON IMPORTANT DATES

Dr. John R. W. Stott will be in New York City <u>January 30</u> for a Ministers' Workshop open to pastors, youth ministers and appointed representatives of these churches and organizations. Contact Barb Steen for details: 22 Lenox Ave., Ridgewood, NJ 07450. (201) 345-8578 or (201) 845-0378.

On <u>February 5-8</u> a conference titled "The Church Faces New Religious Movements in America" will meet at Princeton Theological Seminary. Information on this event, co-sponsored by Overseas Ministries Study Center can be obtained from Dr. Jack Cooper, Director, Center of Continuing Education, Princeton Theological Seminary, 12 Library Place, Princeton, New Jersey 08540.

John Howard Yoder, Professor of Theology at Goshen Biblical Seminary, will give the Stone Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary on February 5-9 and the Morgan Lectures at Fuller Theological Seminary on February 14-16. Further information can be obtained from those institutions.

The Annual Berkeley Lectures on the Bible and Christian Faith (February 9-11) will be delivered by Dr. David Hubbard, president of Fuller Seminary. An afternoon session on the state of theological education today will be given at Pacific School of Religion. An evening dinner in cooperation with TSF will include comments from Dr. Hubbard and TSF secretary Mark Branson. The week's lecture titles are: "Creation—the Divine Context"; "Covenant—the Divine Commitment"; "Community—the Divine Company"; "Consummation—the Divine Climax". Further information can be secured from Ron Thompson, First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley, 2407 Dana St., Berkeley, CA 94704

The West Regional Meeting of the IBR will be on March 3 at Fuller Seminary. The pro-

gram includes: "Ebla--What's New?" (by William LaSor); "The Person of Jesus: The perspective of Modern Jewish Scholarship." (by Donald Hagner); "The Law in Romans 9:30-33." (by John Toews); "New Testament Theology: Impasse and Exit." (by Ralph Martin). Further information is available from Bob Gundry, Westmont College, 955 La Paz Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93108. (805) 969-5051.

Clark Pinnock and Harold Lindsell will discuss the various issues surrounding the position of "biblical inerrancy." Information on this <u>April 6</u> New York meeting can be obtained from Robert V. Rakestraw, Calvary Baptist Church, Route 4, South Main St., Flemington, NJ 08822. (201) 782-6608

ARTICLES WORTH READING

"Dealing with the Devil: A Cost Benefit Analysis" by William Sloane Coffin, Jr. in *Christianity and* Crisis, 11/27/78.

Christianity and Crisis, October 16, 1978 issue which focuses on the ethical dimensions of the energy debate. Topics include the poor, health, ecology and employment.

"What Revolution is—and is not" by Robert F. Weir (Religious Studies, Oklahoma State) in Worldview, 11/78.

"Judaism in American Today" by Eugene Borowitz and "Mordecai Kaplan: Prophet of Pragmatic Theology" by Richard Wentz in *The Christian Century*, 11/8/78

"Christians and Muslims" by John R. W. Stott in *Christianity Today* 12/1/78.

"The New Context of Black Theology in the United States" by Garyraud Wilmore (Rochester) in Occasional Bulletin, October 1978.

"An Anthropological Apologetic for the Homogeneous Unit Principle in Missiology" by Charles Kraft (Fuller) in Occasional Bulletin, October 1978.

"Liberation and Evangelization—A Feminist Perspective" by Letty M. Russell (Yale) in *Occasional Bulletin*, October 1978.

"Living in the Political Briar Patch" editorial in *The Christian* Century by James Wall 11/1/78. "The Problem of Modernity and the Church" by Os Guiness in *Radix*, November/December, 1978.

"New Firepower for Fighting War" (news report on October meeting of the "peace churches") in Christianity Today, 11/3/78.

"Small Lives for Big Words: Individualism and State Power Reconsidered" by Irving Louis Horowitz (Rutgers) in Worldview, September 1978.

"Babes in Toyland, Inc." by Phil Harnden in The Other Side, 11/78.

"Unmasking the Powers: A Biblical View of Roman and American Economics" by Walter Wink in Sojourners, October, 1978.

"The Inner Reformation in the Outer Lands--Interviews with Four Scholars" by Bert Witvoet in Vanguard, November-December 1978.

"Joy on the Way: Life in an Korean Prison" by Stephen Moon (formerly professor at Hankuk Theological Seminary) in *The Christian Century* 11/29/78.

"Christian Ethics and Global Economics" by Denis Goulet (Overseas Development Council) in Christianity & Crisis, 11/13/78.

"Lutheranism: A Quest for Identity" by Richard E. Koening in The Christian Century, 10/25/78.

NOTEWORTHY REVIEWS:

Promise & Deliverance, Vol. I & II (Paideis Press) on the Dutch Reformation Movement, by S.G. de Graaf, reviewed by Al Wolters in Vanguard, November-December 1978.

Common Roots: A Call to Evangelical Maturity by Robert Webber, reviewed by Nancy Hardesty (Candler) in The Christian Century 10/25/78.

I Believe in the Historical Jesus by I. Howard Marshall (Eerdmans) and Quests for the Historical Jesus by Fred H. Klooster (Baker), reviewed by David Aune (IBR) in Christianity Today, 11/3/78. Prophecy and Canon by Joseph Blenkinsopp (Notre Dame) reviewed by David E. Aune (IBR) in Christianity Today 12/1/78.

The Church as Evangelist by George Sweazey, reviewed by Gabriel Fackre (Andover- Newton) in The Christian Century 11/8/78.

Jesus Christ the Liberator: A Critical Christology for Our Time by Leonardo Boff, reviewed by Richard Quebedeaux in The Christian Century.



PHILOSOPHY

The Devil, Seven Wormwoods and God by Bernard Ramm. Word Books, 1977, 178 pp., \$6.95. Reviewed by Stephen T. Davis, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Claremont Men's College and News & Reviews Associate Editor.

It is sadly true that some evangelicals and evangelical scholars are known for their pompous and superior attitude toward those who disagree with them. "I'm right and anybody who differs with me is on the road to hell"--this is the attitude they convey. They feel it their right to criticize anyone who deviates from the truth as they see it. All such people are said to be incompetent, blind, or irrational. Often such criticisms are made without any serious attempt to understand the thinking of the person criticized.

Bernard Ramm has written an important book which evangelicals ought to read. It is a conscious effort to show that not all evangelical scholars are like those described above. It is a balanced and incisive analysis of the thought of seven thinkers who are usually looked upon as enemies of Christianity. Ramm devotes a chapter to each of six modern philosophers: David Hume (1711-1776), Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951), Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-), and Albert Camus (1913-1960). He also devotes a chapter to Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). The rather strange title of Ramm's book is explained by the fact that he calls the seven thinkers that he discusses "wormwoods," after C.S. Lewis' fictional devil in The Screwtape Letters.

Ramm argues that, properly understood, each figure is indeed an enemy of Christianity but has much to say to which Christians should listen. He does not disguise the fact that each wormwood has caused much harm to the cause of Christ. Nevertheless. he evaluates their central ideas clearly and fairly. He criticizes them in places -- always avoiding ad hominem attacks or "straw man" criticisms--but he also argues that each wormwood says things that ought to be of great value to Christians.

For example, Ramm believes that

Christians can derive great insight into human nature, and especially sin and depravity, from the writings of Camus. Ramm argues against the traditional conservative Christian cultural analysis of sin, in which adultery and drinking are emphasized far more than selfishness, pride, and cowardice. Ramm's reading of Freud convinces him that Christians need to understand rather than ignore the psychological dimension in human behavior. Freud should not be feared or neglected. Emotional disturbances should not be regarded as the result of sin or of "just not trusting God eough." From Wittgenstein Ramm derives the moral that Christians ought to purify their language logically. For example, the flippant and all-too-common Christian who says, "Let me share with you something Jesus told me today,' needs to think clearly about what he is actually claiming and what his words mean. Ramm also stresses Heidegger's distinction between authentic and inauthentic modes of life. One mode Heidegger condemns is novelty-seeking. Influenced by Heidegger, Ramm brands as inauthentic the pathological concern some evangelicals have for biblical prophecy.

Some questions can be raised about the book. For one thing, Ramm's treatment of at least some of his wormwoods skates across the surface of their thought rather than probing deeply, although this is perhaps to be expected in a book designed to introduce evangelicals to the thought of the seven. For another, the lessons Ramm draws from at least some of the wormwoods seem only marginally related to their actual intentions as thinkers. Finally, while I am happy with the seven Ramm has chosen, I would have enjoyed reading a chapter on Charles Darwin and one on Bertrand Russell.

Nevertheless, Ramm's book is a valuable contribution to evangelical literature. It is refreshing to find an evangelical scholar who is fair enough to "give the devil his due," as Ramm puts it. Ramm does prove that not all evangelical scholars are professionals at badmouthing. But, most importantly, he has done a valuable service to seminarians, ministers, and Christians in general by objectively analyzing the thought of seven great enemies of Christianity whom Christian scholars typically ignore or castigate.

THEOLOGY

Historical Theology: An Introduction by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Eerdmans, 1978. 455 pp. \$14.95. Reviewed by Bernard Ramm, author of numerous books and currently lectures at Biblical Seminary in Fresno, California (Mennonite Brethren).

All of us who teach theology are faced with the problem of historical theology. Those theologians who have broken with any kind of orthodox norm or tradition in theology can ignore it. But those of us who see an intimate connection between Holy Scripture, the course of theology through the ages, and the contemporary writing of theology cannot ignore historical theology. Yet it confronts us with a dilemma. We know that historical theology is important for any healthly evangelical theology. Yet historical theology presents us with such a glut of materials that one can fail of heart to plunge the beginner in theology into such a bounty of materials.

I would like to add parenthetically my experience with lay people. As these people have brought to me various problems of Christian life or church experience I have noticed that there is scarely a one of them that has not been the subject of one or more debates or books or church decision somewhere in the history of the church. Most of the time the question is answered to their satisfaction just by recounting the historical event and the debate it prompted when it first emerged in the history of the church. If true of the lay people, how much more of the pastors!

To return to the matter of historical theology. I know in my first encounter with the church Fathers how strange the names sounded (especially after four years in a secular university): Cyprian, Jerome, Ignatius, Polycarp, Epiphanius, Gregory, Tertullian! How guilty I feel now as I flip out the name of some church father or medeival scholastic to beginners in theology whom I presume by some sort of osmosis have learned who that learned gentleman was!

Bromiley's book is an attempt to come to terms with this problem. His book is an introduction, a

primer aimed at the beginner in theology. It is written in such a way as to eliminate the usual discouragements one finds in historical studies such as endless bibliographies and footnotes piled up high on the pages like cord wood. The book is carefully outlined. The exposition is simple, direct and uncomplicated. Summary paragraphs are given so that the student may check whether he has learned what he ought in the previous pages.

The range of the book is the entire history of theology. Bromiley starts with the Apostolic Fathers at the first of the second century and ends with Barth and Thielicke. It can be used either as the text for an intoductory course in historical theology or as a companion to a course in systematic theology.

Bromiley's case for the importance and necessity of historical theology is stated in the opening chapter. He sets out his case for the study of historical theology. There have been two tendencies in our seminaries in the past hundred years which in principle undermine the necessity of historical theology. The first is that to be found in church history. Church historians. taking their cues from secular historians, usually put theology in the pot with all the other factors present in any given church period. Church history written as scientific church history undercuts the importance of historical theology whether it intends that or not.

The second tendency is to make the study of the history of doctrine (Dogmengeshichte in German) a matter of technical scholarship (Harnack, Loofs) not unlike specialists in the history of China or India. Again, the necessity and importance of the history of theology for theology per se is undermined by making it a specialized science in church history.

It was Karl Barth in modern times who stood against all this and attempted to restore the necessity of historical theology for the writing of present theology. Gerhard Ebeling for a different reasons also challenged the prevailing tradition. Bromiley as a major translator of Barth takes

his stand with Barth. Therefore historical theology is part of our understanding of the Word of God and therefore part of our understanding of what we mean today in our theology by the Word of God. The history of theology stands alongside Greek and Hebrew as means whereby we understand the Word of God. In this we think Barth and Bromiley are right.

No two people interested in historical theology would go at Bromiley's task the same way. Bromiley has his rights of selection here. Our only demur is that he could have given us an excellent classified bibliography. on historical theology. I have in mind here books on Patristics (Quasten, Altaner) or standard sources (e.g., Migne's Patralogia), etc. etc. Hence a student who may happen to investigate a particular man has some bibliographical map in front of him so he may know where to go from Bromiley's book.

Fire in the Fireplace: Contemporary Charismatic Renewal by Charles E. Hummel. (Inter-Varsity Press, 1978, 275 pp. paper, \$4.95).

Holy Spirit, by Michael Ramsey Eerdmans, 1977, 140 pp., paper, \$2.45.

God as Spirit by G. W. H. Lampe Oxford University Press, 1977, 239 pp., \$14.95.

Reviewed by Ray S. Anderson, Associate Professor of Theology, Fuller Theological Seminary.

Each of these three books seeks to explore the experience which the Christian of the first century ascribed to the Holy Spirit, drawing forth theological and practical implications for today. Actually they have very little in common.

Charles Hummel, in Fire in the Fireplace, limits his attention to the work of the Spirit in renewal, particularly with respect to charismatic renewal and its implications for the church today. Citing his own exposure to charismatic renewal in connection with Inter-Varsity student groups during the early part of the '60's Hummel discusses briefly, but helpfully the emergence of charismatic renewal against the backdrop of Pentecostalism as a 20th

century movement.

Turning quickly away from contemporary movements, he carefully examines the biblical testimony concerning the Holy Spirit in the Luke-Acts material, and in the Apostle Paul's teaching (focusing on I Cor. 12-14). From this study, he concludes that both Luke and Paul, notwithstanding their separate emphases on the work of the Spirit, understand the Holy Spirit as the on-going ministry of Christ empowering his church for mission and equipping members through spiritual gifts for the edification of the Body of Christ.

In the final section, the issues of spiritual gifts, baptism in the Spirit, prophecy, tongues, and healing are discussed in light of insights gleaned from the biblical study. There is nothing here that has not been said before. Hummel concludes that Spiritual gifts continue to be exercised in the church today. The language of "baptism in the Spirit" is misleading and not biblical, though the experience may well be valid in Paul's sense of being filled with the Spirit. Tongues may be one sign of the filling of the Spirit, but they are not the sign, not an indispensable sign.

The value of the book is its balance, lucidity, and irenic tone. While it makes no pretense to critical scholarship, and does not take up the difficult question concerning the relation of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of Jesus, it does not obscure the Spirit, and should not offend anyone who is willing to test experience by Scripture.

In his deceptively simple little book, Holy Spirit, Michael Ramsey, the late Archbishop of Canterbury, blends a devoutly critical approach with pastoral concern for the work of the Spirit in renewal. The book could be compared with Michael Green's I Believe in the Holy Spirit (Eerdmans, 1975). Green approaches the subject more topically, while Ramsey holds more closely to the development of a concept of Spirit through the biblical tradition.

Ramsey offers very little discussion of contemporary issues, through he does neglect to mention briefly in a concluding chapter the chapter the significance of the gifts of the Spirit for the

renewal of the church. Actually, Ramsey's book is more like an abstract of a larger biblical theology of the Holy Spirit. Biblical scholars who take the New Testament documents as reliable witnesses to the self testmony of Jesus will not be lisappointed, and yet it is clear that familarity with the latest in critical scholarship informs his study.

Vithout forcing an artifical unity upon the biblical material, Ramsey develops the conclusion that the Holy Spirit is no less than the Spirit of God and yet bears the impact of Christ's own spirit. He grounds the activity of the Holy Spirit in the person of Jesus Christ, both nistorically and as a living presence in the church. In a section remarkable both for its previty and theological acumen, Ramsey makes the helpful suggestion that the Holy Spirit can be understood as "God answering to God." This suggests that the Trinity can be understood as the relationship of 'God to God", not only through the economy of redemption, but in God's own eternal being. While not divulging his own proclivity in the matter, readers night well conclude the Ramsey is closer to Barth's "ontological trintarianism" than to Maurice Wiles "cryptounitarianism." For all of the value of this little book, one could only wish that Dr. Ramsey had expanded it into a najor work on the Trinity. For as he himself is clearly aware, the Holy Spirit is as much a revelation of God in his own personal mode of being as the impact of God in the creation and reconciliation of the world.

It was with keen anticipation that this reviewer turned to G.W.H. Lampe's book, God as Spirit. Lampe, who is Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge University offers this monograph as the Bampton Lectures for 1976. Promising a radical examination of Trinitarian theology based on the relation of the Holy Spirit to Jesus, Professor Lampe begins with a twofold questions: What is the relation of Jesus to God, and what is his relation to Christians here and now? From this he develops a basic thesis: ". . . the Spirit of God is to be understood, not a referring to a divine hypostasis distinct

from God the Father and God the Son or Word, but as indicating God himself as active towards and in his human creation."
(p. 11)

Lampe is rightly concerned with what the church means when it confesses that "Jesus is Lord" and that "Jesus is alive today." Traditional Trinitarian theology has understood the confession that Jesus is Lord to mean that the Incarnation is a manifestation of a pre-existent divine Logos in human form; thus, the second person of the Godhead. Likewise, the Holy Spirit has been assumed to be a third person of the Godhead, differentiated essentially from both God the Son and God the Father. While the unity of the Godhead in its essential differentation posed a semantical as well as conceptual problem for theology, orthodoxy has held that an essential differentiation between Son, Father and Spirit must necessarily be posited for soteriological reasons. God must be on both sides of the atonement as the one who judges sin on the cross and also as the one who bears sin in a creaturely form. The Holy Spirit is then to be understood as the creative and renewing activity of God in the church sanctifying sinners in union with Christ. Thus, not only does the Trinity assert that God is on both sides of the atonement, but that he is both transcendent and imminent in salvation history, uniting present experience to the once and for all reconciliation of the world to God in Christ.

Too little has been done in the history of doctrine with the nagging question as to the essential distinction between the human spirit of Jesus Christ which is asserted to be alive and active in the world today and the Spirit of God which is now understood as the Holy Spirit or the Spirit of Christ, to use Pauline terminology. It is this question which Lampe seeks to explore. Unfortunately, he not only cuts the proverbial Gordian knot, he unravels the cord itself with the result that the single strand of his thought is insufficient to bear the full weight of an incarnate God. In order to support his thesis that the Holy Spirit and the spirit which was manifest in the historical Jesus is one and the same, he is forced to

deny a doctrine of incarnation in favor of inspiration. Setting aside the doctrine of divine Logos which becomes enfleshed as mythological, Lampe sugests that Jesus was "inspired" to an exemplary degree by the Spirit of God which inspires all of creaturely life. Thus, Jesus is normative for a life which is inspired of God. There is no "pre-existent" subjective life which has continuity with the human Jesus, nor is there a "post-existent" subjective life which establishes continuity beyond death between Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

As Lampe seeks to develop this thesis through a critical study of the biblical tradition, it soon becomes clear that his theologizing is being controlled by a process concept of God's activity. Thus, he consistently denies the entrance of the transcendent God into history, but argues that God as Spirit is immanent within creation. It is finally the Spirit of God which is incarnate for Lampe, not the Logos of God. And each human being is an incarnation of Spirit to some extent, while Christ is an incarnation of Spirit to a greater extent. "Jesus is alive today", thus becomes a present confession of experience of God's Spirit, not qualitatively different from Jesus' own confession. Salvation, in this scheme, is openness to divine Spirit, which can be termed the "Spirit of Christ" only because it is the same Spirit which "saved" Christ. The church's early testimony to the resurrection of Christ was mythological, in that what was confessed was the presence and experience of the same Spirit which was incarnate in Jesus.

This, of course, is a return to the cosmological unitarianism which caused Arius to deny the eternal deity of Jesus Christ, now dressed up in post-enlightenment anthropological optimism. While Lampe purports to begin with the data of Christian experience of God through the Christ event, he subjects the data to a crituge which subordinates revelation as history to history as revelation. Readers who wish to pursue the critical question concerning the Holy Spirit and Jesus would do better to turn to the book by James D. G. Dunn, Jesus and the Spirit (The Westminster Press, 1975) where the conclusions are more

helpful to an ongoing dialogue, though, unfortunately, not as lucidly presented as those in Lampe's book.

NEW TESTAMENT

The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text by I.

Howard Marshall. Eerdmans,
1978.

New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke by William Hendrickson Baker, 1978. Reviewed by Grant R. Osborne, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Professor of New Testament.and Associate Editor of News & Reviews.

It is not often that two major commentaries on the same book are released at approximately the same time, especially on a book which needed some new commentaries in English. Marshall's is especially valuable in this regard, for it is the first commentary on the Greek text of Luke in fifty vears. As the first in the New International Greek Testament Commentary series, edited by I. H. Marshall and W. W. Gasque, it establishes a formidable precedent for further works in the same series. Originally intended to take two volumes, publication costs caused the publishers to place its 928 pages in a single volume. Scholars have been awaiting publication of this work for some time, and it must be said at the outset that few indeed will be disappointed. The material is presented in a concise, abbreviated style which makes every word important. Most others would take 50% more space to present the same amount of information. In addition, only H. Schurmann's Herder commentary, Das Lukas evangelium (Freiburg, I, 1969) does more with the theological nuances of the book.

Due to the length of the volume, Dr. Marshall has depended on his earlier work, Luke: Historian and Theologian (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970) for introductory matters and so provides only eight pages on introduction. This is unfortunate, for we would have benefited greatly from his further thought on the matter. On many points not covered in his earlier work he has had to refer the reader to the introduction by E. E. Ellis in his New Century commentary on Luke. This is one

of the few weaknesses in this otherwise excellent work. We would have benefited greatly by his thoughts, for instance, on proto-Luke (not explicitly mentioned but implied in his discussion of sources on p. 31), and a more detailed discussion on date and Sitzen im leben would have been helpful.

His exegesis proper does not suffer from such limitations. He obviously has done his homework; his commentary is divided up into paragraphs from the text, and each paragraph begins with an extensive introductory discussion, covering such aspects as form critical and tradition-critical theories as well as biblical theology. These sections are in some ways the highlight of the commentary, especially for those not sufficiently competent in technical aspects to interact fully with his commentary proper. The introductory sections present the major theories of each pericope in readable fashion and shows the strengths and weaknesses of each. For instance, his discussion of tradition and redaction in the birth narratives (pp. 45-49) provides a valuable survey of the field. One could only wish that he had been able to interact with Raymond E. Brown's recent The Birth of the Messiah (Doubleday, 1977) the most important treatment to date and one which comes to different conclusions than Marshall, who agrees with Schurmann that Palestinian sources have been utilized in Luke's characteristic style.

Perhaps the one weakness here is a tendency at times to present an extremely detailed discussion of theories then to make his conclusion with such brevity that the reader is left wondering exactly why he has made such a decision. For instance, in his discussion of the parable on the rich man and Lazarus, he concludes, "The present parable probably rests on tradition traceable back to Jesus himself" (p. 634). The difficulty is that he has not done a linguistic and theological study, even in the commentary section. While the conclusion is viable, it is doubtful that the evidence cited will convince a non-evangelical.

For the scholar the commentary

proper is the most valuable aspect of the work, and it should make this work stand down through the years as one of the truly important works of our generation. It is remarkably readable for its technical nature and leaves very little unconsidered in its quest for the meaning of the text. Of course, literary critics and structuralists will be disappointed at his assumption that the author's intended meaning is not only recoverable but is the major goal of bilical study properly done. In this regard Marshall definitely belongs to the critico-historical school of research rather than to the newer literary schools of thought which seek the "deeper structure" or "implied author-implied reader" behind the text. The work is done from the standpoint of form-reduction criticism and must be utilized within that tradition. Since this reviewer consciously accepts that tradition and believes that the newer approaches have yet to prove themselves, that is not a difficulty. However, followers of Gadamer or Ricoeur et al. may not find this as useful. Especially disappointing to the latter group will be Marshall's failure to interact with members of these more recent disciplines. However, for those of us who have accepted the critical presuppositions of the historical school, the problem is minor and this work is an extremely resourceful aid to a detailed study and understanding of Luke.

The commentary section proceeds verse by verse but avoids the artificiality of other commentaries who take a similar approach by utilizing transition sentences which demonstrate the continuity and development of thought within the section. This plus the discussion of each major section and sub-section in the prefaces to each pericope provides a good structural understanding of the Gospel as a whole and of each individual part.

The technical expertise of Dr. Marshall is demonstrated again and again as the commentary progresses. Not only is he able to work through difficult grammatical points but also he is able to apply these to the total exegetical picture of the passage

as a whole. His acquaintance with and utilization of background material such as archeological evidence, parallels in pagan or Jewish literature and political or economic data make this perhaps the best work to date on the Gospel. Unlike many ICC volumes, this does not get bogged down with technical detail but rather weaves that into the broader task of understanding the text. In this regard, only the masterful new ICC on Romans by C. E. B. Cranfield shows a comparable ability to weave together the many strands of exegetical data into a wholistic pattern of meaning for the text.

In short, Marshall's commentary hre is highly recommended for all serious students of the Scriptures. The pastor who is willing to work in depth will find his time well rewarded with nuggets of information which make excellent illustrative material for helping the congregation understand the text. The scholar will find it even more helpful in acquainting one with the issues as well as answers. I, Howard Marshall, one of the leading evangelical scholars in Britain, has done all of evangelicalism a service by producing such a masterly study on Luke.

Hendriksen's tome is even longer (1122 pages) and has a great deal of diversity, with fifty pages of introduction and several imaginative indices, such as a "Subject Index of the Synoptics," which provides a comprehensive index tracing topics ranging from Abba to Zechariah through each of his commentaries on the Synoptic Gospels. Hendriksen is an erudite commentator who since 1953 has set himself the formidable (if not impossible) task of producing commentaries on the entire New Testament (to date he has completed all four Gospels and the Pauline epistles with the exception of Romans and the Corinthian Epistles), One must admire one who would tackle so mammoth a project, even though the failure to consult the multitudinous articles as well as works on Luke and related topics is the natural result of such a project: it is simply impossible to write a commentary every couple of years and keep up with the massive amount of material published today.

Hendriksen's strength is his practical usefulness. His works have always contained a great deal of homiletical aids and sermonic hints, such as a tendency to point out special word studies and background information which have value for the pulpit ministry. In this volume he has added another nuance, a section called "Practical Lessons" at the end of selected divisions; this attempts to define more clearly the application of the material discussed in the previous section and reminds one somewhat of the old Pulpit Commentary series. In addition, he has sought in his last two volumes (Matthew and Luke) to discuss critical theories and here adds a critique of redaction criticism to the discussion in his previous volume. Finally, we might mention here two other noteworthy features: 1) a section discussing "Greek Words, Phrases and Constructions" at the end of each division and 2) a special chapter on parables, discussing both location and interpretation, found in the lengthy discussion of the travel narrative.

In spite of a great deal of material attempting to come to grips with critical issues, one cannot escape the impression that Dr. Hendriksen is not up to date in this area. Obviously, his emphasis on practical matters and the necessity of working though a book in so short a period of time have made it impossible for him to work through all the issues involved in so complex a book as Luke's Gospel. This is well illustrated in the fact that he has discussed redaction criticism only now, even though it has been a well-defined "school" twenty-five years. Moreover, his discussion considers only its use by radical critics and seems unaware of the growing consensus in evangelical circles that properly used (minus the negative presuppositions), it has great positive value for uncovering biblical theology in the Gospels. For instance, see this reviewer's articles in Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 19 no. 2 (1976), 73-86; 21 no. 2 (1978), 117-30; and in a forthcoming issue of The Evangelical Quarterly; also, Marshall's commentary is a model of a positive redaction-study.

The same is true when one examines the sections discussing the Greek. While the parsing is helpful to the beginning student or to one who has forgotten his morphology, the grammatical and syntactical discussion adds little of value to the more experienced student. A comparison of any section with Marshall will illustrate this point quite well. Moreover, etymological studies often partake of the errors exposed by James Barrin his classical Semantics of Biblical Language (1961), namely the false assumption that the past use of a term can be determinative of its present meaning.

Finally we might note the material in the commentary proper. Dr. Hendriksen's discussion will be helpful to the pastor in his exposition, but the scholar will not find a great deal of aid, for the bibliography is not complete enough to be of help. One example will suffice to illustrate the lack, and it will also help the serious pastor to realize that he should consult Marshall along with Hendriksen before finalizing his sermon. The parable of the dishonest manager in Luke 16:1-13 is one of the most difficult in the Gospels to interpret. Hendriksen takes the traditional approach, stating that the owner commended the shrewdness, not the dishonesty of the manager, and the owner (κύριδε) should not refer to Jesus. However, two articles by J. A. Fitzmeyer (Heythrop Journal 25 [1964], 23-42) have shown fairly conclusively that the lowering of the loan payments dealt with the interest and not the principle and so was not dishonest at all. Both are employed by Marshall but not by Hendriksen. Such omissions can lead to a false interpretation of a passage and illustrate the importance of doing one's homework before writing a commentary.

In conclusion, it must be said that both commentaries have a definite place. Dr. Marshall's is that timeless work which will be useful for decades by scholar and pastor alike. Dr. Hendriksen's is more limited but still can be helpful to the pastor for its popular style, practical hints and charts, and even for its exegetical discussion. With regards to the latter aspect, however, it should definitely be balanced by a deeper com-

mentary such as Marshall.

It seems as if evangelicals today are working on two levels, one exemplified by Marshall, with his careful scholarship and voluminous research, the other similar to Hendriksen, with his greater accessability to the public. Evangelical scholarship in the last fifty years has too often been characterized by the latter, with only a glimpse at the greater possiblities in a Bruce or a Morris. Today the liberal world stands with open arms for the first time in decades, and it must be asked whether evangelicalism will answer the challenge.

Several encouraging signs indicate that evangelical scholars are beginning to meet the need. First, there are excellent exegetical commentaries such as Lane on Mark, Hughes on Hebrews, Mounce on Revelation, and Craigie on Deuteronomy. Second, two commentary series provide exciting possibilities in this regard, the one already mentioned (NIGTC, edited by Marshall and Gasque), the other the new Word commentary series, edited by Ralph Martin and Glenn Barker of Fuller Theological Seminary. If the high quality of Marshall can be maintained, we may see a return to the high quality of evangelical scholarship seen at the turn of the century, in men such as Lightfoot, Westcott and Aort of Cambridge or Warfield and Machen of Princeton/Westminster.

This does not mean that we should not reach the public. However, we must raise the level of scholarship in our more popular works. There is no reason why evangelicals cannot maintain the same level of scholarship yet reduce the technical language to a minimum. The problem appears to be that as soon as we decide to produce a work for the general populace, our scholarly interaction becomes minimal. This need not be! It is time we reexamined our priorities and put just as much work into a popular commentary as we do a technical one. Here the Germans once again are ahead of us, with radical scholars like Käsemann, Marxsen, or Conzelmann producing books for the layperson as well as for the scholar. Let us meet the challenge and once again take the lead in producing works,

both technical and popular, which are of the highest quality!

New Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate by Gerhard Hasel. Eerdmans, 1978. 254 pp., \$5.95. Reviewed by George Ladd, Professor of NT at Fuller Theological Seminary.

Here is one of the most exciting books I have read in quite a while. Hasel controls the literature on both the Old and New Testaments. Few men can boast of such an accomplishment. While he is a professor of Old Testament and Biblical Theology at Andrews University, Hasel is equally at home in New Testament theology. He has already written a companion volume on the Old Testament.

The first chapter of seventy pages outlines the history of the discipline. Nowhere will one find in English a more detailed and erudite discussion of the subject. In the second chapter the author discusses methodology in New Testament under the captions of The Thematic Approach (Alan Richardson), The Existentialist Approach (Rudolph Bultmann, Hans Conzelmann), The Historical Approach (W.G. Kummel) and The Salvation History Approach (Oscar Cullmann, G.E. Ladd, L. Goppelt).

Chapter III deals with the Center and Unity in New Testament Theology. Here Hasel concludes that no consensus has been reached. The fourth chapter focuses on New Testament Theology and the Old Testament.

In a final chapter, Hasel makes clear his own position, which he has not previously expounded, under the heading "Basic Proposals Toward a New Testament Theology: A Mutiplex Approach". He insists that the variety of New Testament theology should not be lost. He expounds the only method he feels will do justice to the New Testa-ment text. The "historical-critical" method which widely prevails today is a child of the Enlightenment and cannot do justice to the New Testament, whose basic assumption is that God has acted in history. The historical-critical method assumes that the Bible is a closed continuum--an unbroken series of causes and effects, and has no room for transcendence in history.

Hasel insists that the only adequate method is a theological-historical

method which has room for the acts of God in history. (This reviewer took the same position some years ago in his book The New Testament and Criticism (Eerdmans) p. 40. See also Interpretation, 25, 1971, p.55) It is surely significant that two Evangelical scholars have come to the same conclusion independently of each other. The present reviewer agrees that it is the theologian's task to set forth what the Bible meant and also what it means.

We will look forward with anticipation to a theology of the Bible from Professor Hasel's pen.

OLD TESTAMENT

A Theology of Exile: Judgment/ Deliverance in Jeremiah and Exekiel by Thomas M. Raitt. Fortress Press, 1977. 271 pp. Bibliography and index. \$15.95. Reviewed by John D. W. Watts, Professor of OT at Fuller Seminary.

The cover says: "This is a systematic form-critical analysis of the theological implications of the onset of the Babylonian Exile. The turnabout from promises of doom to promises of unconditional deliverance found in the books of Jeremiah and Ezekial is the most dramatic shift in the history of classical Israelite religion."

It is a fair statement of the book's purpose and field of work.

Thomas M. Raitt teaches in the College of Wooster, Ohio. He is conversant with scholarship on both sides of the Atlantic and with both Jewish and Christian scholars on the subject. His interest also focuses on the way the situation of the Exile parallels our own and, hence, the message of these books to our times.

The study begins with the analysis of the judgment oracle, follows it to its radical peak, and looks into the rejection and theodicy motifs. It then traces the shift to prophetic oracles of deliverance with a thorough analysis of the deliverance message.

Raitt feels that the prophets succeed in doing for Israel what Job's friends tried but failed to do for him. He claims that the theology of exile contains many elements similar to those in the Christ-event. He sees here a theology in which

God's acts are unpredictable. He is free and here there is "the ultimately impenetrable mystery of the relation between God's propensity to bring judgment on sin and his propensity to deliver those on whom he will have mercy." This theology calls for openness to receive a new word from God.

A final section is titled, "The Necessity of an Experience of Exile." The theology of exile is here applied in almost homiletical terms of religious experience, both personal and corporate.

This is an interesting book. The work of form criticism is handled competently. The issues are presented lucidly. But the author comes off better as an Old Testament scholar than as a theologian. Is "propensity" the right designation for God's decisions on judgment or deliverance? Did Jeremiah or Ezekiel imply that "exile is a good experience" as Raitt recommends for modern believers or churches (p. 228)?

The work is provocative. It takes the Bible seriously as a theological book requiring theological interpretation. To the extent that it forces us to think about genuine biblical issues (and it does that!) it is to be greeted with enthusiasm, and read, and discussed, and, if need be, corrected or improved upon by more careful study of the texts. Now we need more of the same for other books!

The Prophets and the Powerless By James Limburg
John Knox Press, 1977, 104 pp.
\$3.45, paper.
Reviewed by Elmer A. Martens,
Mennonite Brethern Biblical
Seminary, Fresno, California.

The prophets are Nathan, Elijah, Amos and Isaiah, and the power-less are the widows, powerless without their husbands; orphans, powerless without their parents; and the poor, powerless without money.

Limburg's agenda is to set Christians right about the preoccupation of Old Testament prophets: not to calendar the future å la Erich von Dåniken and Hal Lindsey, but to awaken the conscience. Limburg argues that "care for the widow, orphan and poor is central to what is expected in the lifestyle of a people which calls itself a people of God" (p.35).

As a broker, Limburg retails in popular style—a style aimed at the undergraduate and the church—man—the findings of scholars. Prophets are akin to messengers in the ancient world, not primarily predictors of the future. In approaching a text, including a text from the prophets, one asks first what it meant in the context of an ancient time before one asks what it means today.

The divine concern for the powerless is established in early Israelite law and covenant, but also aptly and compellingly in wisdom literature. With such clear and early orientation towards care and sensitivity to the powerless, the prophets as messengers from God declare their message. Nathan and Elijah call kings David and Ahab to account for the arrogant exercise of power. Amos targets his message toward all Israel. A total society, now af fluent, is faulted for disregard of the powerless. The prophets, Isaiah among others, are expositors of what justice entails. In the midst of the abuse of power and wealth they take up an advocate role for the powerless. In the final chapter Limburg asks: Who are the prophets for today? His answer, not facetious but quite to the point, is: Elijah, Amos,

The author holds a doctorate from Union Theological Seminary in Virginia and is professor of religion at Augustana College. His style is fresh. Without belaboring the current American scene, he has a way with expressions such as "Israel's bicentennial," of keeping the prophet's blow torch pointed toward the twentieth century.

The book can serve as an introduction to the message of the prophets, and it has good potential as a study guide for college groups. It is a pithy statement of an emphasis that evangelical ministers, if they stress it at all, do so too apologetically. End notes are few; an annotated bibliography of fifteen books is included.

The book's strength is its succinct mini-expositions of particular prophetic texts and a straightforward uncluttered style. Limburg is correct in devoting a chapter to the concept of justice, and while he tries to convey the large compass of the concept, he

does not sufficiently explain its nuances. His treatment here is not adequate. Some will be disappointed that the book does not more specifically pinpoint action plans for today.

Yet it is a punchy little book by a Biblical scholar who is in touch with both the prophets and also with today's church. Limburg's thesis is not one that is contested, but it needs hearing and implementation.

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Though his death and the shedding of his blood Jesus has reconciled us to God, cleansing us and putting away all our sins.

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Luke. In study Marshall comes
to the defense of the integrity
of the Gospel parables and argues their authenticity in
their original setting.

tal New Testament theology.

#210 New Testament Commentary Survey by Anthony Thistleton (updated by Don Carson) and Old Testament Commentary #211 Survey by John Goldingay (updated and edited by Mark Branson and Robert Hubbard). The aim of these booklets is to survey and comment on the best resources available in English for understanding the theological significance of both the OT and NT. It has in mind the average seminary student or religion major rather than the research scholar. After explaining the functions of a commentary, it goes on to describe and evaluate onevolume commentaries and series. After that, it examines commentaries on each and every OT and NT book, providing brief, but highly illuminating remarks on each. It closes with a presentation of the "best buys". Anyone concerned with preaching and teaching the OT or NT will find these useful, perhaps indispensable. (50 pp.)

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