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THE PRINCETON SEMINARY BULLETIN

VOLUME XVII NUMBER 3 NEW SERIES 1996

COMMENCEMENT 1996
Jehovah's Bystanders? THOMAS W. GILLESPIE

Leaders with Heart LEONORA TUBBS TISDALE

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IN MEMORIAM
David Weadon: A Tribute KATHARINE DOOB SAKENFELD

Remembering David MICHAEL E. LIVINGSTON

Index Vol. XVII (1996)

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CONTENTS

COMMENCEMENT 1996
Jehovah's Bystanders? *Thomas W. Gillespie* 279

Leaders with Heart *Leonora Tubbs Tisdale* 283

NEUMANN LECTURE
The Actualization of Christ's Achievement in Our Historical Existence: Breaking out of the New Babylonian Captivity *Herman C. Waetjen* 291

THOMPSON LECTURE
A Plethora of Epiphanies: Christology in the Pastoral Letters *Jouette M. Bassler* 310

STONE LECTURE
Health, Disease, and Salvation in African American Experience *James H. Evans, Jr.* 326

IN MEMORIAM
David Weadon: A Tribute *Katharine Doob Sakenfeld* 348

Remembering David *Michael E. Livingston* 351

BOOK REVIEWS

Homosexuality and Christian Community, ed. Choon-Leong Seow — *W. Eugene March* 353

Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology: Its Genesis and Development, 1909–1936, by Bruce L. McCormack — *B. A. Gerrish* 354

Numbers, by Dennis T. Olson — *Thomas B. Dozeman* 356

Making Sense of New Testament Theology: "Modern" Problems and Prospects, by A. K. M. Adam — *Deirdre Good* 359

Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin, by Cornelius Plantinga, Jr. — *Stephen L. Stell* 360

The Decalogue and a Human Future: The Meaning of the Commandments for Making and Keeping Human Life Human, by Paul L. Lehmann — *Barry Harvey* 362

Divine Discourse: Philosophical Reflections on the Claim That God Speaks, by Nicholas Wolterstorff — *George I. Mavrodes* 363

A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period, 2 vols., by Rainer Albertz — *J. J. M. Roberts* 365

The Social World of the First Christians: Essays in Honor of Wayne A. Meeks, ed. L. Michael White and O. Larry Yarbrough — *Brian K. Blount* 367

The Sermon on the Mount: A Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, including the Sermon on the Plain (Matthew 5:3-7:27 and Luke 6:20-49), by Hans Dieter Betz — *A. K. M. Adam* 369

The New Testament and Psalms: An Inclusive Version, ed. Victor Roland Gold et al. — *Morna D. Hooker* 371

Earthing Christologies: From Jesus' Parables to Jesus the Parable, ed. James H. Charlesworth and Walter P. Weaver — *James D. G. Dunn* 373

Revelation, Redemption, and Response: Calvin's Trinitarian Understanding of the Divine-Human Relationship, by Philip Walker Butin — *Charles Partee* 375

John Calvin's Exegesis of the Old Testament, by David L. Puckett — *Gary Neal Hansen* 376

Jonathan Edwards and the Catholic Vision of Salvation, by Anri Morimoto — *Don Schweitzer* 378

Sworn on the Altar of God: A Religious Biography of Thomas Jefferson, by Edwin S. Gaustad — *James H. Moorhead* 379

King among the Theologians, by Noel Leo Erskine — *Peter J. Paris* 381

A Fire in the Bones: Reflections on African-American Religious History, by Albert J. Raboteau — *Stephen D. Glazier* 383

A History of Christianity in Africa: From Antiquity to the Present, by Elizabeth Isichei — *Mercy Amba Oduyoye* 384

Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy, by Mercy Amba Oduyoye — *Willette A. Burgie* 386

Proper Confidence: Faith, Doubt, and Certainty in Christian Discipleship, by Lesslie Newbigin — *Frederick R. Trost* 388

Thy Will Be Done: The Conquest of the Amazon: Nelson Rockefeller and Evangelism in the Age of Oil, by Gerard Colby with Charlotte Dennett — *Alan Neely* 390

Scripture and Homosexuality: Biblical Authority and the Church Today, by Marion L. Soards — *Robin Scroggs* 392

The Cry of Tamar: Violence against Women and the Church's Response, by Pamela Cooper-White — *Maureen A. Wallin* 393

In the Name of All That's Holy: A Theory of Clergy Malfeasance, by Anson Shupe — *Donald Capps* 395

REVIEW ARTICLE

Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development, by Helmut Koester; New Testament Apocrypha, rev. ed., 2 vols., ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher and R. McL. Wilson; The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation, by J. K. Elliott — *James H. Charlesworth* 399

INDEX VOL. XVII (1996) 404

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Jehovah's Bystanders?

by Thomas W. Gillespie

Farewell Remarks to the Class of 1996
by the President of the Seminary

Comedian Flip Wilson once quipped, "I'm a Jehovah's Bystander." "They wanted me to be a Witness," he explained, "but I didn't want to get involved." There is a sense in which that sentiment belongs to us all.

Consider Israel in the time of its Babylonian captivity. Five hundred eighty-six years before Christ, Jerusalem fell to the army of King Nebuchadnezzar. The city was sacked, the temple destroyed, and the leadership of the nation carried off to Babylon. There they found their place among the many other military and political victims of the conquering Babylonians.

The people of God found themselves in the midst of cultural, ethnic, and religious pluralism of the first magnitude. Without the cultural support of their king, their temple, and their holy land, they were compelled to keep faith alive as best they could improvise. As the Psalmist lamented:

> By the waters of Babylon,
> there we sat down and wept,
> when we remembered Zion.
> On the willows there
> we hung up our lyres.
> For there our captors
> required of us songs,
> and our tormentors, mirth, saying,
> "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"
> How shall we sing the Lord's song
> in a foreign land?
>
> (Ps. 137:1–4)

Clearly, Israel would have preferred to circle up the wagons, go into *laager*, and keep a low profile. In that situation, however, they heard the prophet of God declare to them:

> "You are my witnesses," says the Lord,
> "and my servant whom I have chosen,
> that you may know and believe me
> and understand that I am He.

Before me no god was formed,
nor shall there be any after me.
I, I am the Lord,
and besides me there is no savior.
I declared and saved and proclaimed,
when there was no strange god among you;
and you are my witnesses," says the Lord.
(Isa. 43:10–12)

In an exposition of this text, philosopher Paul Ricoeur calls attention to the fact that in passages like this the biblical authors use the terms "witness" and "testimony" metaphorically.[1] Their literal sense is located socially in the institution of a court of law, where there is a judge and a jury, a prosecution and a defense, and an issue to be tried. The prophet of God, according to Ricoeur, uses the concept of a trial as a metaphor for human history. History is the trial where the disputed issue is Who is God? Who is God really? Who is really God? Thus the ringing challenge:

Bring forth the people who are blind, yet have eyes,
who are deaf, yet have ears!
Let all the nations gather together,
and let the peoples assemble.
Who among them can declare this,
and show us the former things?
Let them bring their witnesses to justify them,
and let them hear and say, It is true.
(Isa. 43:8–9)

Ricoeur points out further that the testimony a witness gives has a quasi-empirical character. We testify to what we have seen and heard, or to what we have at least experienced. But testimony also has a convictional dimension. It represents what we believe in the depth of our being. Moreover, testimony in a trial is never a neutral act. We bear witness in behalf of either the prosecution or the defense.

This is the biblical context in which we hear the New Testament call Christians to the witness stand. Following the resurrection, the disciples asked Jesus if the trial of history was about to conclude. His answer was this: "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own

[1] Paul Ricoeur, *Essays on Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Lewis S. Mudge (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 119–54.

authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). History continues. The trial proceeds. The issue remains unresolved: Who is God? Who is God really? Who is really God?

The God who claimed Jesus as his Son and raised him from the dead still calls his people to give their testimony, to bear their witness. That responsibility falls especially upon those whom God calls to leadership roles in the church. That responsibility falls particularly upon the Class of 1996 as you graduate this day from Princeton Theological Seminary and go forth to places of ministry across the world.

It is a world very much like ancient Babylon with its ethnic, cultural, and religious pluralism. It is a world very much like the Greco-Roman civilization into which the risen Christ sent his apostles armed only with his Spirit and his gospel. The world into which you go now is called by many postmodern, meaning a world without intellectual foundations, a world that views truth claims as matters of opinion and moral convictions as personal preferences, a world that considers what William James called "Truth with a big T and in the singular" evidence of false consciousness.

Speaking on this theme last month at a west-coast pastors' conference, a minister attested to the validity of this assessment from his own ministry on a university campus. "Years ago," he said, "my witness to Jesus Christ was greeted with the demand 'What evidence do you have for that claim?' [the modern question]. Today my witness is met with the sneer 'What right do you have to make such a statement?' [the postmodern question]." It is no wonder that our time in history is known as "the age of suspicion."

Nathan A. Scott, Jr. picks up on the metaphor suggested by the Russian literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin and renames our time "the age of carnival." A carnival is a scene at which everyone is trying to get your attention, to lure you into their sideshow, to play their game, to take their ride. No attraction has a privileged position, and the arrangement is without rhyme or reason. By comparison, a three-ring circus is a model of organization and rationality. According to Scott, "What Bakhtin takes to be the most fundamental fact about carnival is that, under its strange kind of dispensation, ambivalence of viewpoint is the prevailing sentiment: *nothing* is accorded a privileged status, and *everything* is relativized."[2]

At such a time and into such a world, you now go forth to assume leadership

[2] Nathan A. Scott, Jr., "The House of Intellect in an Age of Carnival," in *The Whirlwind in Culture*, ed. D. W. Musser and J. L. Price (Bloomington, IN: Meyer-Stone, 1988), 43.

roles in the church of Jesus Christ. It is admittedly an awesome task. But no more awesome than the task to which the prophet called Israel in its time of Babylonian captivity. And certainly no more daunting than the mission the risen Jesus laid upon his disciples.

Do not look to the culture for support of your views or your vision. Do not be surprised if even the church resists your witness and is indifferent to your testimony, for the church today is an acculturated institution. But remember that the Lord Jesus Christ does not send you forth alone to bear witness in your own strength and according to your own wisdom.

Ever remember his promise, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you." Today, the Seminary has accredited you academically. Your respective churches will authorize you ministerially. But only God can empower you for the task to which he has called you and to which you now turn your hand.

May the Spirit of Christ be upon you and with you all the days of ministry that are before you, and may you be found credible and authentic witnesses in the trial that human history is.

Leaders with Heart

by Leonora Tubbs Tisdale

Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, Associate Professor of Preaching and Worship at Princeton Theological Seminary, preached this sermon at Princeton Seminary's Baccalaureate Service, held at Nassau Presbyterian Church on May 19, 1996.

Texts: 1 Samuel 16:1–13
Philippians 1:3–11

It was not until a month ago that I finally got around to seeing the movie that some of you had been telling me for weeks that I should see: *Dead Man Walking.* And by the time I went, I had a good idea what to expect. I had seen an extensive interview on the "Today" show with Susan Sarandon, and so I expected to like the real-life character she plays, Sister Helen Prejean. I had heard discussions about the movie's balanced treatment of the death penalty, so I expected it to leave me free to make my own decisions. I knew that the movie would probably be emotionally draining, so I waited until a time when I was viscerally ready for it, packed in plenty of Kleenex, and went with trusted friends. And I had listened to no less than five student sermons that used some incident from the movie as an illustration or example (some of them very fine sermons preached by some of you), so I waited expectantly throughout the movie for those already familiar scenes to appear.

But what I didn't expect—didn't fully expect at all—was that there, in the East Windsor Cinema, on a Friday afternoon in April, I would encounter on the Hollywood big screen (of all places!) a leader who would make me both so proud, and so challenged, to be a Christian.

Here, at last was a movie that didn't paint believers as insensitive, legalistic, moralistic jugheads who go around beating everyone over the heads with their KJV Bibles. Here, at last, was a movie where the minister type (ironically, in this instance, a nonordainable Roman Catholic woman) didn't mount the pulpit to preach pious platitudes or to hurl hateful epithets of prejudice against some out-group. Here, at last, was a movie in which the Christian was not hopelessly naive, blatantly stupid, or sickeningly sweet.

Here, instead, was a movie that portrayed a Christian leader with heart

—a heart big enough to embrace in love both the families of the murder victims and the one convicted of committing the murder;

—a heart wise enough to interpret the gospel, in all its costly grace, in language that a death-row inmate could hear and receive;

—a heart vulnerable enough to enter into the heartache, anger, and pain of another and to walk with suffering ones, even through the valley of the shadow of death;

—a heart brave enough to take a stand for justice and to refuse to compromise or apologize for it, even when grossly misunderstood and misinterpreted;

—and a heart humble enough to admit its wrongs and to seek, through prayer, a wisdom that comes from God alone.

In Sister Helen Prejean, I encountered, in a most unlikely place, a leader with heart. And I left that local theater both deeply moved and profoundly challenged. For by comparison, I found my own heart lacking.

In our Old Testament reading this afternoon we are reminded that what matters most to God in the quest for good leaders is not the outer appearance—the way we look, the charm we manifest, the ranks we attain, the degrees we possess—but what is on our hearts.

Our story begins when Saul was king in Israel, and Saul, as the scriptures tell us, was the kind of king who, from the outward appearance, had it all. He had wealth; he had charm; he had charisma; and he had good looks. Indeed, the Bible says that "there was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than [Saul]; from his shoulders upward, he was taller than any of the people" (1 Sam. 9:2).

But the Bible also tells us that God, in time, repented for having made Saul king over Israel. Why? Because Saul lacked that one criterion absolutely essential for leadership under God: a good heart. Instead of obeying and serving God, Saul had looked out for his own vested interests. Instead of heeding God's commands and doing that which best profited God's people, Saul had done that which profited himself. Instead of erecting altars for the worship and glory of God, Saul had erected a monument unto himself. And God was not pleased.

And so, in the passage we read this afternoon, God basically stages a coup d'état—an overthrow of Saul. While Saul is still king, still officially in power, God sends the prophet Samuel out to the tiny village of Bethlehem, to the house of Jesse, to do a very risky thing: to anoint a new king over Israel. And this time, God makes it very clear what the primary criterion should be. For when the oldest of the sons of Jesse—a big, strapping, handsome lad—comes before Samuel and Samuel says, "Surely, God, this must be the one," God quickly intervenes.

"Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature," God says, "For I have rejected this one. The Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart" (v. 7).

As many of you graduating Hebrew scholars know, we really don't have a word in English that does justice to the Hebrew understanding of "heart." When we think "heart," we tend to think Valentine's Day, love, and warm, sentimental feelings. A "soft-hearted" person is one who is quick in empathy; a "big-hearted" person is one with a generous spirit. And those sentiments certainly capture a part of what the Bible means by "heart."

But heart in the Bible means more, much more.

The heart to the Hebrews was not only the seat of emotions; it was also the seat of *reason*. It was through the heart that a person gained knowledge and understanding, made plans, and pondered the deepest things of life. It was the heart that gave a leader the discernment to rule justly and wisely, making fair and equitable choices on behalf of a people. To say that a person had a good heart in Israel was also to suggest that the person had that intangible quality called "wisdom."

The heart was also the locus of *conscience* in Hebrew thinking. When the Psalmist prays, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me," that Psalmist is asking God for a renewal of conscience. From a hardened or uncircumcised heart could flow forth wickedness or deceit or hatred. But from a tender heart, an upright heart, a cleansed and renewed heart, flowed goodness, honesty, and compassion.

It was the heart that guided a leader's *will*. If the leader's heart was centered on God and God's desires for a people—attending to God's special concern for the poor and the oppressed—then the leader was able to guide the people in the ways of justice, righteousness, and truth. But if other desires ruled the heart—pride, self-promotion, greed, a lust for power—then the leader followed other paths.

And it was the heart that revealed where a leader's *ultimate loyalty* lay. A ruler with a good heart was devoted to God, worshiped God, and stayed ever open to God's guidance, teaching, and correction. But a ruler with a bad heart shut God out and often went after other gods—whether they were the gods of other peoples or, as in the case of Saul, the god of self.

The heart, in short, represented the essence of the human person. From a good heart could flow traits like wisdom, integrity, commitment, courage, compassion, justice, and ethical decision making. And it was for that rare and elusive leader—a leader with heart—that God sent Samuel seeking in Bethlehem that day.

It is graduation weekend here at Princeton Seminary, and while a lot has changed in the three thousand years since God sent Samuel to Bethlehem, one thing has not: This world still desperately needs leaders with heart.

We certainly need such leaders in *political life*—leaders who are not simply

media darlings like Saul or attuned to what the latest popularity polls would have them say but compassionate and knowledgeable visionaries, modeling, in both their public and private lives, the justice and righteousness of God.

Several weeks ago, I was transporting a group of teenagers from one place to another, when the conversation turned to the upcoming presidential election in this land. I was distraught to hear one of them say that she had two friends who, though they would turn eighteen this year and be eligible to vote for the first time, probably would not. "But why?" I asked (breaking my usual rule about not interrupting such conversations when I am in the role of the eavesdropping adult). Because, the general consensus from the back seat seemed to be, there is no candidate in this election with the kind of vision, integrity, and compassion that inspire trust. No leader with heart.

Earlier this week, I opened the *Trenton Times* to see an article regarding the ongoing debate over teaching values in the *public schools.* And I thought, as I read it, how much we continue to need leaders with heart in our school system. Not only do we need teachers who love their subject matter and instill in their students a love for it, too. We also need teachers who, through their care for and respect of students, model values far beyond words in the classroom. Our children are hungering for such leaders with heart.

In the *workplace*, too, there is a longing for leaders with heart: people who not only go about their own work with intelligence, commitment, and high ethical standards but who also inspire others with whom they work toward greater character and faith.

My husband and I recently attended the wedding of a wonderful couple in our church who had been introduced to each other by the groom's boss, also a member of our church. It was a joyous wedding, one made all the sweeter by the compatibility of this couple and the fact that they had been waiting until well into their thirties to discover one another. And as the wedding festivities proceeded into the evening in typical New Jersey style—with a four-course Italian meal, much toasting, and dancing—it became increasingly apparent that there was another special relationship being celebrated on this night, namely, the love and affection shared between this groom and his older mentor, the boss. Not only was the boss reported to have been driving by the church all afternoon in nervous anticipation of this marriage as if it were his own; not only did he appear about to pop his buttons every time he was recognized for having introduced these two wonderfully suited people to one another. What was also apparent, at every turn, was the devotion, admiration, and respect this groom had for his boss. For this young man had discovered in his workplace a boss with heart—one who not only mentored him in his work,

but who also cared enough to mentor him in other aspects of his life as well. And that leader had obviously made all the difference.

The world needs leaders with heart. And so does the church. Pastors and Christian educators, chaplains and teachers, scholars and administrators

—who excel not only in knowledge but also in wisdom;

—who have not only a seminary degree but also a high degree of humility;

—who are capable of loving not only those who agree with them but also those who disagree with them;

—and whose lives are spent not in erecting monuments unto themselves but in leading others to the altar of God.

The truth of the matter is, Princeton Seminary Class of 1996, this world desperately needs you (as it needs all of us who call ourselves Christian) to be such leaders with heart—in whatever place or ministry you find yourself placed by God.

But that call, as many of you have shared with me in recent weeks, can be somewhat daunting.

"Who am I," some of you have said to me, "to think I am ready to leave this pasture where I have been busily tending books and papers and exams and to take on the mantle of pastor or teacher or educator, tending a flock of God's people?" "Who am I, ordinary person that I am, to think God might use me to preach the gospel, to comfort the afflicted, to guide the confused, or to be a role model for anyone?" "Who am I, average person that I am, to think that God might be calling me to be a leader who makes a difference in my country back home or in the community to which I am called?" "Who am I, woman that I am, to think that God actually called me—and not one of the seven sons—to this ministry?" "Who am I, who know so well how far short my own heart falls of reflecting the heart of Christ, to think that God can use me to inspire other hearts to turn to God?"

It is precisely at this juncture that I believe our Old Testament text for today offers us good news and encouragement. For it reminds us of that which is at the very heart of the gospel itself: God's way is often to choose that which the world deems weak to put to shame the strong; to choose that which the world deems foolish to shame the wise.

Samuel went to Bethlehem, to the house of Jesse, looking for a leader with heart. And for a while it looked as if he would not find one. Like contestants in a beauty pageant, Jesse's sons paraded before Samuel—first Eliab, then Abinadab, then Shammah. . . . From the oldest to the youngest they came, and each time Samuel and God, judges in search of a beauty that had nothing

whatsoever to do with external appearance, would confer: "Is this the one?" "No, not this one. I'm looking for the one with heart."

Finally, when all seven sons had filed by and none had been found to be king, Samuel asked Jesse in exasperation, "Are all of your sons here?" And that's when Jesse sent out to the pasture to bring in his youngest, David—one who had no résumé, no history of grand accomplishments, no wealth, no power, no impressive stature—a mere child. But it was this one, this totally unexpected one, whom God deemed to have that most important leadership trait of all: a good heart. It was this one whom God anointed to be the next king over Israel.

Several weeks ago, I went back to the town where I had graduated from college, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, to preach at the University Presbyterian Church there. And the weekend became something of a pilgrimage of remembrance for me, as I reflected upon a leader with heart whom I unexpectedly encountered there twenty-five years ago and who profoundly changed my life.

The year was 1971, and the time was one of great turmoil and upheaval in the life of this nation. Students were mounting protests on college campuses in opposition to the Vietnam War. The President of this nation, Richard Nixon, and many other high national leaders were being publicly investigated regarding their roles in the Watergate scandal. College campuses across the land were troubled places where students, cut loose from the old moorings of authority and truth, sought to find their way to meaning through drugs or multiple sexual partners or other self-destructive means. And the church—once strong and respected in the era of the 1950s—seemed to be losing its voice.

When I decided to transfer out of my private, church-related women's college after two years and go to a large, secular state institution—the University of North Carolina—my parents were not altogether thrilled. But I went anyhow, searching for direction and purpose in my life; searching for a major (for I had by then run through several); searching for some wisdom and guidance for my future; and searching to see if there was a way to think about my Christian faith that made sense in light of the troubled world in which I found myself.

It was in a large lecture hall on the UNC campus that I encountered my leader with heart—though I, like Samuel, didn't immediately recognize him as such. He was a short, wiry man with a face weathered from many hours spent in the sun. And as he lectured to that packed hall of two-hundred-plus students, he paced, back and forth, back and forth, without a note in his hands.

What initially astonished me, frankly, was that his courses were filled to overflowing with students. Because in the heart of this secular university in this secular era, this man taught not math or political science or literature or economics. He taught the Bible.

But what also became readily apparent to me—even my first day in his class—was that he taught it with his heart.

He taught with wisdom and reason, allowing me, for the first time, to explore the world of historical criticism and to be able to ask all the hard questions of biblical texts I had always wanted to ask.

He taught with integrity and character, introducing me to the world of the Old Testament prophets, and modeling—by his living and by his stances on critical social issues of the day—the ethics he taught from the scriptures.

Above all, he taught with a passionate love for God and God's Word that shone through in every word he spoke and that caused me to trust him to lead me also in ways of deeper understanding and truth.

His name was Dr. Bernard Boyd, and though I cannot begin to estimate the influence this one leader with heart had on the lives of students who passed through his courses at UNC, I can tell you something of the influence he had on my life.

Because of this leader with heart, I changed my major yet one more time—to religion—and took every single Bible course he taught. When I went to seminary some years later, it was not because I wanted to be a preacher. (That vocation caught me totally by surprise.) It was because Dr. Boyd had whetted within me an appetite and a desire for more knowledge of the Bible, and I wanted to study it in its original languages.

Because of this leader with heart, I was invited to take courses not only in the classroom but also in the home of the Boyds—where I attended not only to the subject matter of the course we were taking on Deuteronomic history but also to the obvious love and affection shared by Bernard Boyd and his wife, Thelma. Their home was a place of warmth and welcome for students, and the love shared between these two people, who were obviously devoted to one another, became a model for me when I began thinking of the kind of home I wanted in the future.

And because of these leaders with heart, I got my first job after college—as director of youth ministry in a church in Spartanburg, South Carolina, a job that not only set me on my vocational course toward ministry but also led me to the man who has been my beloved spouse these past twenty-one years, Al Tisdale.

Never did I imagine as a young woman sitting in Dr. Boyd's lecture halls in the early seventies and listening to him tell stories about his days as a seminary student—his days as a Princeton Seminary student—that my own path would lead me to this place. But as I walk the campus these days, I often do so with an awareness of one who has walked them before me and with a prayer of great thanksgiving that God, at such an impressionable time in my own life, sent me a leader—a graduate of this place—with heart.

The church and the world today are desperately in need of leaders with heart. And the good news of the gospel is that God chooses very ordinary people—a David from Bethlehem, a Helen Prejean from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, a Bernard Boyd from Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina; a Diana Brawley from Wilmington, North Carolina, a Cleo LaRue from Corpus Christi, Texas, or a Geetha Arulmohan from Bangalore—and calls them forth to be such leaders. Not because they have it all together. Not because they can wow and dazzle with their external accomplishments or appearance. And not because they are perfect people (for, as we all know, King David was by no means perfect). But because they have that most important of all leadership qualities—hearts that are open to God.

And with such hearts, through the Spirit's anointing, God can do amazing things in church and world. Using that which the world may deem weak, to show forth God's own strength; using that which the world may deem foolish, to show forth God's own wisdom; using that which the world may deem very ordinary, to be extraordinary proclaimers of God's goodness and grace.

The movie *Dead Man Walking* ends with a scene in which, through a church window, we see Sister Helen Prejean and the father of one of the murder victims on their knees at prayer—opening their own hearts to God for God's cleansing, God's wisdom, God's guidance. As the movie ends, so would I like to end this sermon: with a prayer, offered many years ago by the apostle Paul for a group of people who, as he openly admits, had captured his own heart (as many of you in this graduating class have captured mine). A prayer offered from the heart, for the hearts of those he loved.

"And this is my prayer [for you], that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God." To God be all honor now and forever. Amen.

The Actualization of Christ's Achievement in Our Historical Existence: Breaking out of the New Babylonian Captivity*

by HERMAN C. WAETJEN

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IN JOHN 14:12, more or less at the beginning of his long Farewell Speech, Jesus issues a startling pledge to his disciples: "Amen, amen, I say to you, the one who believes into me will do the works that I do, and greater than these she or he will do because I am going to the Father." Throughout most of the history of the Christian movement, such a promise of fabulous possibilities has tended to be regarded as unimaginable and unfulfillable. Not only has the church subjected its members to a hierarchical relationship of dependency vis-à-vis the Christ that would preclude the actualization of such a divine potentiality, but as a participant in the culture of the Western world, the church has been captive to a five-hundred-year trajectory of material rationality that has eclipsed the reality of possibility. Both the verticality of the faith relationship between Jesus and his disciples and the delimitations of the materialist paradigm, which originated in the nominalism of William of Ockham,[1] have foreclosed the fulfillment of the covenantal promise of John 14:12. Accordingly, those who have embraced the Christian faith throughout this period have been confined to a kind of Babylonian captivity that has prevented them, like the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda in John 5:5, from entering the promised land of health and wholeness and beginning to experience the transcendence implied in Jesus' summons "Keep on rising, take up your mattress, and keep on walking."

Concomitantly, this very same trajectory of material rationality has exerted a dominant influence on the exercise of historical reason in its scientific evaluation of the New Testament's witness to the Easter event. A materialist paradigm determined by causal-calculating reason cannot affirm, much less corroborate, the reality of Jesus' rising from the dead, and contemporary New Testament scholarship that operates within this paradigm either compro-

* Dedicated to my beloved father, Henry Waetjen, in his ninety-third year, in profound gratitude for his unconditional love and faithful support.

[1] My thanks to D.R. McGaughey of Willamette University for the insights from the last chapter of his forthcoming book, *Strangers and Pilgrims: On the Role of Aporiai in Theology.*

mises the witness of the New Testament or relegates it to the realm of faith.[2] A very recent example is Gerd Luedemann's 1994 monograph, *The Resurrection of Jesus.* In the concluding chapter, entitled "Can We Still Be Christians?" Luedemann writes:

> So it is here on the historical Jesus, as he is presented to me by the texts and encounters me as a person through historical reconstruction, that the decision of faith is made, not on the risen Christ as I would have liked him to be, or as, for example, he is accessible archetypally to all human beings as a symbol of the self. However, I *believe* that this Jesus was not given over to annihilation through death, and the notion of his being with God, his exaltation, his resurrection and his life follow almost automatically from our communion with God—but in constant relationship to Jesus' humanity—without, however, it being possible to make statements about his present being. He is hidden from us as the Exalted One; only God is manifest. We must stop at the historical Jesus, but we may believe that he is also with us as one who is alive now.[3]

Why must we stop at the historical Jesus? For Luedemann, of course, it is necessary because the resurrection was nothing more than a hallucination. But is the post-Easter memory of the early church invalid? And should that memory be disregarded because its formulations, which intimate a new, indeed, a divine possibility of human existence, cannot be subjected to enlightened, materialist reason? Moreover, why is it impossible to make statements about Jesus' present being? Must the directions the post-Easter Gospels offer for such projections be dismissed? And why is Jesus hidden from us while God is manifest? Is it no longer possible to experience the post-Easter Jesus in the narrative worlds of the four Gospels or in those arenas of historical existence that the Gospels indicate? Why, after Richard R. Niebuhr's formidable critique of earlier interpretations of the Easter event, is New Testament scholarship's investigation of the Gospels' resurrection narratives still determined by the dualism of Kantian epistemology?

Luedemann acknowledges that he has conducted his investigation of the resurrection traditions under the "treasured" influence of Wilhelm Herrmann, and therefore inherently within the framework of Herrmann's loyalty

[2] See Richard R. Niebuhr's critique of biblical scholarship's interpretation of Jesus' resurrection in terms of Kantian epistemology in *Resurrection and Historical Reason* (New York: Charles Schribner's Sons, 1957), 1–71.

[3] *The Resurrection of Jesus: History, Experience, Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994), 183. See also his more recent book, *What Really Happened to Jesus: A Historical Approach to the Resurrection* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995), 131–37.

to nineteenth-century historical criticism and its determination by Kantian epistemology. Like other Kant-oriented theologians, Herrmann identified history with nature as the realm of necessity and therefore presupposed that the scientific methods employed in the investigation of nature could also be applied to the historical-critical analysis of biblical texts. Christian faith cannot find a resting place or a foundation for itself within this Kantian domain of *The Critique of Pure Reason*. While the resurrection traditions of the Gospels may be subject to critical analysis, the reality of Jesus' rising from the dead to which they bear witness is suspect because, like the other miracles, it cannot be integrated into the causal nexus of either nature or history. Ironically, neither can it be regarded as a "noumenal reality" and apprehended under *The Critique of Practical Reason*, because in his analysis of the antinomies of reason, Kant postulates that the thinking self is an immortal soul. The human body is a material reality, subject to the categories of substance and causality. Its finitude cannot actualize the summum bonum of perfect harmony between human reason and moral law. Practical reason, therefore, presupposes the self-evident proposition of the immortality of the soul, rather than the resurrection of the body, to enable the moral faculty of human being to achieve its perfection.

Like Wilhelm Herrmann, Luedemann makes a Kant-like differentiation between historical criticism and existential faith, but, unlike Herrmann, the "living personality of Jesus" is not encountered in the domain of practical reason but in the historical-critical reconstruction that New Testament scholars have derived from the texts of the Gospels. To quote Luedemann again: "The man Jesus is the *objective* power which is the enduring basis of the experiences of a Christian. Through Jesus we are 'first lifted into a true fellowship with God'. Jesus grasps me, makes me bow down, exalts me and makes me blessed, loves me, through all the strata of the tradition. He is the ground of faith."[4] But can a historical-critically reconstructed Jesus serve as an adequate foundation on which to build faith? Like Gerd Luedemann, John Dominic Crossan seems to think so. He concludes his critical investigation in *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* with the astonishing sentence "If you cannot believe in something produced by reconstruction, you may have nothing left to believe in."[5] Yet no critical reconstruction of any kind can achieve a representation of the original reality of Jesus' career beyond the realm of probability. And if such a reconstruction

[4] *Resurrection of Jesus*, 182.
[5] (San Francisco: Harper, 1991), 426.

were to be adopted as the ground of faith, faith would be nothing more than intellectual consent.

Luedemann's form- and redaction-critical analysis of the Easter stories results in a virtual identification of the interpretations of the post-Easter Jesus by the earliest Christians with the critical reconstruction of the pre-Easter Jesus. "Finally, our historical reconstruction led to the insight that the structural characteristics of the Easter experience ... of the forgiveness of sins, the experience of life, the experience of eternity, are contained in the words and story of Jesus. So we have to say that before Easter, everything that was finally recognized after Easter was already present."[6] For Luedemann the Easter event, whatever it was, is nothing more than the reinforcement of earlier experiences conveying to the disciples a better understanding of the Jesus they had known. But can this or any historical reconstruction constitute a provenance of human transformation? Can a historically reconstructed Jesus empower us to do his works, much less greater works than those the Gospels attribute to him? What is the basis of the extraordinary possibility that Jesus presupposes for his disciples? It appears that Luedemann's investigation of the resurrection of Jesus leaves us captive to a Kantian epistemology, which, as Richard R. Niebuhr has recognized, absolutizes the categories of Newtonian science and cosmology as the forms of sensibility and the categories of reason by which the mind organizes and interprets the exogenous world.[7] But if the universal structure of thought is essentially a sign process, that is, if the mediation of thought is always subject to a historically determined linguistic system, then no epistemological theory can ever establish the limits of pure reason. Luedemann, however, is content in his reductionism to embrace an elementary faith. As a last word he acknowledges that "the unity with God experienced in faith continues beyond death."[8] That evidently is enough, and consequently he exhorts "Christians to live by the little that they really believe, not by the much that they take pains to believe."[9]

A postmodern approach to the New Testament witness to Jesus' resurrection, as it is developed by Marianne Sawicki in her book *Seeing the Lord: Resurrection and Early Christian Practices*,[10] is more efficacious in enabling access to the reality of resurrection than any analysis of the biblical texts that is determined by a critical methodology founded on a Kantian epistemology. The reality of the Easter event is not established by academic scholarship

[6] *Resurrection of Jesus*, 181–82.
[7] *Resurrection and Historical Reason*, 119.
[8] *Resurrection of Jesus*, 184.
[9] Ibid.
[10] (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994).

performing autopsies on those Gospel narratives that bear witness to the Easter event but rather by engaging in those activities prescribed by them, that is, identifying with the hungry and the poor, obeying the teaching of Jesus, and devoting oneself to liturgy. Evidently influenced by Jacques Derrida's dictum "There is nothing outside of the text,"[11] Sawicki contends that the continuity of the risen Lord's presence and the experience of "seeing the Lord" are constituted by the reality of intertextuality. Of course, if there is nothing outside of the text, there are many different kinds of texts that are inscribed with meaning: not only the great diversity of printed matter but also culture and human beings. Ironically, however, the texts of the New Testament Gospels are, like Jesus' tomb, empty.[12] They will not enable us to encounter the risen Lord. At best, they are "professional training manuals," which convey bodily and textual strategies that indicate those contexts and activities in which the risen Lord will be seen. According to Matthew, that experience will occur in the practice of the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount; according to Luke-Acts, it will take place in our participation in and our response to a community of hungry people.[13] The referents of the term "resurrection" are established by the Gospels and are always beyond the New Testament texts, enabling readers to identify and recognize the living presence of the risen Lord in the texts of the world. Accordingly, Sawicki argues, "It would be a misconception to regard the gospel words as referring, after the fact, to some event separate and self-contained that happened independently of those words and that subsists apart from them somewhere in the human past."[14] And "those who want to see the Lord must devote themselves to liturgy and the poor (better yet, the liturgy *with* the poor) as well as to printed texts."[15]

Certainly the Gospels are not historical reconstructions that re-present the actuality of the unfolding of Jesus' career in its original Palestinian context. But are they simply "professional training manuals," designed to instruct us where we will see the risen Lord? As artistically constructed texts, they, by the signs that constitute them, put forward potential narrative worlds; and we, by the activity of reading, (1) transform those signs into people, places, actions, and teaching and (2) concomitantly create discrete, self-contained story worlds. Our own discipleship is not deferred as we engage in this aesthetic

[11] Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 158.
[12] Sawicki, *Seeing the Lord*, 84–89.
[13] Ibid., 83, 89–91.
[14] Ibid., 93. See also 302–3.
[15] Ibid., 303.

activity. But we are the advantaged disciples because we are listening to an omniscient narrator informing us of events and actions in the life of Jesus that his original disciples do not experience. For example, as the disciples from outside the text, in contrast to the disciples inside the text, we learn from the narrator of Mark's Gospel the words the heavenly voice spoke to Jesus as the Spirit descended into him at his baptism, "You are my beloved Son; in you I began to take pleasure." How will we, privileged with this knowledge, answer the question the disciples verbalize when they have experienced Jesus' authority over the forces of chaos in the stilling of the storm, "Who then is this for even the wind and the sea obey him?" How will we evaluate Simon Peter's confession, "You are the Christ," or how will we judge his subsequent elevation of Jesus to the rank of Elijah and Moses in response to the transfiguration? What happens to us, or what do we do when we reach the conclusion of Mark's Gospel and discover there is no closure? The end proves not to be the end! According to the youth of Mark 16:5, Jesus has been raised from the dead, and, even as he is no longer in the tomb, he is no longer in the text. He is on his way to Galilee, most likely to inaugurate a second career that will be similar to the first. Inexplicably, the three women who came to complete the burial of Jesus' corpse remain silent in spite of the ecstasy of their revelatory experience. What will be our response? Will we believe the good news of Jesus' resurrection? Will we, the disciples outside the text, create a continuation of the narrative by following Jesus to Galilee? Evidently that is our only recourse to determine the truth of the youth's testimony. Words cannot deliver the certainty of Jesus' resurrection, even in the light of the witness of Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus inscribed in the Gospel according to Matthew. Nevertheless, their empirical experience of both seeing the risen Lord and grasping his feet is indispensable in establishing the ontological reality of his resurrection.

Jesus did not merely rise into the Christian proclamation, as Rudolf Bultmann maintained; nor did he rise into intertextuality, as Sawicki proposes. At the same time, the Easter event is not to be reduced to a hallucination or a psychological episode that occurred within the consciousness of the disciples. In his post-Easter appearances, Jesus presented himself to his disciples as an objective—not physical! but objective—reality; and a number of Easter stories utilize attributes of physicality to express that objectivity. According to Luke 24:34, Jesus invites his disciples to "Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and blood as you see that I have." To provide additional confirmation, he asks for and receives a piece of broiled fish, which he eats in their presence.

The ontological reality of Jesus' resurrection from the dead can only be experienced in terms of physicality. Sawicki, therefore, rightly connects resurrection with the bodily imaging of God.[16] Seeing the Lord occurs concretely in "sharing the necessities of life,"[17] that is, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, giving hospitality to the stranger, caring for the sick and visiting the imprisoned, as the parable of the sheep and the goats in Matthew 25:31–46 discloses. Nevertheless, resurrection is more that caring for the poor and celebrating the liturgy. Resurrection is more than engaging in bodily and physical strategies. Resurrection is more than something that happens between and among persons.[18]

Resurrection is the entry into a new moral order that is constituted as a terrestrial reality by the creative act of God, and therefore it is something that happens to individual human beings. It is a principle component of the eschatological projection of a new heaven and a new earth that originated in the millennialism of Jewish apocalypticism, and it seems to have made its earliest appearance in the Apocalypse of Isaiah (Isaiah 24–27), specifically in Isaiah 26:19.

> Your dead shall live, their corpses shall rise.
> O dwellers in the dust, awake and sing for joy!
> For your dew is a radiant dew,
> and the earth will give birth to those long dead.

Daniel 12:2 enlarges this eschatological vision to include the despicable and the ignoble. "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

Resurrection and its attendant reconstitution of all things is preceded, however, by a cataclysmic judgment that terminates the old moral order. The process of redemption in society has disintegrated.[19] New forms of power have been introduced that have altered the distribution of wealth. The old rules that governed the ordering of power no longer guarantee the truth of things. As political oppression and economic exploitation intensify the social unrest, those who become aware of their disenfranchisement isolate themselves from the current moral order and form communities that are oriented toward the search for a new kind of social being. Intellectual activity aided by

[16] Ibid., 336.
[17] Ibid., 84.
[18] Ibid., 79.
[19] See Kenelm Burridge, *New Heaven—New Earth: A Study of Millenarian Activities* (New York: Schocken, 1969), 4–14.

scriptural interpretation endeavors to comprehend the changes that have occurred in the social construction of reality.

Exemplifying this phase of millenarian formation is book 1 of 1 Enoch, which, by an appropriation of the myth of Genesis 6:1–4, attributes the disintegration of the current social order to the birth of giants who "consumed the produce of all the people until the people detested feeding them. So the giants turned against the people in order to eat them" (1 Enoch 7:3–4).[20] These giants are identifiable as systemic structures and social institutions that transcend the power and control of the peasantry and extract the surplus of their agricultural production. The injustices that prevail cannot be eradicated by a reformist response. A new condition of being is required, and therefore the irremediable moral order that predominates must be terminated.

Book 1 of 1 Enoch foretells the eternal punishment of the watchers, "the children of heaven," as well as the destruction of the giants. Daniel foresees the annihilation of the four chaos monsters that devour much flesh. First Enoch's Apocalypse of Weeks anticipates the final judgment to occur during the tenth week of human history:

> there shall be the eternal judgment; and it shall be executed by the angels of the eternal heaven. . . . The first heaven shall depart and pass away; a new heaven shall appear; and all the powers of heaven shall shine forever sevenfold. Then after that there shall be many weeks without number forever; it shall be a time of goodness and righteousness, and sin shall no more be heard of forever. (1 Enoch 91:15–17)

The Messiah apocalypse of 2 Baruch offers essentially the same vision. The creation will be returned to primordial chaos during the thirteenth epoch of human history, and the fourteenth and final age will mark the beginning of eternal justice and peace.

Resurrection is God's re-creation of the deceased elect, those who are identified in Isaiah 26:19 as the dead who belong to God: "Your dead shall live; their corpses shall rise." Resurrection opens the door to a joyful participation in the reconstitution of all things. In the Similitudes of 1 Enoch, Enoch is assured:

> The righteous and elect ones shall be saved on that day. . . . The Lord of the Spirits will abide over them; they shall eat and rest and rise with that Son of

[20] All quotations of 1 Enoch are taken from the translation by E. Isaac, in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols., ed. James H. Charlesworth (Garden City: Doubleday, 1983–85), 1:13-89.

> Man forever and ever. The righteous and elect ones shall rise from the earth and shall cease being of downcast face. They shall wear the garments of glory. These garments of yours shall become the garments of life from the Lord of the Spirits. Neither shall your garments wear out, nor your glory come to an end before the Lord of the Spirits. (1 Enoch 62:13–16)

The Easter appearances of the risen Jesus to Cephas, the twelve, and "to more than five hundred sisters and brothers at one time" unquestionably engendered intellectual ferment (1 Cor. 15:5–6). Recognition was vital, requiring the identification of the risen one with Jesus of Nazareth and alternately determining the significance of both the event and the person. Among the variety of interpretations that emerged was the myth of resurrection, derived from the eschatology of Jewish apocalypticism and imposed on the event of Jesus' rising from the dead to signify the inauguration of the millenarian vision of a new heaven and a new earth. Attendantly, from within this millenarian orientation, Jesus himself was identified with the *bar nasha* of Daniel 7:13–14, a type of new Adam, who, on the basis of his appearance before the Ancient of Days, recovered the characteristics that distinguish the human being created in the image and likeness of God: dominion, glory, and kingship (see Ps. 8:4–8). In the Hellenistic Jewish-Christian community, the identification of Jesus with the *bar nasha* of Daniel 7:13–14 was translated into the christological, but corporately oriented, title: *ho huios tou anthrōpou.* By raising Jesus from the dead, God appointed him to be the founder of a new humanity. Accordingly in 1 Corinthians 15:45, the apostle Paul acknowledges him to be the "Last Adam" who is a "life-giving spirit," the image of the glory of God into which those who follow him are being metamorphosed from one degree of glory to another (2 Cor. 3:18).

A number of passages in the letters of the apostle Paul indicate that he embraced this interpretation of the Easter event. Above all, of course, is 1 Corinthians 15, where it is especially obvious in his circular argumentation of verses 12–13: "Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised." What the Corinthian Christians evidently are rejecting is the eschatology of the resurrection of the dead, a reality of the future when "the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed." In an effort to convince them, Paul utilizes the analogy of a grain of wheat in order to develop the difference between two kinds of bodies, the flesh-and-blood body of the present, which has its own glory, and the spiritual body of the future, which will be superior in glory to the physical body as one star is superior in splendor to another.

But the millennial myth of resurrection, as applied to the Easter event, not only guarantees the future resurrection. Above all, it identifies the reality of Jesus' rising from the dead as the beginning of a new creation as well as the birth of a new humanity. The realized eschatology of the new creation is the hub of Pauline theology from which the spokes of his contextualizing interpretations radiate. J. Christiaan Beker has articulated it well. The apocalyptic reality of the *regnum Christi* is the "deep structure" or "coherent center" from which "a variety of symbols" is drawn in response to the contingencies of Paul's evangelizing contexts.[21] Paul himself acknowledges it as such in Galatians 6:15. "For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything, but a new creation. And as many as follow this rule, peace on them and mercy and upon the Israel of God."

If the Easter event of Jesus' rising from the dead, as interpreted by the myth of resurrection, signifies the establishment of a new creation, Jesus' death, accordingly, must denote the end of the old creation. In this respect the millennialism of Jewish apocalypticism also functions as the "deep structure" of Pauline theology. For if Jesus' death terminates the old moral order, Paul can simultaneously declare, as he does in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "old things passed away; new things have happened."

Moreover, Jesus' death, like his rising from the dead, becomes a vital factor in the establishment of a paradigmatic experience into which all humanity can enter, namely, dying and rising with Christ. Paul enlarges on this in Romans 6:4. "Therefore we were buried with him through baptism into death so that even as Christ was resurrected from the dead through the glory of the Father, so let us walk in the newness of life." The myth of resurrection, accordingly, provides the key to the interpretation of Jesus' rising from the dead and, retrospectively, to the interpretation of Jesus' death.

But the consequence of participating in Jesus' death must be clearly apprehended. "If," as Paul says, "one died on behalf of all and consequently all died," that death must be claimed as the end of my involvement in the old moral order. "Old things passed away." My eschatological death, therefore, terminates my participation in the human condition of sin that dominates the old moral order as well as the alienation that that disease engenders. The wonderful outcome is reconciliation with God. Paul's understanding of atonement is derived not from the temple cult but from the interpretation of Jesus' death as the end of the old creation.[22] "For if being enemies we were

[21] J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 17.

[22] See Matthew 27:51–53 for the influence of the millennialism of Jewish apocalypticism.

reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life" (Rom. 5:10). We are reconciled to God through the death of his Son, but not without our own participation in that death. We are also saved by his life, but not without our participation in his resurrection. There is no cheap grace here!

"Being saved" begins with an entry into the reality of resurrection. It is analogous to the experience of Lazarus, the Beloved Disciple in the narrative world of the Fourth Gospel. After the stone, which seals the cave of nonbeing in which he is buried, has been rolled away and Jesus has issued the call to come forth, he, with hands and feet bound and eyes covered with a burial cloth, by some prodigious effort succeeds in exiting from the tomb. Re-created or resurrected, he is ready to begin a journey into a new moral order. But unbinding must first take place before he is able to walk and to see; and since he is unable to set himself free, he needs some assistance from the community to which he belongs. Like Lazarus', our salvation, our being saved, lies in our being unbound and set free. By entering the new creation, which God constituted through the Easter event, we have been resurrected with Christ, and therefore we have become members of a new humanity bearing the identity of "life-giving spirits." As Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:45, "The first human Adam became a living being; the last Adam a life-giving spirit." Those who are "in Christ," the last Adam, are "life-giving spirits"! That, however, is a paradoxical identity. For although we have died with Christ and have been raised with Christ, and therefore are participating in the new humanity of "life-giving spirits," we are undergoing a metamorphosis that is transfiguring us into the image and stature of our pioneer, the resurrected Christ. The process of transformation gradually enables us to "rule in life" and to engage in the activities of the *dikaiosynē tou theou*, the justice of God (Rom. 5:17).

It is in this domain of being "in Christ," the last Adam, and consequently also being on the way into a reordering of power that all the possibilities of this new creation become realizable. The scale and scope of those possibilities, disclosed by Jesus in the narrative world of the four Gospels, are originated and activated by God's breath, the Holy Spirit. We, who are "life-giving spirits" because we belong to a new humanity and are therefore being metamorphosed from one degree of glory to another (2 Cor. 3:18), are called to incarnate those possibilities as God's surrogates with and for our fellow human beings.

The Easter event, as interpreted by the myth of resurrection, has inaugurated the long awaited reconstitution of all things. This is the time of the

regnum Christi, the reign of Christ. Paul characterizes it as the age in which the Christ abolishes every rule, every authority and every power; that is, all the forms and forces of death that prevent all who have been created in God's image and likeness from "ruling in life." Only after this work has successfully been completed will the Christ return the kingship to God and become subordinate to God, as Paul states in 1 Corinthians 15:28. This reign of Christ, however, must not be construed as the elite sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ. The new creation is not a reconstruction of a hierarchical ordering of power. The kingship of the risen Christ is a horizontally structured rule in which all the members of the new humanity have an equal share. For the Christ, as Paul contends in 1 Corinthians 12:12, is the community of the one and the many: "For even as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body being many are one body, so also the Christ."[23]

The objective of this corporate, horizontally constituted kingship is the deliverance of the creation from its bondage, the redemption of the old moral order and all who participate in it. This is the work that God has reserved for and entrusted to the new humanity; and the languishing creation is awaiting its manifestation. "For," as Paul declares in Romans 8:19–21, "the eager expectation of the creation is waiting for the unveiling of the sons and daughters of God. For the creation was subordinated to futility, not willingly, but on account of the one (who) subordinated it in hope. Because the same creation will be liberated from the enslavement of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God."

This is the assignment the new humanity is called to fulfill. To say the least, it is an awesome undertaking, and, as each year passes, it seems more preposterous. Nevertheless, God will not rescue the creation unassisted. Incarnation is the instrumentality by which this objective will be achieved. All who participate in the new humanity of the risen Christ and therefore are "life-giving spirits" are called to collaborate with God and fulfill this commission to save the creation. There is no other legitimation for Christian identity.

The undertaking is realizable only if the reign of Christ is a horizontally shared kingship. Jesus himself acknowledged that in his confession at his trial before the Sanhedrin, "You will see the Son of the Human Being (the new humanity) seated on the right hand of power." Christian self-understanding humbly but courageously embraces this privileged position of being co-enthroned with the resurrected Jesus and therefore also being co-enthroned

[23] See Beker, *Paul*, 306–10.

with God. It is from this source that divine possibility originates and becomes actualizable in historical existence.

The Synoptic account of the stilling of the storm dramatizes this reality. Jesus falls asleep in the middle of a storm while sailing across the Sea of Galilee. From fear of drowning, his disciples awaken him, not because they want a miracle to save them but because Jesus, who in view of his location "in the stern on the pillow" is the pilot, has, by falling asleep, lost control of the boat. They simply want him to get his hand back on the rudder and guide the boat through the storm. They are acting according to the old paradigm of Psalm 107:23–32. To quote the most pertinent verses, "Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he brought them out from their distress; he made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed." Jesus delivers them, but in an unanticipated manner, namely, by assuming the role of the Lord and calming the wind and the sea. But immediately afterwards he reproaches them for being cowardly and not having faith. Yet, at least according to the old paradigm, they had faith. They had cried out to the Lord in their trouble. Why does Jesus reprimand them? Evidently, the old paradigm of dependence is no longer valid to those who are following Jesus into a new moral order. Verticality promotes dependence and paralysis. "Having faith" now involves acting out of the empowerment of participating in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. When Jesus subsequently sends the disciples across the Sea of Galilee alone, they are hesitant to go without him because they remember how safe and secure they were when he was in the boat with them. Consequently, it is necessary for him to compel them to get into the boat (Mark 6:45). In view of the time when he will be taken away from them, they must learn how to be pioneers in his place for those who will follow them into a reordering of power. As they begin to sail across the sea, Jesus ascends "into the mountain" to pray for them; when he descends at dusk he observes that they have made little progress. Yet he does not interfere. During the fourth watch of the night he comes to them walking on the sea, and, as the narrator informs us, "he was wanting to pass them by" (Mark 6:48). Jesus is anxious about them, but he refuses to be paternalistic. They must be trained for the future, for their exercise of sovereignty and power will be essential for the fulfillment of their commission. They must learn the limits of the authority they bear as members of the community of the Son of the Human Being.

The disciples, however, see Jesus walking on the sea and, imagining him to be a ghost, cry out in fear. He responds to their alarm immediately, "Keep on being courageous! I AM. Stop being afraid!" In his self-disclosure he employs

the phrase *egō eimi*, the Septuagint translation of Yahweh's self-identification to Moses at the burning bush, and also the Septuagint translation of Yahweh's declarations of transcendence and matchlessness in Isaiah 41–48. In performing an act that is traditionally limited to God, as Job 9:8 indicates, Jesus by his use of "I AM" reveals the identity and destiny of the new humanity, that community of "life-giving spirits" that is willed by God to be transformed into the image and stature of the risen Lord. When Jesus climbs into the boat, the wind ceases, but his disciples are profoundly unsettled: "They went out of their minds!" They do not understand the significance of what they have witnessed because, as the narrator explains, "they did not understand about the loaves, but their heart was hardened" (Mark 6:53). The sovereignty that Jesus manifested by walking on the sea is the same as that by which he fed the multitudes; it is the sovereignty of the New Human Being whom God gave birth to and who therefore is God's Offspring. The disciples, however, continue to let their society and its culture determine the limitations of possibility in historical existence.

Marianne Sawicki is right when she states, "The first evangelists find that they cannot bring anyone to the possibility of resurrection through the mere telling of a story."[24] Her insistence, however, is on the teaching that succeeds the wonder working of the early prophets, teaching that will enable the disciples "to reach and recognize the risen Lord," to see "what they literally cannot see: Jesus in the hungry, the thirsty, the strange, the naked, the sick, and the imprisoned."[25] But the possibility of resurrection is not established simply and only on the basis of "seeing the Lord" in the communities of the poor and the oppressed. Personal participation in Jesus' resurrection and its entry into a reordering of power is paramount. If the disciples and Peter follow the risen Jesus to Galilee where he is initiating a second career, they will not only "see the Lord" as he continues his ministry among the marginalized masses, they will also participate in his resurrection, even as they participated in his death; and consequently, like him at the beginning of his career in the narrative world of Mark's Gospel, they will be called into being as God's beloved daughters and sons and simultaneously be empowered to actualize the possibilities of the reign of Christ.

At the conclusion of Matthew's narrative world, the eleven representatives of the new Israel "see the Lord" on the Sinai-like mountain of Galilee where the risen Jesus appears to them. "But some doubted" (28:17). What they doubt is not clarified, but most likely the reader is to assume that it is the

[24] *Seeing the Lord*, 84.
[25] Ibid., 87.

reality of Jesus' resurrection from the dead. Nothing is said or done to resolve their doubts. The risen Jesus claims to have received "all authority in heaven and on earth," thereby intimating the fulfillment of Daniel 7:13–14 and the confirmation of his identity in resurrection as the *bar nasha* or the New Human Being. He issues the so-called Great Commission and at the same time insinuates the means by which their doubts will be resolved. By fulfilling their authorization to make disciples of all ethnic communities in the same way Jesus disciples them, any doubts of the reality of his resurrection that might persist will be dispelled.

But there is more than the teacher's teaching that is to be taught to disciple others. Eleven ascended the cosmic navel of the mountain in Galilee; twelve descend. The teacher joins the eleven, and as the twelfth, constitutes the new Israel and imparts equal participation in his identity as the *bar nasha*, the New Human Being, and equal participation in the fullness of his authority in heaven and on earth. The I AM, with which he identified himself to his disciples while walking on the Sea of Galilee (14:27), now encloses them—and us! "See, I with you AM (*egō meth hymōn eimi*) even to the consummation of the age." Drawn into the I AM of Emmanuel, "God with us," the community of the New Human Being, which the risen Lord constitutes on this Sinai-like navel in Galilee, is empowered to continue the world-transforming ministry of Jesus.

In the Acts of the Apostles, the evangelist Luke draws his readers into the Pentecostal experience of the disciples, after Matthias has been chosen to replace Judas as the twelfth representative of the new Israel. "All were together in one place; and suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them" (2:1–3). All of them, both the women and the men, receive empowerment through the same gift of God's Spirit that had descended upon Jesus at his baptism. While Jesus was anointed by the Spirit's settling upon him in the physical appearance of a dove, signaling that he was being sanctioned by heaven, his disciples are ratified by a supracephalic flame that signified the dawn of the new age and their participation in the apotheosis of the risen Lord.[26]

In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus breathes the Spirit on his disciples on Easter evening (20:22), and as a result his earlier promise of 14:1–3 is fulfilled, "In

[26] For the significance of the "tongue of fire," see Richard Oster, "Numismatic Windows into the Social World of Early Christianity: A Methodological Inquiry," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 101 (1982):212–14.

my Father's house are many rooms; and if not, I would tell you because I am going to prepare a place for you. Again I am coming and I will receive you to myself so that where I AM (*egō eimi*) you also are." As bearers of God's presence they become "rooms" in "the Father's house," rooms that Jesus prepared by going away into death and resurrection. Accordingly empowered, they will begin to fulfill Jesus' promise, "the works that I do you will do and greater works than these because I am going to the Father."

The Gospels are not "about" access to one who died. Their generic content is not to communicate the means of approaching someone dead.[27] All of them, in their own distinctive modes, end without closure indicating or intimating where and by what means the reality of the Easter event can be experienced. The "seeing" that is required results from a personal entry into death and resurrection with Jesus and concomitantly actualizing the divine possibilities that belong to the legacy of the new humanity. Seeing clearly is a divine gift, but sometimes, as in the story of Jesus' opening the eyes of a blind human being in two stages, the sight that is gained is imperfect, and a second remedial touch is necessary (Mark 8:22–26).

Lazarus, as the Beloved Disciple of the Fourth Gospel, offers an apposite epistemological model. Although he is not identified by the narrator as the Beloved Disciple, we as the readers can make that identification on the basis of the first of the Easter episodes in the Fourth Gospel. When Mary Magdalene reports her discovery of an empty tomb, two disciples, Simon Peter and "the one whom Jesus loved," scramble to investigate. The details the narrator gives are crucial for the identification of the Beloved Disciple.

> The two were running together, and the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter and came to the tomb first and bending over he sees the strips of linen, but he did not enter. Then Simon Peter comes following him and he entered the tomb. And he views the strips of linen and the face cloth that was on his head, not lying with the linen strips but folded up into one place. Then the other disciple entered, the one coming to the tomb first, and he saw and believed. (20:4–8)

There is no way to account for the strange conduct of the Beloved Disciple except to identify him with Lazarus. He outruns Peter but does not enter the tomb. He has surmised what has happened, but he is hesitant to enter the tomb because he himself came out of a tomb. Nevertheless, he eventually enters, stands beside Peter, eyeballs the same empirical objects of Jesus' burial garments, and believes. His faith is not simply a leap into the dark, nor is it

[27] Against Sawicki, *Seeing the Lord*, 302.

based on scriptural proof. "For," as the narrator observes, "they did not yet know the scripture that he must rise from the dead." He believes because of his own experience of resurrection. When he sees the strips of linen folded up into one place, he remembers that he himself came out of his tomb, bound hand and foot, and had to be set free. Jesus, in his resurrection from the dead, had the authority of the New Human Being "to lay down his life and to take it up again." The seeing and believing of the Beloved Disciple are determined by his own experience of resurrection as Lazarus. That is the epistemological foundation of his faith.

Marianne Sawicki ends her inquiry into Christian origins by contending for a postmodern theology that does not "insist on a God beyond text or on causality from beyond the textual world."[28] "As modern theology worked out a place for God in the 'depth dimension,' postmodern theology must work out a place for God in/as some dimension of textuality."[29] But the Easter event is not simply Jesus' rising into the texts of hungry and naked bodies. Those are texts that belong to the old moral order. Certainly Jesus is alive and active in these texts. As the youth in Mark's Easter story declares, "He is going before you into Galilee." Jesus, however, enters those texts from the new text of the rule of God, which he established and which God constituted ontologically by raising Jesus from the dead.

Is Jesus alive? Did he really rise from the dead? Or to phrase the question as Sawicki does toward the end of her book: "Could he recognize himself? Did his personal awareness continue; was *he himself* still around to enjoy whatever happened after Calvary? Did he come out of the tomb laughing? *Will I?*"[30] Sawicki considers these questions important but does not answer them. Those who, like Lazarus, have responded to the call to exit from the cave of nonbeing and follow Jesus into the metamorphosis of resurrection can answer with a joyful affirmation.

Martin Luther designated the papacy of his time "the kingdom of Babylon and the power of Nimrod the mighty hunter."[31] In his treatise "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church," he identified the configurations of bondage in the seven ecclesiastically constituted sacraments that controlled Christians from birth to the grave and prevented them from realizing their freedom in Christ. The biblical scholarship of modernity, insofar as it continues to be captive to the dualism of Kantian epistemology, is another kind of Babylonian

[28] Ibid., 332.
[29] Ibid., 333.
[30] Ibid., 336.
[31] Trans. A.T.W. Steinhaeuser, in *Works of Luther*, vol. 43 (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1943), 171.

captivity, which debars the signs of identification and recognition by which the risen Jesus made himself known.[32] Instead it substitutes a reconstructed historical Jesus "as the clue to God in our life" and closes the door to participation in the new moral order of the resurrection and its inherent possibilities. The ecclesiastical promulgation of transcendent Christologies, informed by ancient creeds torn out of their historical contexts, is another kind of Babylonian captivity that restrains Christians from entering into a horizontal relationship with the risen Lord and enjoying the ecstatic sense of self-worth that he wills to share by drawing them into his I AM. Postmodernity's intertextuality into which the risen Jesus disappears without the perspective of the new creation is yet another kind of Babylonian captivity. Although it acknowledges the identification of the risen Jesus with the hungry and the homeless, the sick and the diseased, the immigrant and the imprisoned, its efficacy is limited by its denial of the gospel's referent of the text of a new humanity.

The apostle Paul acknowledges the empirical reality of this text in 2 Corinthians 3:2–3, where he identifies the Corinthian Christians as a "letter." "You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all human beings, and thereby made visible that you are a letter of Christ being ministered to by us, not written with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on stone tablets but on the physical tablets of the heart." The old covenant was inscribed on stone tablets and issued to Moses in an ambiance of glory for transmission to the people of Israel. Its splendor, however, which was reflected in the face of Moses, was temporary; and to conceal its fading character Moses covered his face with a veil. The new covenant, in contrast, is a text inscribed on the tablets of the human heart. Accordingly, it is a text within a text, and insofar as it is inscribed on the tablets of the human heart, it may remain concealed and invisible. The text of the new covenant becomes legible only when it is expressed externally through the text of the physical body in terms of deeds and words. The Word, God's speech activity, must become flesh. Incarnation is the medium of the textuality that discloses the ontological reality of the new moral order that was constituted by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Those who embody the new humanity are letters of God addressed to the world. They are texts that make the reality of the new creation readable; they are texts that glow with an ambiance of glory. To quote Paul again: "Now if the ministry of death, chiseled in letters on stone tablets, came in glory so that the people of Israel could not gaze at Moses' face because of the glory of his face, a glory now set

[32] Niebuhr, *Resurrection and Historical Reason*, 175.

aside, how much more will the ministry of the Spirit come in glory? . . . What once had glory has lost its glory because of the greater glory" (2 Cor. 3:7–8, 10). But where is that "greater glory"? If the text of the new covenant supposedly manifests itself with a greater glory than that of the old covenant, in what ways does it make that glory visible? How is it disclosed in the lives of human beings? Somehow the effects of participation in the new creation must shimmer in and through the lifestyle of those who are "life-giving spirits." That kind of lifestyle would radiate the supremacy of life in the face of all the forms and forces of death that tend to dominate the sociocultural order. That kind of lifestyle would reflect an increasing diminishment of alienation and, conversely, a flowering reconciliation with God and fellow human beings. That kind of lifestyle would exhibit a freedom that struggles to remain outside the vicious cycle of exchanging rejection for rejection, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. That kind of lifestyle would display the integrity of the five wise virgins of Jesus' parable, who expressed their identity of being light bearers by their vocational activity of bearing light. That kind of lifestyle would reveal a dedication to the subversion of any and every pollution system that divides the world into the realms of the clean and the unclean, and disadvantages and dehumanizes those who are identified as the unclean. Accordingly, that lifestyle would be engaged in service and ministry to, with, and for all humankind, but always out of the freedom and unobligedness of participating in the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Involvement in this kind of a lifestyle is not a journey into diminishment but an odyssey into the fullness of life and, simultaneously, a transfiguration into the glory of God. As Irenaeus articulated it, "The glory of God is the human being fully alive." Yet as the Apostle reminds the Corinthians,

> We have this treasure in clay pots, so that it may be made clear that the immensity of power belongs to God and does not come from us. Oppressed in every way but not crushed, uncertain but not despairing, persecuted but not abandoned, thrown down but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus is made *visible* in our bodies. (2 Cor. 4:7–10)

A Plethora of Epiphanies: Christology in the Pastoral Letters

by JOUETTE M. BASSLER

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I AM OFTEN asked, and frequently ask myself, some variant of the question "What is a nice woman like you doing working in a place like the Pastoral Letters?" First and Second Timothy, together with Titus, are, after all, not noted for their rhetorical power or theological depth, and they are certainly not supportive of women in my role as teacher; they are, in fact, not supportive of women in any roles except those of submissive wife and bearer of children.[1] They have occupied a relatively marginal place in Pauline scholarship, only rarely attracting serious attention, and then usually over predictable issues. Yet these documents exert, I must confess, a strange fascination for me. On the one hand, their pseudonymity (which I assume) raises interesting questions about their origin, their purpose, and their relationship to each other and to the undisputed letters in the Pauline corpus. Their content raises questions about the social location of the intended audience, the identity of the opponents, the circumstances that evoked this particular epistolary response, and—not least—the nature of it. On the other hand, my own personal response to the social agenda imparted to the church by these documents is so negative that it has been difficult to engage them fairly. If I am to respond convincingly to them, I need to understand the author's context and his theology. I need to understand the logic and presuppositions of his argument, and I need to discern the interconnectedness of things within his discourse. One cannot effectively critique what one does not understand. What follows, then, is an exercise in understanding one critical aspect of these letters: their Christology.

Such an exercise presupposes, of course, a modicum of theological and

[1] The women mentioned in 1 Timothy 3:11 *may* be women deacons, but the text is very cryptic and is open to other interpretations as well; see Jennifer H. Stiefel, "Women Deacons in 1 Timothy: A Linguistic and Literary Look at 'Women Likewise . . . ,' " *New Testament Studies* 41 (1995):442–57. Older women are encouraged to teach other women (Titus 2:3–5), but what they teach is submission!

rhetorical skill on the part of the author of these letters, and scholars have not always been willing to grant that. Indeed, the letters have been dismissed in the not-too-distant past as "a miscellaneous collection of material" with "no unifying theme . . . no development of thought."[2] Recently, though, some scholars have begun to recognize in the author a theologian of some skill and subtlety. They do not, to be sure, tend to regard him as Paul's equal, but neither do they pillory him as an inept collector of diverse materials. Frances Young expresses an opinion that is emerging with some frequency in these circles: "These epistles may not make sense as Pauline theology, but they do have a theology of their own."[3] Lewis R. Donelson concurs: "The author has a cogent and consistent theological system."[4] Moreover, "it is time," says Young, "to reassess the theological material and to reconsider its function in the argument of the whole."[5] It is on this suggestion of a cogent and consistent theological system and in response to this call for a reconsideration of its function that I present the following thesis: The epiphany Christology of these letters functions as the foundation of a pervasive epiphanic pattern that touches almost the whole of the letters' contents.

My argument rests on several presuppositions that should be laid out clearly at the outset. I will not argue these points. Though others have differing opinions on them, I have not yet encountered any compelling evidence to the contrary, and for the purposes of this discussion I simply mention them as my position on these issues. I presuppose that the author and addressees of these letters are pseudonymous, that all three letters were written by the same author and reflect the same historical circumstances, that they circulated together as a "minicorpus" from the beginning, and that one can therefore speak of the theological system of the corpus as a whole.

I. An Epiphany Overview

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, when serious questions began to be raised about the Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Letters, much of the discussion of their Christology has been conducted explicitly or implicitly in an apologetic or polemical mode, defined and fueled by the intense debate over authorship that ensued. Those holding to Pauline authorship saw the Christology of the Pastorals as an obvious extension of the

[2] A. T. Hanson, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 42; see also E. Lohse, *Die Entstehung des Neuen Testaments* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1972), 63–64.

[3] *The Theology of the Pastoral Letters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 73.

[4] *Pseudepigraphy and Ethical Argument in the Pastoral Epistles* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1986), 66.

[5] Young, *Theology*, 48.

Christology of the homologoumena, tempered, of course, by the impact of time and experience on the aging apostle, but recognizably Pauline. J. N. D. Kelly, for example, points to a veritable "mass of convincingly Pauline material" in these letters as evidence that they are "in substance and spirit" Paul's own work.[6] Those regarding the letters as pseudonymous have used the same Pauline yardstick but point to what they see as the Pastorals' obvious inferiority vis-à-vis the apostle's theology as confirmation of their non-Pauline character. "The writer's ideas," says Fred D. Gealy, "are more practical than profound. Unlike Paul, he does not himself rise to lyrical heights of religious expression."[7] Like so many commentators of this period, Gealy then defines the Pastorals' theology by listing the differences between Paul and "Paul," with the authentic letters establishing the categories and the criteria. As long as Pauline authorship was the issue or the assumption, appreciation for the author's distinctive Christology was difficult to achieve.

Though one can hardly speak even now of a prevailing consensus on the authorship question, some recent investigations of the letters' Christology have moved beyond the agenda established by that debate. Assuming, but not defending, the letters' pseudonymity, some scholars have begun to explore the Christology of these letters on its own terms and not in terms of its relationship to Paul's thought. Some interesting observations are resulting from this, particularly regarding the significance of the "epiphany" language found in these letters.

As is well known, in the Pastoral Letters, Jesus' return at the end of the age to judge the world is consistently described as an ἐπιφάνεια, not, as in the rest of the New Testament, as a παρουσία: "I charge you to keep the commandment without spot or blame until the ἐπιφάνεια of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about at the right time" (1 Tim. 6:14–15); "For the grace of God has appeared ... training us ... to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the ἐπιφάνεια of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). The noun ἐπιφάνεια is found in only one place in the New Testament outside the Pastorals: in 2 Thessalonians 2:8, as part of a pleonastic expression describing the second coming (ἡ ἐπιφάνεια τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ, NRSV: "the manifestation of his coming"). The verb ἐπιφαίνω appears *nowhere* else in the

[6] *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles: I Timothy, II Timothy, Titus* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 34; see also Gordon D. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, rev. ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988), 16.

[7] *The First and Second Epistles to Timothy and the Epistle to Titus* (New York: Abingdon, 1955), 364.

New Testament in connection with this event.[8] Thus, although describing the second coming as an "epiphany" is not absolutely unique to the Pastoral Letters, it is not common outside those letters, and only in them is this event presented purely and simply and repeatedly as an ἐπιφάνεια. This is striking and, one suspects, significant.

Even more striking, and probably more significant, is the fact that the first coming of Jesus is also called an ἐπιφάνεια:

> Join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, but it has now been revealed through the appearing [ἐπιφάνεια] of our Savior Christ Jesus who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. (2 Tim. 1:8a–10)

The author of these letters, but no one else in the New Testament canon, uses the same Greek noun, ἐπιφάνεια (and the related verb ἐπιφαίνω), to refer both to the past event of Jesus' first coming and to the future event of his second coming. What is the significance and function of this distinctive terminology?

The two epiphanies do not define a process—for example, from lowliness to exaltation.[9] Instead, each reveals a previously hidden divine reality. The first, however, is not a revelation of the preexistent Christ or a revelation through Christ of God but a very specific revelation of God's saving purpose and grace (2 Tim. 1:9–10), God's goodness and lovingkindness (Titus 3:4). This is important and sometimes overlooked in discussions of this topic. At least when applied to Jesus' first coming, the epiphany language does not refer primarily to a revelation or manifestation of Christ but to the revelation, through the Christ event, of a reality about God. This does not mean that we should not speak of an epiphany Christology,[10] but that when used of the Pastorals, we must understand it to refer primarily to Christ as the vehicle, and not the content, of the epiphany. Moreover, in the first epiphany the

[8] Outside the Pastorals, the verb ἐπιφαίνω is used only in Luke 1:79 and Acts 27:20, and in these texts, it refers to quite different events. The lexeme φανερόω appears much more frequently in the New Testament, but without the special nuance of the prefixed form (see below).

[9] So Victor Hasler, "Epiphanie und Christologie in den Pastoralbriefen," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 33 (1977):200.

[10] Hans Windisch comes close to this conclusion: "von einer Epiphanie-Christologie in den Past, nur mit grossen Einschränkungen gesprochen werden darf" ("Zur Christologie der Pastoralbriefe," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 34 [1935]:227).

entire Christ event—birth, life, death, resurrection, bestowal of the Holy Spirit—is compressed into a single revelatory moment (that seems, at least, to be the import of 2 Timothy 1:10, which describes the effect of this "epiphany" as abolishing death and bringing life and immortality to light),[11] and this moment is presented in isolation, not as part of God's past salvific activity. This epiphany—and the plan of salvation that it reveals—is not presented, for example, as the climax of a covenant, whether with Abraham or with Moses. It is not interpreted in terms of the fulfillment of earlier promises to Israel;[12] it is not linked with earlier prophecies to Israel;[13] and it is not interpreted in terms of earlier saving interventions such as the exodus or the return from exile or the Maccabean revolt. In short, these letters do not view the Christ event as part of a salvation-historical scheme, the ongoing historical drama of God's saving actions. When the historical Christ event is presented as an ἐπιφάνεια, the understanding seems to be that it opens a window on, or provides a glimpse of, an eternal, transcendent reality. It reveals God's saving purpose and grace, but there is no obvious sense that this purpose has been unfolding through history; it has simply existed from eternity.

The second epiphany reveals the eschatological glory of Jesus when he returns as judge of the living and the dead to consummate God's saving purpose (Titus 2:13). When the parousia is thus presented as an ἐπιφάνεια, the emphasis shifts from apocalyptic judgment of human persons and empires to the revelation of divine reality. Epiphany language thus seems to promote a static picture of a curtain going up twice to reveal tableaux of the divine reality, but not a live drama. This perception is flawed, however, in at least two significant ways.

First, Dieter Lührmann, in his careful 1971 study of ἐπιφάνεια, has demonstrated that in the Hellenistic age this had become a fixed term for the intervention of a god or goddess on behalf of his or her devotees.[14] In the writings of this period, ἐπιφάνεια did not refer simply to an "epiphany" in

[11] See Lorenz Oberlinner, "Die 'Epiphaneia' des Heilswillens Gottes in Christus Jesus: Zur Grundstruktur der Christologie der Pastoralbriefe," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 71 (1980):202–3.

[12] The only promises mentioned in these letters are promises made "before the ages began" in the eternal will of God (Titus 1:2).

[13] The prophecies referred to in 1 Timothy 1:18 and 4:14 are Christian prophecies associated with Timothy's ordination. They do not suggest the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies (see Jürgen Roloff, *Der erste Brief an Timotheus* [Zurich: Benziger Verlag; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1988], 101–2).

[14] "Epiphaneia: Zur Bedeutungsgeschichte eines griechischen Wortes," in *Tradition und Glaube: Das Frühe Christentum in seiner Umwelt: Festgabe für Karl Georg Kuhn zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. G. Jeremias, H.-W. Kuhn, and H. Stegemann (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971), 185–99.

the contemporary sense of the word, that is, a sudden revelation of divinity (with the emphasis on *revelation* per se). Instead, though revelation remains a component of the event, the emphasis was on the concept of a helpful *intervention* ("*helfendes Eingreifen*") by the deity on behalf of that deity's worshipers, often in military conflict but in other concrete ways as well. Lührmann found this same association with a "saving intervention" present in the Pastoral Letters and signaled with particular clarity by the title "Savior" that is applied to both God and Christ with striking frequency in these letters.[15] Thus, he insists, the epiphany language of the Pastoral Letters signals not merely a revelation but also an intervention that has salvific results. We will need to explore later the nature of that saving intervention, but it promises to augment the more static concept of revelation.

Second, the two christological epiphanies are part of a more comprehensive concept. This does not mean—as we have seen—that they are situated within a broad historical vision of God's prior saving actions. Rather, the period between these two epiphanies is filled with a whole series of epiphanic moments, which relieve the otherwise static picture and indeed suggest the nature and locale of the active intervention that is constitutive of ἐπιφάνεια.

Some hints about the complexity of the development and deployment of the epiphany concept in these letters appeared in a 1935 article by Hans Windisch.[16] Windisch agreed that the epiphany concept in the Pastorals had two primary components. He identified the first, however, with the revelation of God's plan of salvation through Christian proclamation and teaching, which then worked itself out through Christian renewal in baptism and through the work of the Holy Spirit. The second component was the future double appearance of the great God and of our Savior Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13). Windisch did *not* regard the historical appearance of Jesus as an epiphany, and in that he was mistaken.[17] His recognition that Christian proclamation and teaching are significant components of the Pastorals' epiphany scheme was, however, an important one. Windisch did not follow through on this insight, though, and instead went on to promote the παῖς

[15] Ten of the twenty-four occurrences of the title "Savior" in the New Testament are found in the Pastoral Letters: 1 Timothy 1:1; 2:3; 4:10; 2 Timothy 1:10; Titus 1:3, 4; 2:10, 13; 3:4, 6. See Paul Wendland, "ΣΩΤΗΡ: Eine religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 5 (1904):335–53.

[16] "Zur Christologie," 213–38.

[17] Windisch discounted 2 Timothy 1:10 as good evidence for this since the focus in this verse is on the activity and efficacy of the Resurrected One, not the Incarnate One (ibid., 224), but that introduces a distinction foreign to these letters. The Resurrected One is the Incarnate One and the work of the resurrection is of a piece with the incarnation (1 Tim. 3:16; 2 Tim. 2:8).

θεοῦ Christology that he saw in several hymnic and liturgical fragments in the letters.

Lorenz Oberlinner, on the other hand, not only identified Jesus' historical appearance as an epiphany, he saw this as the key to the letters' Christology: the decisive manifestation in Christ of God's will to save. He also recognized—as Windisch did—the dynamic quality of the epiphany concept in these letters. It defines not just a single point (Jesus' appearance in judgment) nor even two discrete points (incarnation and parousia). The epiphany concept encompasses the totality of the helping intervention of God in Christ and therefore includes not only the initial revelation, through the Christ event, of God's will and plan to save but also (as Windisch had shown) the ongoing revelation in and through the proclamation of the gospel and the final revelation of salvation itself at the parousia. Oberlinner then demonstrated how the traditional christological materials—the hymns and liturgical fragments scattered throughout these letters—have been reinterpreted in light of this epiphany "*Grundstruktur*."[18] This was a decisive step in the investigation of the concept, for it shows that ἐπιφάνεια controls the meaning of other material and not the other way around.[19] Oberlinner does not, however, explore how the rest of the material in these letters—and there is a lot of it—might fit into, or be interpreted by, the epiphany schema.

Lewis Donelson has approached the Christology of the letters from the broadest perspective, looking for the logical connections among the ethical statements, christological statements, and "other dicta" (which includes the rest of the material in these letters).[20] His work is filled with insightful observations, but he is primarily interested in the inner logic of the author's ethical system and the role pseudonymity plays in it, so he focuses on the deductive and inductive logic that binds the statements together, and many good theological insights get lost in his technical discussion. There remains work to be done on a different level, namely, clarifying the connections between the epiphany Christology of these letters and other activities described in them.

This is what I propose to outline here: the connections between the epiphany Christology and other epiphanic aspects of the letters, in the hope of showing with greater clarity than has heretofore emerged the function (or *a*

[18] "Heilswillens Gottes," 192–213.

[19] See also Hasler, "Epiphanie," 205. Others, however, disagree: See, e.g., Hejne Simonsen, "Christologische Traditionselemente in den Pastoralbriefen," in *Die paulinische Literatur und Theologie*, ed. Sigfred Pedersen (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1980), 61.

[20] *Pseudepigraphy*, 129–54.

function) of this Christology within these letters. To be more precise, it seems clear that the second coming, though called an epiphany, has essentially the same function in these letters as it does—under another name—in other New Testament documents, namely, to motivate the ethical behavior prescribed in these letters.[21] But how does the first coming, with its distinctive presentation as a manifestation of God's saving will and grace, function in these letters? Why does the author of these letters emphasize precisely *this* concept (incarnation as epiphany), which did not enhance the fiction of Pauline authorship and indeed somewhat undermined it, since epiphany Christology is not found in this form in Paul's undisputed letters? How does this peculiar epiphany scheme enhance the author's message? It serves, of course, as a warrant for the message of God's saving grace. God's nature as a saving God and the extent and nature of God's plan of salvation are revealed in the Christ event. Is it possible, though, to identify a connection between this epiphany concept and other aspects of the letters similar to the connection between, say, the christological hymn of Philippians 2:6–11 and the surrounding exhortations, or between the christological emphases of 1 Corinthians 1:18–25 and Paul's description of the church and himself as weak and despised? Let us review the evidence, starting with the first epiphany.

II. The First Epiphany

God's gracious nature, saving will, and eternal plan of redemption are definitively revealed through the incarnation, that is, through Jesus' earthly life viewed as a whole. This is most clearly indicated in 2 Timothy 1:9–10, the text I cited earlier. Like so many passages in these letters, this one seems to bear in its measured cadences the imprint of a liturgical origin; but that does not mean it cannot also convey accurately the author's views. In fact, because the basic idea expressed here is echoed in so many places in these letters (a point I will argue below), the fragment seems to be an important statement of the author's christological perspective. "[God] saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

The basic revelatory pattern here is a familiar one from other letters in the

[21] See Donelson, *Pseudepigraphy*, 146–52.

Pauline corpus: a mystery present from eternity is now revealed.[22] But unlike these other earlier texts, it is not the mystery of the inclusion of the Gentiles that is revealed (cf. Col. 1:26; Eph. 3:5–12) or God's mysterious wisdom hidden from the world in the cross (1 Cor. 2:6–10). Instead, it is God's fundamental salvific purpose and saving grace that are revealed through the public event of the "appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ." In Titus 2:11 and 3:4, the language is somewhat more oblique, but the message is no less clear: "For the *grace of God* has appeared [ἐπεφάνη], bringing salvation to all," and "when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared [ἐπεφάνη], he saved us according to his mercy."[23]

What is striking about these passages is that Jesus is not presented as the agent of God's plan, that is, as the one through whose death and resurrection God's saving will was implemented, but as the revealer of it. The author, by citing traditional material, certainly knows and affirms the message of the efficacy of Christ's death (1 Tim. 3:16), but the emphasis here is on Christ's role as revealer. In the formulations in Titus, Christ even disappears behind the revelation. That is, Christ himself is not mentioned, only that which is manifested by his "appearing": God's grace and goodness and loving-kindness.

This emphasis on the revelatory aspect of the Christ event can also be seen in a passage that does not speak directly of revelation at all, 1 Timothy 2:5–6:

> For there is one God;
> there is also one mediator between God and humankind;
> Christ Jesus, himself human,
> who gave himself as a ransom for all.

The christological content of this fragment is striking, but the concept of Christ as mediator is not reflected anywhere else in these letters. The insistence on the humanity of Christ may be directed at some level against the docetic Christology of the opposing teachers—though this is speculative since we do not have direct evidence of their Christology. It may also be reinforced by the reference to Jesus' Davidic descent in 2 Timothy 2:8. In 1 Timothy, however, the passage is cited as a warrant for the author's argument in 2:1–7, and Jesus' humanity is not in any way relevant to that argument. Thus, this point—though of interest to later theologians—cannot reflect the author's primary interest in the passage. The final line of the fragment, "who gave

[22] See Nils A. Dahl, "Form-Critical Observations on Early Christian Preaching," in *Jesus in the Memory of the Early Church* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1976), 30–36.

[23] On the interpretation of these two verses in terms of the incarnation, see J. D. Quinn, *The Letter to Titus* (New York: Doubleday, 1990), 212.

himself as a ransom for all," contains the familiar christological motif of Jesus' self-giving (see Titus 2:14; 1 Tim. 1:15; Mark 10:45; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 5:2). The emphasis on the universal object of this self-giving ("ransom *for all*") is characteristic of these letters,[24] and, more to the point, it picks up the language of verses 3–4, for which this fragment serves as an immediate warrant: "This is right and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." Surely, then, it is this statement about Jesus giving himself as a ransom for all that accounts for the author's interest in the fragment and led to its incorporation at this point in the text: it reinforces and confirms the author's statement about God's universal salvific will.[25]

For understanding the author's development of the epiphany theme, however, the comment he has appended to the fragment is even more significant than the fragment itself: τὸ μαρτύριον καιροῖς ἰδίοις.[26] This phrase is variously translated by such phrases as "this was attested at the right time" (NRSV), which raises the question "by whom?" and "this was the testimony at the proper time" (NAB), which raises the question "what constitutes the testimony?" The variety of translations suggests the inherent ambiguity of the phrase: Who or what does the attesting, and what is attested?[27] The phrase is indeed terse but not completely enigmatic. It probably refers to Jesus' act of self-giving on behalf of all that is described in the preceding verse. This is the testimony to God's desire to save all (v. 3) and this testimony occurred at the proper time (καιροῖς ἰδίοις), a phrase that clearly refers in these letters to the time determined by God (see 1 Tim. 6:15; Titus 1:3). Thus construed, and as Hasler notes, the expression of verse 6b belongs to the linguistic field of the revelatory concept.[28]

This clause thus provides a dramatic reinterpretation of the significance of

[24] See, e.g., 1 Timothy 4:10; Titus 2:11.

[25] Oberlinner suggests that it was the author of these letters who added the self-giving formula of verse 6a to the one-God acclamation of verse 5 and that he did so in order to emphasize that the ultimate significance of Jesus' death lies in the fact that it reveals God's saving will ("Heilswillens Gottes," 203–5). The same point concerning the significance of Jesus' death emerges, though, with the usual assumption that verses 5–6a were already a unified piece of tradition when the author incorporated them into his argument. See also Klaus Wengst, *Christologische Formeln und Lieder des Urchristentums*, 2d ed. (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlag, 1972), 72–73.

[26] It has been suggested that these words were also part of the quoted fragment (see, e.g., Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972], 41), and they are printed as such in the 26th and 27th editions of *Novum Testamentum Graece*. The words καιροῖς ἰδίοις, however, reflect the author's vocabulary (see 1 Tim. 6:15; Titus 1:3), and the thought of verse 6b is continued seamlessly in verse 7.

[27] Hanson, e.g., calls it "very obscure" (*Pastoral Epistles*, 69).

[28] Hasler, "Epiphanie," 205.

Jesus' death. His death not only had "ransoming" power, as the tradition confirms, but it also—and perhaps especially—had testamentary power, as this author affirms. That is, Jesus' self-giving death witnessed to, and thus revealed, God's saving will and plan at the time that God decreed. As an important corollary to this, the author notes elsewhere that the God whose saving will and plan is thus revealed "is faithful . . . and cannot deny himself" (2 Tim. 2:13). That is, the Christ event (understood broadly) attests to God's saving nature and plan, and the author affirms God's fidelity to that nature and plan.

This epiphany was also, of course, a saving intervention. It abolished death (2 Tim. 1:10) and introduced a mediator whose own death functions as a ransom for all (1 Tim. 2:5–6).

III. The Next Epiphany

Because the author understands the first epiphany to be not simply a revelation of Christ himself, or of God, but a revelation of God's saving will, this revelation is not limited to the Christ event itself. As Windisch and others have recognized, these letters also affirm that this saving will is revealed through proclamation—first Paul's and then the church's.[29] That is, like the Christ event, proclamation is an epiphanic event (as this author understands the concept): it reveals and actualizes God's will to save. This is already indicated in 1 Timothy 2:7, the verse that follows immediately after the interpretation of Christ's death as a testamentary, that is, a revelatory, event: "for this [that is, for testimony to God's saving will] I was appointed a herald and an apostle . . . , a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth."[30] Paul's appointment was for the purpose of continuing the testimony to, and thus the revelation of, God's saving will through the proclamation of the gospel.

The identification of both the Christ event and the proclamation of it as successive revelatory events is explicit in 2 Timothy 1:9b–10. I have cited the text twice, but it is easy to miss the striking revelatory language of this passage: "This grace was given to us [by God] in Christ Jesus before the ages began, but it has now been revealed [φανερωθεῖσαν] through the appearing

[29] Windisch, "Zur Christologie," 227; Hasler, "Epiphanie," 202; Donelson, *Pseudepigraphy*, 134.

[30] Some argue that verse 6b refers only to Paul's testimony to the Christ event, yielding the translation found in the NRSV: "This was attested at the right time"—i.e., by Paul. George W. Knight is probably correct, though, when he says, "The solution is probably to be found in a both-and rather than an either-or understanding," that is, the testimony mentioned in verse 6b refers both to the Christ event and to Paul's proclamation (*Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992], 124).

[διὰ τῆς ἐπιφανείας] of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light [φωτίσαντος] through the gospel." Two things are described here in identical ways. The first event, the Christ event, reveals God's saving nature and grace. The participle φανερωθεῖσαν and the noun ἐπιφάνεια emphasize the epiphanic character of this event. The second event, the proclamation of the gospel, again brings to light this salvation (that is, life and immortality). A different word is used here—φωτίζειν, not φανεροῦν—but it too belongs to the vocabulary of revelation.[31] The appearing of Christ and the proclamation of the gospel both have the same revelatory function and point to the same transcendent truth—salvation as the eternal purpose and gift of God.

In Titus 1:2–3 the revelation through the gospel is described in more detail: ". . . in the hope of eternal life that God, who never lies, promised before the ages began—in due time he revealed his word through the proclamation with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior." In many ways this passage is parallel to 2 Timothy 1:9–10, with one significant difference. In 2 Timothy the saving grace of God, given before the ages began (πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων) is revealed (φανερωθεῖσαν) through the incarnation. Here the promise of salvation made before the ages began (πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων) is revealed (ἐφανέρωσεν) through the proclamation entrusted to Paul.[32] This passage thus confirms that the Christ event and proclamation are construed by this author as parallel epiphanic events. This has a significant corollary: As long as the revelatory aspect of the Christ event is emphasized, that event and the proclamation of it are functionally equivalent.[33]

IV. Other Epiphanic Events

This recognition is very helpful, as far as it goes, but I think the influence of this epiphany pattern is even more extensive. If, for example, the proclamation of the gospel is an extension of, or repetition of, the epiphany of the Christ event, the proclaimers become themselves agents of epiphany. Then, just as it is important to affirm God's faithfulness in the context of the first epiphany, it is also important in the context of the next one to affirm the faithfulness of these agents. Paul, of course, is the first of these agents: "I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he judged me faithful and appointed me to his service" (1 Tim. 1:12). Paul is also

[31] Cf. 1 Corinthians 4:5, where φωτίζειν and φανεροῦν are clearly synonymous.

[32] Philip H. Towner correctly identifies the λόγος (word) of v. 3 as the promise of eternal life mentioned in v. 2 (*1–2 Timothy and Titus* [Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1994], 220–21).

[33] See also Hasler, "Epiphanie," 205; Oberlinner, "Heilswillens Gottes," 206.

instructed to entrust the gospel to other "faithful people" who will serve as agents after him (2 Tim. 2:2). More importantly, the letters insist that Paul's role as "herald, apostle, and teacher" (1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11) was itself part of God's preexistent-but-now-revealed plan of salvation (2 Tim. 1:9). The author even affirms that Paul's life—that is, his conversion—reveals God's saving will: "The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience, making me an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life" (1 Tim. 1:15–16). The Greek word used here is ἐνδείξηται, but it has the same semantic range as ἐπιφάνειν and should also be considered part of the epiphany vocabulary of these letters. Thus Paul is not only the proclaimer—by God's plan, command, and will—of the gospel that reveals God's saving will. His dramatic conversion also has an epiphanic quality insofar as it reveals, not simply to him but especially to others, God's saving grace embodied in the utmost patience (μακροθυμία) of Christ.

The words and lives of other church leaders are also an important aspect of the wider epiphany scheme. They are agents of epiphany insofar as they proclaim—and thus make manifest—God's saving intent. Their behavior, their instructions, and their exhortations, however, also contribute to the "epiphany," for "epiphany," as Lührmann has demonstrated, includes not only revelation but also the active component of saving intervention. We need to consider what shape "saving intervention" can—and must—take.

It is necessary at this point to note that for this author salvation is both gift and achievement.[34] That is, the author retains a strong Pauline message of grace poured out "not because of any works of righteousness that we had done" (Titus 3:5). At the same time, though, the believer attains salvation by responding in obedience through very specific and prescribed patterns of behavior. Both gift and attainment are necessary, and saving intervention, to be effectively salvific, should address both spheres of the salvation process. We have seen that the first epiphany, the Christ event, is saving intervention insofar as it alters the cosmic order to effect grace. The author also affirms that this event intervenes in the arena of human behavior: "The grace of God," says the author, the grace that is the basic content and gift of the revelation, "has appeared, bringing salvation to all and training us to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly" (Titus 2:11–12). This suggests that the first epiphany provides "saving intervention" in two ways: it provides

[34] See Young, *Theology*, 57.

the gift of a ransom and the training necessary for the attainment of saving virtue. That statement ("grace . . . trains us") is too abstract, though, to provide by itself much insight into the way the author understands this epiphanic "training" to occur. The author does not appeal with any regularity to the Holy Spirit as the vehicle of this training, though it is perhaps presupposed,[35] and Christ himself does not seem to remain actively present between the two epiphanies.[36] What these letters do stress, however, is the moral teaching and upright behavior of church leaders, which, I suggest, constitute in this author's mind a second-level epiphanic intervention. In cooperation with the Holy Spirit and as agents of the pedagogical function of divine grace, church leaders not only make present the epiphany of the incarnation through their proclamation; through their teaching and exhortation they also provide the ethical information and concrete intervention that enables the moral progress that brings salvation; and through their lives they model that moral progress (1 Tim. 4:15–16).

There is one final but, I think, highly significant aspect of the epiphany concept that percolates through these letters. I have shown that the primary components of ἐπιφάνεια, as this author understands it, are (1) the revelation of God's saving intent and grace through the Christ event and through Christian proclamation and (2) the active intervention that takes place on one level through the soteriological consequences of Christ's incarnation, death, and resurrection and, on another level, through the teaching, exhortation, and example of faithful church leaders. Once that is established, the conclusion seems near at hand that these pseudonymous letters themselves are epiphanic vehicles.

The Christ event reveals God's eternal saving purpose and grace, the proclamation reveals God's reliable promise of eternal life, and the letters reveal God's "sure" plan of salvation. In fact, this epistolary epiphany is emphasized by the formulaic phrase πιστὸς ὁ λόγος (NRSV: "The saying is sure"), which appears five times in these letters to attest to the reliability of the revelation: "Christ came into the world to save sinners: faithful/reliable is the word!" (1 Tim. 1:15). "A woman will be saved through childbearing,

[35] Only in Titus 3:5 is the Holy Spirit mentioned as the "divine power to effect those things that lead to salvation" (Young, *Theology*, 69); cf. 1 Timothy 4:1, where the Spirit is linked with prophecy, and 2 Timothy 1:14, where the author links the Spirit with the work of the ordained church leader (see also 2 Tim. 1:6).

[36] Donelson insists that the epiphany Christology relegates Jesus "to two appearances, one in the past and one in the future, with no present contact" (*Pseudepigraphy*, 153). This seems confirmed by J. A. Allan's study showing that the "in Christ" formula in these letters does not retain the Pauline sense of mystical identification with Christ ("The 'In Christ' Formula in the Pastoral Epistles," *New Testament Studies* 10 [1963]:115–21).

provided they continue in faith and love: faithful/reliable is the word!" (1 Tim. 3:1).[37] "Godliness . . . holds promise for both the present life and the life to come: faithful/reliable is the word!" (1 Tim. 4:8). "If we have died with him, we will also live with him: faithful/reliable is the word!" (2 Tim. 2:11). "God has poured out on us the Holy Spirit, so that having been justified by grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life: faithful/reliable is the word!" (Titus 3:8). Moreover, the letters serve as vehicles of intervention, for just as the grace revealed in the Christ event trains us to lead the godly lives that result in salvation, and the exhortations and teaching of the church leaders do the same, so too the letters are filled with instructions on the moral life that is necessary to attain salvation.

By presenting the Christ event as an event that reveals God's saving will and pedagogical grace, the author allows a number of other things to be understood as epiphanic and thus to be linked functionally to the Christ event. Proclamation, Paul's conversion, the lives of church leaders, and the letters themselves all reveal—as the Christ event did—God's saving plan. And if the Christ event was the cosmic intervention that abolished death and redeemed us from iniquity, it is particularly through these church leaders and these letters that quotidian intervention occurs in the form of tutelage in the behavior that yields salvation.

None of these individual points is antithetical to views found in Paul's own letters, but the epiphany framework is not present there to interpret and reinforce them, and the very richness of Paul's thought dilutes their impact. The fox, it has been said, knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing.[38] The author of these letters is a hedgehog to Paul's more christologically diverse fox, and he knows one big thing: God's saving grace has been manifested in Christ, through the gospel, in Paul's life, in the words and deeds of the ordained clergy, and through these letters themselves. Outside of this structure lie speculation and disaster; within it, truth and salvation.

This is a cogent and consistent theological system, but there are obvious dangers here. Presenting the Christ event and the proclamation and exhortation of church leaders as functionally equivalent reinforces the clerical hierarchy that is evident elsewhere in these letters.[39] Suggesting that the

[37] Though all recent English translations and most recent commentaries associate the phrase "Faithful is the word" with the statement about the office of bishop that follows, the phrase is used elsewhere in these letters always to emphasize a statement about salvation. That suggests that it should be linked, as here, with the comment on women's salvation in 2:15 (see Dibelius and Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 51).

[38] The saying is attributed to various people, the earliest being Archilochus, a seventh-century B.C.E. Athenian.

[39] See Young, *Theology*, 146.

letters themselves stand within the trajectory of epiphanic events reinforces the message projected by their pseudonymity: These are authoritative documents whose messages of salvation and of exclusion from salvation, of submission and silence and subordination, are to be taken with utmost seriousness. By taking these letters into its canon, the church has, of course, confirmed this. What I am suggesting is that the letters themselves contain the seeds of this suggestion, quite apart from the disputed verse about the inspiration of scripture (2 Tim. 3:16). On the other side of the ledger, the pattern also suggests a norm by which to judge the words and deeds of church leaders and even biblical texts: to be truly epiphanic they must reveal, as the Christ event did, that God's saving grace embraces all of humankind.

Health, Disease, and Salvation in African American Experience

by James H. Evans, Jr.

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For many people in the African American community, life in the contemporary world should carry a warning similar to that found on tobacco products. It can be hazardous to your health. The threats to the health of African Americans are deeply rooted in the social structures of Western culture. Those threats are obviously manifested in the ubiquity of advertising for tobacco products and alcoholic beverages in many African American communities. (However, the problem is more deeply rooted than the images of Joe Camel selling cigarettes and a bull selling malt liquor.) The healing and wholeness of black people is obstructed by powerful forces in American society that are difficult to isolate and even more difficult to resist. The tremendous growth in medical technology, scientific advances in treatments, and new discoveries in various medical fields have complicated the issue of what it means to be healthy in our culture. Yet for African Americans the issue of their physical health is inseparable from the ravages of racism upon their humanity. There is a deep suspicion of the medical delivery system among many black people in the United States. This suspicion is rooted in the collective memory of incidents like the infamous Tuskegee experiment. Beginning in the 1930s more than four hundred black men were either infected with syphilis or simply diagnosed and left untreated. The disease was allowed to progress in these men even though effective treatments were readily available. The sole purpose of this experiment was to chart the progress of the disease until the subjects died. This experiment was conducted within the boundaries of the law and was halted in 1972 as a result of public outcry. The horror of the willingness to sacrifice the health and lives of these black men for the sake of advancing medical science is exceeded only by the insult of being consistently denied access to the medical delivery systems. (The historical experience of being denied access to "white only" hospitals during legal segregation has been overlaid with the contemporary experience of being denied quality health care.) The nightmare of the Tuskegee experiment is the backdrop for the persistent rumors that AIDS is the result of a

genocidal plot in which the virus was artificially developed and intentionally introduced into the black population in Africa, the Caribbean, and the United States. It is less important that irrefutable substantiation of this rumor would be difficult to produce and more important that African Americans often feel vulnerable and live in an environment of fear and trepidation. This in and of itself is not healthy.

One of the tasks of ministry is to advance the spiritual health of the Christian community. Ministers are called to be "physicians of the soul." However, for people of African descent one cannot separate the health of the soul from the health of the whole person. The health of the whole person may include but is not the same as the full function of all the biological systems in the physical body. The health of the whole person simply suggests that we are more than flesh and bone; that we are our bodies and more. There are other religious and even Christian groups that harbor their own suspicion and ambivalence toward modern Western medicine (e.g., Christian Scientists). The health problems of black folk, however, are deeply rooted in their inclusion and marginalization within Western culture and societies.

The purpose of this lecture is to address the notion of health in African American experience as a theological problem. By exposing the religious underpinnings of this issue, insight might be provided that will enhance the work of those who minister to African Americans. The basic assumption is that this is not a problem of medical ethics but something much more fundamental. The question of who receives quality medical care in our society is, at heart, a question of who shall be saved? The theological issue here is soteriology. The language of soteriology is almost never used in discussing this issue because that language is associated with narrow theological discussions of sin. When the concept of health is discussed, it is most often juxtaposed with the concept of illness. However, it is my thesis that the concept of health, when referring to black people, is discussed in muted tones and within the narrative framework of a rhetoric of disease.

We will begin with a brief examination of the most animated public discussion of health in recent years: the debate on the Health Security Act proposed in the early 1990s. The truncated character of this debate suggests that the deeper issues remain unaddressed. A conceptual overview of the major scholarly discussions of disease in the field of medical anthropology will provide the context for a brief examination of this concept in the experience of black people in Western cultural systems. It will be important to note how the Bible speaks to the notions of health and disease, before concluding with a proposal for revising our theological understanding of salvation.

I. The Health-Care Debate: More Than a Question of Ethics

In the early 1990s the debate over health care in the United States was initiated by the realization that many of the nation's social problems were actually health problems. Tens of millions of people lacked either the resources to obtain quality medical care or the insurance coverage to guarantee access. While a significant portion (14%) of the national gross product was spent annually on health care, a large percentage of the population found such care beyond its reach. The response to this problem was the introduction of the 1993 Health Security Plan by the President of the United States. The aim of this plan was to guarantee that every American citizen had access to quality medical care. For our purposes, the details of the plan and its relative merits or faults are less important than the way in which the issues were rhetorically framed. The introduction of the notion of universal coverage spawned four major questions, but in the final analysis those questions left unaddressed the fundamental issue.

First, the idea of universal health care presented a political/economic question. "How can we provide universal access to quality health care and at the same time control spiraling costs?" Here the issue is one of determining the principles, in terms of money and power, by which this commodity called health care is allocated. Second, it presented an ethical question. "Is not health care a fundamental good to which each American citizen is entitled?"[1] Or is the case, as former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop put it, that "what's good for each American is not necessarily good for all Americans and what's good for all Americans is not necessarily good for each American"?[2] Here the issue is one of determining whether health care is a fundamental good or a relative good; whether it is primarily an individual possession or a community possession. At this point the public conversation reached its most heated and unproductive stage. It simply pitted individual rights against group responsibilities, and given the propensity toward individualism in U.S. society, the conversation was doomed to futility. Third, the debate on health care in the United States presented a cultural question. "Is not the issue of universal entitlement to health care shaped by a Darwinistic bias toward the survival of the fittest amidst the inexorable forces of the marketplace?"[3] The issue here is whether the idea of universal health-care coverage is antithetical to our

[1] See William F. May, "The Ethical Foundations of Health Care Reform," *The Christian Century* 3, no. 18 (June 1–8, 1994): 573; and Allen D. Verhey, "The Health Security Act: Policy and Story," *The Christian Century* 3, no. 3 (January 26, 1994): 74.

[2] "The Ethics of Health Care: An Interview with C. Everett Koop," *The Christian Century* 3, no. 3 (January 26, 1994): 78.

[3] Verhey, "The Health Security Act," 76.

closely held notions of what it means to be an American. The fourth question emerging out of the debate was a moral one. Quentin D. Young, a physician, offered these reflections on the formation of that moral question in his experience at Cook County Hospital in Chicago:

> Whatever there was, County had. And you see the most disenfranchised, the most impoverished, the wretched of the earth. I was just a middle-class, kind of liberal person, but it became clear that a doctor at County could adopt one of two philosophies—and the staff was about evenly divided along these lines. About half the doctors felt that they were witnessing divine justice, a heavenly—or Darwinian—retribution for evil ways, for excesses in drugs, in booze and everything else. Patients came to the hospital with their breath laden with alcohol, with needle marks on their arms, their babies illegitimate and all the rest. The other half decided that here was the congealed oppression of our society—people whose skin color, economic position, place of birth, family size, you name it—operated to give them a very short stick. When you saw them medically and psychologically in that broken, oppressed state, it was clear that you had to address issues of justice, not just medical treatment. I had to decide which of these value systems was fair and just, and which one I could live with. It seemed to me the first approach is judgmental and harsh and simplistic. Taking the alternative view gave me a shot at being a part of the human race.[4]

Although the cultural and moral questions had the potential to open public discourse to the deeper theological questions involved, that potential was unrealized because of the absence of significant theological analysis and because the underlying question centered around who would take care of the poor. The ethical debate on health care stalled because the problem was subtly recast as a problem of the poor. Since the end of the mass immigration of persons from Europe early in the twentieth century, the poor has become a way of referring to those persons who are marginal to society. While various ethnic groups have and will continue to move in and out of this category, the term the poor has always been, in many important ways, synonymous with black people. As Toni Morrison notes in her brilliant essay *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*, black people have historically been a cipher in our national discourse.[5] It is my contention that within the deep narrative structures and beneath the broad cultural connotations of

[4] "Health Reform and Civic Survival: An Interview with Quentin D. Young," *The Christian Century* 3, no. 31 (November 2, 1994): 1014.

[5] (New York: Random House, 1993).

health in our society lies a rhetoric of disease. Unless this rhetoric is critically examined it will be difficult, if not impossible, to understand the meaning of health in our times and why human wholeness has proven to be so allusive for the Christian community.

II. A Conceptual Overview of Health and Disease

Concern with health and disease has always been a part of human experience. In every age and culture, life and well-being have been threatened by those conditions we call disease. Disease is as old as life itself "because disease is nothing else but life, life under changed circumstances."[6] It is precisely the different ways in which the forces that control those circumstances of human life are construed which result in the major medical theories and the concomitant views of health and disease.

Among the oldest understandings of health and disease is that of ancient Egypt. The Egyptians developed a sophisticated understanding of human biological systems. This knowledge enabled them to develop the embalming processes for which they are famous. Beyond their knowledge of human anatomy, they understood the processes by which matter decomposed. They developed the knowledge to delay or virtually halt the process of decomposition, which they referred to as putrefaction. This notion of putrefaction was the basis of their understanding of health and disease. Disease occurred when nutriments were taken into the body but not absorbed. These nutriments remained in the organs, were warmed by the natural heat of the body, and underwent putrefaction, which resulted in disease.[7] The Egyptian notion of health is the reverse of disease. Health is restored and maintained by ridding the body of these residues. This was the aim of medical practice in ancient Egypt. In spite of the attempts of some scholars to claim the contrary, ancient Egyptian medicine had a rational basis. This rational basis and many of its fundamental ideas were the legacy of ancient Egypt to Greece.[8]

The most influential theory of health and disease in Western culture is derived from the ancient Greeks. As far back as the time of Homer, the Greeks were concerned about physical health. Health was a highly desirable state, and illness was a sign of the presence of evil. Homeric medicine made a distinction between what we would refer to as disease and illness. Illness

[6] Henry E. Sigerist, *A History of Medicine*, 2 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951–61), 1:38.

[7] J. B. deC. M. Saunders, *The Transitions from Ancient Egyptian to Greek Medicine* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1963), 21.

[8] Many of the ideas that made their way into that body of works called the Hippocratic Collection bore striking similarity to medical ideas from ancient Egypt.

basically referred to those threats to health that persons encountered on the battlefield. To be ill was essentially to be wounded. This is why *The Illiad* and other Homeric poems so vividly recount the horrors of war. On the other hand, disease was inflicted by the gods. Zeus, Apollo, and Artemis could show their displeasure by sending infirmity to plague their human subjects.[9] Homeric physicians refused to treat persons with diseases, limiting their practice to those wounded in battle. Following the Homeric period, Greek notions of health and disease fell into two fairly distinct traditions.

The first and dominant tradition developed in the emergent philosophical schools. In this philosophical tradition, health was defined as the state of balance or equilibrium within the body; that is, those substances that make up the body must be maintained in specific proportions and in specific relationship to each other. Disease occurred when this balance or equilibrium was upset. Both Plato and Aristotle discussed health and disease in their attempts to describe the nature of human and cosmic reality. Likewise, Pythagoras, the mathematician, related health and disease to his view of reality. For Pythagoras, all of reality could be explained in numerical terms and existed in an ideal mathematical harmony. Therefore, "harmony, perfect equilibrium, perfect balance, were the goal of the Pythagorean life and also the key to health."[10] Disease occurred when that delicate balance was upset, and the cure was to restore that balance through diet and, surprisingly, music. (Of course, this view of health as balance and disease as imbalance was also characteristic of other ancient cultures, in particular, the pre-Columbian societies of the Maya. Like many other philosophical ideas, the presence in Greek thought of this view of health and disease does not necessarily prove its origin in Greek thought.)

The dominant figure in Greek medical thought was Hippocrates. Although some scholars have argued that he never really existed, it is generally believed that he was born about 460 B.C. on the island of Cos and died about 370 in Thessaly.[11] Hippocrates is credited with bringing the power of unrelenting rationality to the practice of medicine. He is best known for the body of writing that bears his name, the Hippocratic Collection, a massive work that systematically sets forth a significant portion of the medical knowledge of the day. Although it is not likely that Hippocrates wrote the entire corpus, its main ideas are attributed to him. Its major topics are anatomy, physiology, general pathology, therapy, diagnosis, prognosis, surgery, gynecology, obstet-

[9] Sigerist, *A History of Medicine*, 2:20–21.
[10] Ibid., 97.
[11] Albert S. Lyons and R. Joseph Petrucelli II, *Medicine: An Illustrated History* (New York: Abradale, 1978), 207.

rics, mental illness, and ethics. In these treatises, the foundations of modern Western medicine were laid. Hippocrates is also remembered for the Hippocratic Oath[12] and for the method that bears his name. The Hippocratic method refers to the unrelenting rationalism of Greek medical thought. Eschewing religious and magical explanations for illness and disease, this method was built on four major principles: observe all; study the patient rather than the disease; evaluate honestly; and assist nature. With Hippocrates, the physician is the scientist, medicine is the mastery of nature, and health and disease are no longer matters of mystery.

The second and subordinate tradition in Greek medical thought deals more specifically with the persistent notion that disease was connected with the wrath of the gods. When the Homeric physicians would not treat persons with internal diseases, they went to various cultic priests who helped the patients to placate the offended deities. Even during and after the time of Hippocrates, persons sought alternative causal explanations of health and disease. This religious system of medical thought centered around the mythical figure of Asclepius, the Greek god of healing. Numerous elaborate temples and a sophisticated system of medical treatment evolved from the adoration of Asclepius, beginning about the sixth century B.C. This medical system existed side by side with the practice of secular medicine in Greece, and the temples functioned as hospitals. Since the cause of disease in religious medical thought was the wrath of the gods, health could only be restored by appealing to the god of healing. In Asclepian temples, patients underwent a series of treatments, including dietary prescriptions and ritual bathing. However, the most important component of the healing, called incubation, involved creating an atmosphere in which the patient fell into a sleep-like state. During the night the patient would be visited by a priest dressed like the god Asclepius. The priest, along with the temple assistants, would administer a series of treatments that included traditional and secular methods. In this system the cure took place in the patient's dreams. In one important text in

[12] "In summary, this famous testament contains both affirmations and prohibitions. It begins with pledges to the gods and to teachers as well as future students. The prohibitions are against harm to the patient, deadly drugs, abortion, surgery, sexual congress with the patient or his household, and revelation of secrets discovered while ministering to the sick. The duties are to act with purity and holiness. The Oath is the most widely known document associated with the name of Hippocrates. Graduating medical students for centuries have stood to swear to its provisions (either unaltered or with modifications). Yet it is probably not a part of the Hippocratic teachings, was not in all likelihood sworn by physicians on Cos, and is at variance with some of the principles and practices of Hippocrates" (Ibid., 215).

the field of medical history, the following observation is offered:

> Clearly the most important ingredient in the effectiveness of the temple cure was faith. The suppliant's belief in the efficacy of the god was aided by accounts of cures on tablets and probably by oral descriptions given by temple assistants. . . . The religious and spiritual atmosphere was inspiring, and the appearance and ministrations of the priest acting as Asclepios, with his accompanying retinue, were doubtless impressive.[13]

The persistence of religious medicine in ancient Greece was due to some of the dramatic cures accomplished there. However, a contributing factor was the refusal of secular physicians to treat what they thought were hopeless cases. For these patients there was nowhere else to turn for the restoration of the balance that constituted true health.

While Greek ideas of medical practice set the course of Western thought, four other major notions of health and disease were articulated in subsequent centuries. In the *naturalistic view*, health is defined as an appropriate lifespan that ends in natural death. Disease is the interruption of this natural process. The tragedy of disease is not that it may result in death but that it interrupts the natural processes of life. Philosophically speaking, disease is a permanent historical phenomenon that signals the historical existence of humanity. Disease takes a natural and historical course over time, just as human experience does. In this sense, the history of disease is part of human history. Nevertheless, disease is also a sign that nature has been violated. This view is most clearly articulated by the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau. According to Rousseau humanity enjoyed perfect health in its primitive, paradisiacal state. Disease was the result of civilization. However, it was not merely the changed environment that brought about disease but the fact that in civilization, humanity strove for more than was needed for life. This journey from a natural state to the mastery of the universe resulted in pain and disease.[14] In the *religious view*, as we have already noted, disease is associated with divine punishment, sin, and impurity. In the *moral view*, the source of disease is the inner struggle of humanity to control primitive impulses and desires. In Freudian terms, as human beings seek to limit aggression, unfulfilled desires often result in an assortment of maladies. Here disease is the result of sin defined as transgression against internal moral laws rather than

[13] Ibid., 183.

[14] Walther Riese, *The Conception of Disease: Its History, Its Versions and Its Nature* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1953), 11.

against the external rule of the gods or against the laws of nature. In the *social view*, the roots of disease are found in the living conditions of modern industrial life. Health is restored by the provision of adequate sanitation, inoculation, and education. In this case, diseases are social "not because of the social nature of their causes, but because of their social implications."[15]

The Greek system of medicine has continued to define Western medicine at the level of rational thought and scientific practice. Other medical systems have emerged, all with their distinctive economies of health and disease, for example, homeopathy, hydrotherapy, phrenology, osteopathy, chiropractic, and Christian Science. Some of these systems have stood over and against the dominant medical paradigm, while others have almost merged with it. However, discussions of the philosophical connotations of health and disease have lost their centrality in medical thought with the emergence of germ theory and the role of bacteria in the causal explanation of sickness. Yet, the notions of health and disease continue to function in our culture as rhetorical markers that help us to define our reality and to make sense of that which we do not fully understand.

Several important moments in the development of the rhetoric of disease in Western culture merit brief mention here. First is the discovery by Rudolph Virchow (1821–1902), a pioneer in the field of pathology in European medicine, that what we call disease is not one thing but a series of symptoms for which we have no other explanation. Disease is not caused by outside agents acting on the body but is the result of the response or lack thereof by the body to internal or external changes. Disease, in the view of Virchow, "is but a figurative, imaginative and abstract unity . . . it remains *an abstraction or pure thought, stimulated, however, by the concrete reality of observable phenomena and, above all, not denied by them.*"[16] The significance of this insight is that the difference between health and disease is blurred and the criteria for distinguishing between them become quite relative. Therefore, disease becomes a label, a rhetorical convention, rather than a solution to a problem. H. Tristam Engelhardt, Jr. notes that "disease language is complex. . . . Further, disease language is performative; it creates social reality."[17] This purely formal definition of disease makes it possible to fill the category with a variety of content. For example, disease can take on a primarily social meaning. This has

[15] Ibid., 72.
[16] Ibid., 62.
[17] "Understanding Faith Traditions in the Context of Health Care: Philosophy as a Guide for the Perplexed," in *Health/Medicine and the Faith Traditions: An Inquiry into Religion and Medicine*, ed. Martin E. Marty and Kenneth L. Vaux (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), 174–75.

been true of syphilis throughout the centuries. As a disease, it has no timeless meaning.[18] It has been a symbol for the defilement of Europe by so-called pagan cultures, and it has been the symbol for the defilement of non-Western cultures by Europeans. Further, the development of the notion of disease as a rhetorical category makes it possible to use it to refer to that which we do not understand and/or by which we feel threatened, for example, people of other races. On one hand, racial difference was sometimes admired because certain racial groups seemed resistant to certain diseases. This romantic view was applied to European Jews in the early nineteenth century.[19] More often, however, the rhetorical category of disease made it possible to identify certain racial groups as threats to public health. In the 1930s German National Socialist propaganda associated Jews with the Black Plague. Some medical historians linked Africa with leprosy. Disease became a convenient conceptual category within which to couch a purely irrational racism. The construction of a rhetoric of disease was enhanced by a debate on the nature of contagion. Humankind has always recognized that disease can be spread from person to person. However, this fact has often been overshadowed by the belief that there were divine or cosmic reasons for its spread. In the eighteenth century in the United States and Europe, a battle emerged between those persons who believed that disease was contagious and those who believed that disease was caused by environmental changes or internal bodily changes. The contagionists emerged victorious in this struggle, thereby enforcing the principle of quarantine. Disease as rhetorical device proved quite effective in buttressing arguments for racial segregation, isolation, and finally, genocide, or ethnic cleansing. This rhetoric has had a significant impact on the experience of African Americans and has been especially potent when linked with religious discourse.

III. Health and Disease in African American Experience

One of the ways to understand the complexities of African American experience is to examine the ways in which the rhetoric of health and disease has been employed in setting limits and conscribing life chances. This rhetoric has taken a shape peculiar to the culture of the United States. Its roots, however, like those of many other ideological forces in the nation, lie in Europe. Within European culture the rhetoric of disease developed with

[18] H. Tristram Engelhardt, Jr., "The Social Meanings of Illness," *Second Opinion* 1 (1986): 27.

[19] See Benjamin Ward Richardson, *Diseases of Modern Life* (Union Square, NM: Bermingham & Co., 1982).

distinct racial overtones. One of the more celebrated examples of this was the pornographic fascination of the European medical-scientific community with the physiognomy of Sarah Bartmann. Sarah Bartmann was a woman of the Hottentot tribe in South Africa who was exhibited as the "Hottentot Venus" throughout Europe for more than twenty-five years. Large European audiences gathered to view her naked body, which was of such scientific interest because of the size of her buttocks and her sexual organs. Even after her premature death in Paris in 1815, the fascination with her body continued as her private parts were preserved for viewing and study. Her black body was sacrificed in the interest of others. This account is important because the obviously sexual fascination of her captors was camouflaged by the rhetoric of disease. That is, it was argued that her body and the difference that she displayed was the result of disease. Therefore, the study of her body was critical to the health of the general public. Black women and black sexuality were related to disease. This is the reason for the intermittent European fascination with and aversion to black sexuality.

The rhetoric of disease was a critical factor in the maintenance of American slavery. Although the argument that Africans were diseased was not the primary reason given for their enslavement, it was instrumental in the maintenance of the system of chattel slavery. One writer notes that "there is a long history of perceiving this [black] skin color as the result of some pathology. The favorite theory, which reappears with some frequency in the early nineteenth century, is that the skin color and physiognomy of the black are the result of congenital leprosy."[20]

In the view of Benjamin Rush, a major architect of the rhetoric of disease, the greatest threat to public health was the presence of black people.[21] In scholarly papers Rush argued that the black skin of African Americans was the result of a form of leprosy. Other marks of this diseased state were the size and shape of their lips and noses and the texture of their hair. Interestingly, Rush argued that this disease does not impair the physical health of black people because it was not infectious within the race. However, he notes it is highly

[20] Sander L. Gilman, *Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race, and Madness* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), 101.

[21] Ronald Takaki, *Iron Cages: Race and Culture in Nineteenth Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 16–17. Rush was a founder of the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, a member of the Continental Congress, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, an influential educator, and a philosopher of republican ideology. Moreover, he was a doctor of medicine, surgeon-general in the Revolutionary army, professor of the theory and practice of medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, and the head of the Pennsylvania Hospital's ward for the insane. Author of seminal books on the diseases of the mind, he would later be regarded as the Father of American Psychiatry.

contagious, and it is quite possible for whites to become infected. He reports that "a white woman in North Carolina not only acquired a dark color, but several of the features of a Negro, by marrying and living with a black husband"[22] (There is no mention, curiously enough, of whether this physical change was observed in white men who cohabitated with black women.) The contagious nature of the disease of blackness required that black people be quarantined. Rush argued that it was necessary to separate the races for reasons of public health. The creation of huge racial leper colonies was only a temporary measure. The final remedy, according to Rush, was to cure black people of their blackness. Only by turning their skin white could people of African descent be healed of their infirmity. Rush recommended the ancient practice of bleeding, or purging, to accomplish this task.

The rhetoric of disease was not always associated with the physical color of the African's skin. Black people were also thought to suffer from a variety of mental diseases:

> One of the interesting sidelights of [this issue] was triggered by the sixth national census of 1840. When the results were published in 1841, it was for the first time possible to obtain data concerning mental illness in the United States. The total number of those reported to be insane and feeble-minded in the United States was over 17,000, of which nearly 3,000 were black. If these staggering census statistics were to be believed, free blacks had an incidence of mental illness eleven times higher than slaves and six times higher than the white population. The antiabolitionist forces were thus provided with major scientific evidence that blacks were congenitally unfit for freedom.[23]

In 1851, as scientific theories of racial inferiority emerged, Samuel Cartwright published a paper in the *New Orleans Surgical Journal*, in which he identified certain psychopathologies to which black people, alone, were prey. Chief among these was "Drapetomania," a disease that caused black slaves to run away.[24] The desire to be free and resistance to the institution of slavery were thus diagnosed as a mental illness. The function of slavery was to cure black people of this condition. Many in the medical profession saw black people as a disease in the body politic. Only when that disease had been eradicated could the nation reach its destiny.

One of the lesser observed sources of the rhetoric of disease as blackness is

[22] Ibid., 31.
[23] Gilman, *Difference and Pathology*, 137.
[24] Ibid., 138.

found in the theological discourse of early and medieval Christianity. The propensity of early Christian writers to employ the racially charged symbols of blackness and whiteness to denote evil and good, disease and health, is well documented. Much of this discourse was set by the commentaries of St. Ambrose and St. Bernard of Clairvaux on the Song of Songs. In reading that book of the Bible, both assume that the color of the Shulamite maiden is a sign of her fall from grace. Blackness is associated with sin, and sin is associated with disease. Moreover, in this line of thought it is also permissible to sacrifice the body of black people to enhance the health of white people. One of the most revered legends within the medieval church involved the twin physicians Cosmas and Damian.

> Born in Cilicia in the third century, they were physicians who in the hope of gaining converts to Christianity provided their services without fee. They suffered a grotesque martyrdom in the year 278 during the reign of Diocletian but soon gained a following, at first in the East and later in the West, for numerous miraculous cures both in life and after death. . . . Their most famous miracle occurred at a church named after them in a formerly pagan temple at the edge of the Forum in Rome, where they appeared posthumously to replace the gangrenous leg of the church's sacristan with the leg of a Negro who had died of old age.[25]

Not only does this legend buttress the unspoken assumption that the bodies of black persons can be sacrificed for the health of white persons, there is an interesting twist given to this story in a sixteenth-century painting, attributed to Fernando del Rincon, depicting this famous miracle. In this painting not only does the sacristan have the healthy leg of the black person grafted onto his body, but lying on the floor is the black man with the diseased white leg grafted onto his body. It is this unspoken and almost unconscious assumption that the black body can serve as a kind of ritual victim that bears the sin of disease that lends complexity to the rhetoric of disease as blackness. Theophus H. Smith argues convincingly that black people have functioned in American religious discourse as a *pharmakon*.[26] A *pharmakon* can be both a poison and a cure; both a sign of disease and an avenue to health as purity.

The categories of health and disease furnished a powerful set of metaphors and binary oppositions for a culture radically divided by race. The idea of disease is deeply rooted in the history of attempts to make sense of the

[25] Lyons and Petrucelli, *Medicine: An Illustrated History*, 291.

[26] *Conjuring Culture: Biblical Formations of Black America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 81–109.

unknown. The Tuskegee experiment simply confirmed the historical assumption that black bodies could be sacrificed for the health of others. The debate on providing health care to every American citizen resurrected the submerged language of health and disease. It was a debate that could not be solved at the policy level, because it raised much deeper questions. Who shall be saved from this disease called sin? How shall we be saved? Who shall heal our sin-sick souls?

IV. Health and Disease in the Bible

Within the history of medical thought in the West, a rhetoric of disease emerged. This rhetoric persisted through the rationalistic development of medical thought and practice because it provided a way to account for the strange and unknown in human experience. In the course of time, that rhetoric was associated with people of African descent. This association was buttressed by Western philosophical and cultural discourse and by certain aspects of Western Christian narratives. The system of chattel slavery in the United States found support in this rhetoric of disease, because black skin was deemed pathological. The question confronting us at this juncture is: What resources does the Bible offer to counter this rhetoric of disease, especially as it is associated with blackness?

The contribution of the Hebrew scriptures to this topic is found in (1) their purity codes and hygienic restrictions and (2) their focus on the relationship between health and wholeness. The dietary and sanitary restrictions found in the Pentateuch and described in the older commentaries stress the point that these mandates had their source and ultimate purpose in obedience to God. However, later scholars have argued that the dietary restrictions against eating certain animals had a basis in the maintenance of human health and the prevention of disease. In addition, the practice of circumcision is, in this view, not only an act of obedience to God but also said to be recognized by the medical profession as good preventive medicine. One could point to the biblical injunctions requiring those who are diseased to remain separate from the community as a form of quarantine, or to the command for the ritual washing of the hands as a good antiseptic practice. The emphasis on showing that the mandates of the Hebrew Bible are consistent with good secular medical practice is meaningful to those for whom good medical care is readily available, but it says very little to those whose lives are circumscribed by the rhetoric of disease.

A more critical perspective on the origin and derivation of these biblical mandates would recognize that, in all likelihood, the Israelites inherited a

number of their beliefs about disease from ancient Mesopotamian cultures.[27] Putting the biblical mandates regarding dietary restrictions in a broader social context might yield a different perspective on their origin and function:

> Much has been made of a presumably medical basis for the food prohibitions in Jewish tradition, but there may be other explanations. One recent suggestion is that the taboo against pigs was originally related to their competition with humans for water and grain (scarce commodities in a barren land), in contrast to cattle and sheep which consume relatively little water and graze on forage inedible to man. Since transmissible parasitic diseases and infestations such as tapeworm are also found in sheep and cows, singling out trichinosis in pigs would not be wholly logical. However, to discourage the raising of swine so as to conserve water and grain resources for human consumption, a strict religious taboo may have been necessary—considering man's nearly universal agreement on the delectableness of pork. Medical observations may indeed have been at the core of hygienic codes, but the Biblical listing of seemingly unrelated creatures prohibited as food is difficult to associate with purposes entirely hygienic.[28]

While one cannot deny that the prophylactic measures found in the Mosaic law have significance as preventive medicine, there may have been other factors involved in their development.

The ideas of health and disease in the Hebrew Bible must be understood in the individual contexts in which they are discussed. This means that health, as defined in the Mosaic law, is similar to the description adopted by the World Health Association in 1946. Health is "a state of complete well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."[29] In the Hebrew Bible, health involves the unity of the mind, body, and spirit. "The healthy person is the person who exhibits physical, mental, and spiritual wholeness. This sense of wholeness, of shalom, of well-being, is not confined merely to the individual person, but extends beyond the individual to the community as well. The healthy person is an integral part of the community."[30] Health and disease are complex notions in the Hebrew Bible. Health is not merely the absence of affliction but involves a unique quality of life. Disease cannot be explained simply as divine punishment for sin—a common belief among ancient Meso-

[27] Lyons and Petrucelli, *Medicine: An Illustrated History*, 71.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Cited in John J. Pilch, "Reading Matthew Anthropologically: Healing in Cultural Perspective," *Listening* 24 (Fall 1989): 285.

[30] Karen S. Carter, "A Biblical Vision of Wholeness," *Brethren Life and Thought* 33, no. 1 (Winter 1988): 60.

potamian cultures—as the story of Job reveals. It is an indeterminate aspect of human experience that derives its meaning, in large part, from its context.

The principal biblical resources that have traditionally been used to address questions of health and disease are found in the New Testament. Here the presence of disease is often associated with questions of theodicy. Within the New Testament there is evidence for at least six different explanations for infirmity.[31] (1) Disease may be the result of possession by demons or evil spirits (Luke 13:10–17). (2) God may inflict disease to punish the sufferer for his or her sins (John 5:1–15). (3) Disease may be punishment for the sins of one's parents (John 9:3). (4) Disease may be punishment for sins in a past life (John 9:3). (5) Disease may be permitted to show God's power to heal (John 9:3). (6) Disease may be permitted to show God's power to sustain the sufferer even if the disease is not healed. While there is textual evidence to support these theodicies in the New Testament, there are deeper issues involved that are important in understanding the revolutionary significance of Jesus' healing ministry.

In the field of medical anthropology crucial distinctions are made between disease, illness, and sickness. One of the most influential writers in the field describes them in the following manner. "DISEASE refers to abnormalities in the structure and/or function of organs and organ systems; pathological states whether or not they are culturally recognized. . . . ILLNESS refers to a person's perceptions and experiences of certain socially disvalued states including, but not limited to, disease. SICKNESS is a blanket term to label events involving disease and/or illness."[32] The key to these definitions is that disease refers to some inherent abnormality in the person. Both illness and sickness include a focus on the subjectivity of the sufferer. Most definitions of disease, illness, and sickness in the field of medical anthropology share the emphasis on disease as a thing that overshadows or renders meaningless the subjectivity of the sufferer. Illness and sickness are determined by asking the patient how he or she feels in anticipation of treatment. Disease is associated with some external and observable feature of the person. Here the subjectivity of the sufferer is obscured, and quarantine is prescribed. This explains the tendency of some New Testament scholars to discount the significance of the category of disease and to emphasize illness as the most appropriate concept

[31] Robert M. Price, "Illness Theodicies in the New Testament," *Journal of Religion and Health* 25 (Winter 1986): 309–15.

[32] Allan Young, "The Anthropologies of Illness and Sickness," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 11 (1982): 264.

to relate to healing and health.[33] It is my contention, however, that it is disease, with all of its connotations, that Jesus addresses in his ministry of healing. The function of disease is that it removes the person from the community. It prevents wholeness and solidarity among people. It overshadows the personhood of the sufferer. It consigns the sufferer to an existence within the company of the afflicted. This is why Jesus never looked down on or shunned the sufferers of disease. In many of his healing miracles he brought the sufferer of disease into community. Those who are ill or sick elicit compassion because they are recognized as human beings by others in the community. Thus, one way to understand the healing ministry of Jesus is that he takes disease and removes the stigma associated with it, so that the person is seen as one who is ill or sick. The oppressive nature of the physical condition of the sufferer is alleviated, and true healing can begin to take place.

The most explicit example of disease in the New Testament is leprosy. Jesus' willingness to approach those suffering from this dreaded disease is especially significant in light of the stigma involved. Most biblical scholars agree that what is called leprosy was not one thing but a variety of symptomatic conditions associated with the skin. This points to the function of disease in any culture. It does not invite close investigation. It is a marker for that which we fear. (Some scholars have observed that AIDS is the name for a variety of symptoms that are observable.) This is the reason that black people have been associated with dreaded diseases since at least the sixth century. What African Americans find in the miraculous healing ministry of Jesus is a way out of the company of the afflicted and into the community of the redeemed.

The Bible provides resources for the deconstruction of the rhetoric of disease that often attended the experience of people of African descent. The Bible does not give a definitive answer to the question of why disease afflicts some and not others. Even Jesus does not attempt to explain the presence of disease. He simply affirms that as creatures of God, the sufferers of disease are promised wholeness and salvation. Jesus brought hope, dignity, and liberation to the sick and afflicted. His ministry of healing is central to a revision of our understanding of the meaning of salvation. This brings us to the final task of this lecture, that is, the articulation of a proposal for revising our theological understanding of salvation.

[33] John J. Pilch argues that the concept of disease was foreign to the world of Luke-Acts and that illness is a more appropriate category to juxtapose to health and wholeness ("Sickness and Healing in Luke-Acts," in *The Social World of Luke-Acts*, ed. Jerome H. Neyrey [Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991], 191).

V. Is There a Balm in Gilead?

African American Christians have creatively used the resources at hand to articulate an understanding of salvation suited to their own circumstances. Those resources include traditional Western notions of salvation and notions of healing in African traditional religions and African Christianity. The blend of these elements in the unique context of the experience of black people in the New World has yielded new insights into the nature of health and salvation.

One of the more perplexing questions in the history of Western Christian thought concerns the rationale for the salvation of humanity. Since at least the time of Athanasius, soteriology has been intimately connected with Christology in Christian thought. That is, questions about the salvation of humanity are wound up in questions about the identity of Jesus Christ. The various older theories of salvation involved a commerce between Jesus Christ and God. It is the mystery of this interaction that gives rise to, and ultimately supersedes, each theory. The ransom theory, associated with Origen and Gregory of Nyssa, held that humanity had wandered away from God and had fallen into the hands of the devil, who demanded a price for the release of humankind. The price demanded was the blood of Christ. The satisfaction theory, associated primarily with Anselm, proposed that by sinning, humanity had dishonored God. Only the life of Jesus Christ could restore that honor. The moral or exemplarist theory, generally associated with Abelard, held that the purpose of the life and death of Christ was to model the righteousness and love inherent in humanity. The penal or judicial theory, which emerged in the Reformation period and is associated with John Calvin and Hugo Grotius, proposed that human sin was a crime for which the justice of God demanded punishment. In this theory, Christ accepted the guilty verdict for us. The sacrificial theory, which is consistently present in Western Christian thought from the time of Augustine through the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment, asserted that the forgiveness of human sin required a blood sacrifice. Jesus Christ, the lamb without spot, was therefore slain for our transgressions. The goal of the salvific act has been described in numerous ways, as the deification of humanity, the imputation of righteousness before God, union with Christ, moral perfection, authentic humanity, and political liberation, among others. They all point to the removal of the barriers between God and humanity as requisite for human wholeness and well-being. Most modern notions of salvation also point in this direction. Barth's reconciliation, Bultmann's authentic existence, Reinhold Niebuhr's restoration of original justice, Tillich's participation in New Being, Rahner's self-offering of God to the

world, Gutiérrez's liberation from class oppression, and Ruether's original wholeness of humanity as found in Mary all imply the reconnection of humanity with God. All of these theories of salvation, both ancient and modern, focus on the effects of sin upon the sinners. This is an element of the doctrine of salvation that has found a home in African American Christian thought. African American Christians, however, have asked more of soteriology. What does salvation mean to the *victims* of sin?

In African traditional and African Christian thought, health is understood as harmony and disease as disharmony. One African writer notes that in African traditional thought, "Any sickness [is] viewed not only as a threat to one's existence but also as a destabilisation of cosmic harmony, as there was no real distinction made between the natural and the supernatural."[34] In African traditional as well as African Christian thought, health and disease are intimately associated with matters of the spirit. There is an overriding belief in the spiritual causation of illness, even while the efficacy of Western medical innovations and practices is acknowledged. The spirit is not only involved in the causation of disease, but, in African Christian thought, it is also involved in healing. The role of the Holy Spirit has been central to the self-understanding of many indigenous African churches. Among African Pentecostal churches the power of the Holy Spirit effects healing by defeating the spiritual causes of illness. This healing includes "not just bodily recuperation, but finding remedies for unemployment, family disputes, racism, marital discord, and controversies between factions in a tribe or village."[35] In African traditional thought the sick person is not simply a subdued recipient of medical treatment. In this view "the sick person is seen not as a passive 'patient,' the suffering object of the active therapist or as the determined occupant of a 'sick role,' but as an agent, a subject seeking health, engaged . . . in a 'quest for therapy,' in problem solving, and manipulating the resources available in the environment—and, if need be, changing that environment."[36] On this quest for therapy, the patient might seek a number of treatments, including the use of herbs, ritual cleansing, and incantations or prayers. In African traditional thought, the concept of salvation as healing focuses on the plight of the victim of disease and on the alleviation of the suffering that accompanies it. This is

[34] Andrew Olu Igenoza, "Medicine and Healing in African Christianity: A Biblical Critique," *AFER* 30, no. 1 (February 1988): 15. It is interesting to note how often this notion of health as harmony appears in the medical lore of people outside the Greco-Roman world. It suggests that the idea has its roots deep within human consciousness.

[35] Harvey Cox, "Healers and Ecologists: Pentecostalism in Africa," *The Christian Century* 111 (November 9, 1994): 1044.

[36] Peter Worsley, "Non-Western Medical Systems," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 11 (1982): 325.

often done by attempting to placate the offended spirits. African American Christians, however, have asked more of the notion of healing. In what way does human healing reflect God's providential care, through the power of the Holy Spirit, of the entire created order?

James Lapsley and Donald Bloesch, among others, have argued, convincingly, that health and salvation, or health and forgiveness, are not synonymous.[37] Not everyone who enjoys health will be saved. Not everyone who is saved will enjoy physical health. Health and salvation are, however, related terms. Within the context of a rhetoric of disease as blackness, both ideas need to be revised.

Health, as symbolized by access to quality health care, has become in our time a privatized commodity. It has lost its social, communal, and convenantal character. "This loss of shared public understandings of health contributes to an unhealthy national and international situation in which consumer expectations converge and contend over costly resources."[38] The pursuit of perfect health has raised the volume of discussions of health care but has also skewed its role and importance in human existence. The fact that health is not synonymous with salvation or forgiveness suggests that health, like salvation, is a gift. Health is a relative term; it is not to be thought of as some ideal human condition. Health, while important, is only one aspect of a life worth living. A spiritually balanced life seeks harmony. A measure of good health is valuable to the degree that it allows one to give glory to God. This is why traditional prayers in African American Christian worship will often begin by thanking God "for a reasonable portion of health and strength. Thank you for letting me awake this morning clothed in my right mind, with the blood running warm in my veins." Health is a penultimate good. Life in the presence of God is the ultimate good.

Salvation, like health, is a gift from God. Too often, salvation becomes a private affair, referring to the redemption of the individual from guilt, despair, fear, and death. Salvation, however, is social because sin is social. The social character of sin is not simply its manifestations in institutions. Theologians like Walter Rauschenbusch highlighted this aspect of sin through the Social Gospel. Sin is social because the sin of an individual is not just an offense to God; it injures other people. The social character of salvation is not merely its focus on groups. The notion of salvation in the Hebrew Bible emphasizes this

[37] See James N. Lapsley, *Salvation and Health: The Interlocking Processes of Life* (Philadelpia: Westminster, 1972), 31–45; and Donald G. Bloesch, *The Christian Life and Salvation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), 33–46.

[38] James P. Wind, "Health," in *A New Handbook of Christian Theology*, ed. Donald W. Musser and Joseph L. Price (Nashville: Abingdon, 1992), 214.

aspect of redemption. Salvation is social because the redemption of the victims of sin can be the avenue through which those whose sinfulness wreaks havoc in the world are also saved. This means that our description of salvation must include those who are wounded by sin. In African American experience, salvation is not an escape from the challenges of creaturely existence. Redemption is not exemption. In African American experience, racism is recognized as a cultural pathology. In spite of an environment created by the rhetoric of disease as blackness, people of African descent have always known that they are the victims of the pathology of racism and not the carriers of social disease. This knowledge is encoded in the cultural form of the blues.[39] In the blues the awareness of one's status as a victim of racism is the first step toward transcending that status. The diagnosis of the association of blackness and disease is the first step toward the therapeutic affirmation that blackness is healthy.

Salvation as healing is a central concern in African American Christianity. The ways in which this salvation is experienced draw upon traditions of African healing and Western soteriology. Salvation occurs through the prayers of the faithful. It recalls the incantations used in African healing and the salvific power of the Word in Reformation theology. Prayer is essential to salvation as health, because it overcomes the alienating affects of disease by bringing the victims into union with God. Salvation occurs through the gathered community of faith. It recalls the ecstatic presence of the spirit experienced by the collective group in African traditional healing rituals and the patristic emphasis on the church as the means of salvation. The worshiping community enables, sustains, confirms, and shares in the healing of its members and thereby becomes the means of salvation. Salvation occurs through the sacraments or ordinances of the Lord's supper and baptism. It recalls the ingestion of herbal medicines and ritual bathing as healing practices in African traditional religions and ancient Christian views on the efficacy of bread, wine, and water. These ritual practices emphasize the participation of each member of the community in the salvific presence of Christ.

Salvation and health are interrelated in human experience. This is because

[39] There is a striking similarity between the blues in African American experience, and *han* in the experience of Koreans. This similarity has led to a view of the nature of salvation that is quite compatible with that described here. Andrew Sung Park observes that "in the efforts to heal the victims of their sins or the sins of others, sinners can experience salvation. . . . The idea that sinners can achieve salvation by confessing their own sin regardless of the welfare of their victims is a narcissistic illusion" (*The Wounded Heart of God: The Asian Concept of Han and the Christian Doctrine of Sin* [Nashville: Abingdon, 1993], 102–3).

the notion of disease continues to function as a symbol for that which we do not understand. The limits of Western medicine are evident in "the appearance of new strains of disease and of disease carriers . . . of diseases generated by alterations in the environment . . . and the inability of doctors to deal with the social sources of illness . . . [and] the appearance even of new 'diseases of affluence.' "[40] Healing will continue to occupy the imagination of the Christian community for reasons other than the failures of modern medicine. Healing brings to the fore the power of the salvation of God and serves evangelistic purposes. F. D. Bruner states that "nothing attracts men and attests the Gospel . . . quite like the healing of infirmities. Indeed healing fills out the full gospel of a full salvation."[41]

In African American worship references to Jesus as the restorer of health and wholeness are numerous. "Jesus is a doctor who has never lost a patient." "Jesus is the one who gives me all my medicine." "Jesus is the balm in Gilead to heal the sin-sick soul." In a society where the means to health have become a commodity ruled by the marketplace and where people of African descent have too often found themselves circumscribed by the rhetoric of disease, salvation must mean more than the escape from the natural processes of living and dying. Salvation must give ultimate meaning to life itself.

[40] Worsley, "Non-Western Medical Systems," 322.
[41] Cited in Igenoza, "Medicine and Healing in African Christianity," 23.

David Weadon: A Tribute

(Aug. 8, 1956–Dec. 30, 1995)

by KATHARINE DOOB SAKENFELD

Katharine Doob Sakenfeld is the W. A. Eisenberger Professor of Old Testament Literature and Exegesis and Director of Ph.D. Studies at Princeton Theological Seminary. She gave this tribute at two memorial services for David A. Weadon, the C. F. Seabrook Director of Music and Lecturer in Church Music at Princeton Seminary. The first service was held in Miller Chapel on January 31, 1996; the second was held in Princeton University Chapel on February 10, 1996.

IT IS an honor to be able to speak a few words of remembrance of my friend and esteemed colleague David Weadon. As I prepared these reflections and spoke with others about David, I was struck afresh by the limited angle of vision, the tininess of the window that each one of us has into the life of another. I realized, for instance, that I knew very, very little about David's professional life beyond Princeton Seminary. Yes, I knew of his choir work in New York, but then there were his benefit concerts, his workshops for church musicians all across the country, his efforts to build new bridges between Westminster Choir College and the Seminary. Most of us at this service probably knew David primarily through his Seminary work, but even there, each of us knows only a little of the marvelous whole that was David. So I encourage each of you to honor and cherish your own memories, beyond the words spoken in this service.

For more than a decade, the Seminary chapel staff has known me as a faculty member who would agree to lead chapel only if it included the opportunity to work with David on a music-centered service. Such services gave me an excuse to learn about some new music, to debate the theology of hymn texts, and to spend official time with David. Always he was forthright with me the amateur—improving and shaping ideas, willing to experiment, yet insistent on a musically polished and theologically sound service. Last summer, as I prepared to preach for the opening communion service, our vacation schedules precluded our regular give-and-take about the hymns. So I chose them, only to find on my return that David had changed them and the bulletin was already in press. I was steamed, at first—my choices had been so right, but true to form, David's were better. He'd understood what was needed better than I had myself.

A great musician like David doesn't need a Ph.D. But David set himself to achieve that goal anyway—to deepen his knowledge of the intersection

between theology and sacred music in the history of the church. Those of you who know about Ph.D. demands, just imagine deciding to take on such a program when you already have more than a full-time professional job. My responsibilities for Ph.D. studies here made me one of David's sounding boards for survival during his studies at Drew. Oh, how he agonized over those French and German requirements. Oh, how he quaked over comprehensive exams. Oh, how he held his breath to hear what revisions might be required on his dissertation. And oh, what parties there were to celebrate the completion of his degree!

And David did love to give a good party. Labor Day picnics, Christmas open house in Freehold—dozens of people from all walks of life—very special times.

David came to Princeton Seminary as a very young professional (only twenty-six years old)—younger than any faculty, younger than most any administrator or staff support person, younger than most of the students at that time. Right from the start, his lively humor and southern drawl captured my affection as much as his great musical talent. Under his inspired and inspiring leadership the choir program grew from a handful of students to the multiple choirs that now grace our community and share their gifts with churches throughout the area and across the world. He "grew" our music program at PTS the way the best of our seminary graduates grow a congregation: growing our choirs not only in numbers but in commitment to the task, commitment to deeper understanding, commitment to excellence, commitment to sharing the good news with others, commitment to Jesus Christ.

Yet as I think back, David and I talked very little about his magnificent work here. Our occasional conversations tended to be brief, but they touched on the deeper things, hidden things, illness of our relatives, grieving over deaths of our parents. Both sides of David's usual exterior presence, the happy-go-lucky and the perfection-demanding, would suddenly be set aside as we struggled to understand the mystery of God's way with the world.

In the last months, as that mystery encompassed his own life so directly, David chose not to include most of us. He did not choose the way many of us would have wanted him to choose. And his choice in itself is part of the continuing mystery for us, as we see through a glass, darkly. But David has crossed over Jordan and now sees face to face the God who carried him from the womb even until the end. As David has laid down his burden and joined the celestial musicians—Bach and Brahms and Clarence Dickinson (the subject of David's dissertation research) and Eric Routley (David's teacher at Westminster Choir College), and even my father, a part-time amateur

organist to whom David was very kind—so let us here on earth lay down our burden of frustration over being separated from David even before his death. Let us be grateful for the love and care extended to David on our behalf by the chapel staff, namely, Michael Livingston and Carol Belles. Most especially, let us be thankful for the care and steadfast love shown to David by his beloved companion, David MacPeek.

We cannot by an act of will turn off our pain and sorrow. Nonetheless, let us do what David Weadon, a man of great faith, would wish us to do: Let us join our earthly voices with those heavenly voices, celebrating David's presence among them as we sing praise to God, who promises resurrection to eternal life through our Savior Jesus Christ.

Remembering David

by Michael E. Livingston

Michael E. Livingston, Campus Pastor and Director of the Chapel at Princeton Theological Seminary, offered these remarks at the Seminary's memorial service for David A. Weadon on January 31, 1996.

David and I interviewed Carol Belles separately before she was hired as Chapel Secretary. At the end of her interview with David, he asked if she had any questions of him. "If you hire me and I accept, what is it that I might do that would drive you over the edge?" He thought about it and then said, "What you need to know about me is that I am a church musician. Temperamental, sensitive, a prima donna." Only one of those things was true. David Weadon was a *church* musician. He wasn't simply a gifted organist who found employment in about the only setting an organist can play any more, the church; he wasn't a church musician because he was not skilled enough for a teaching post in a secular academic setting. David wasn't a choral director who settled for church work because the hormones in a junior high school choir would have driven him batty.

David was a believer, a Christian of deep commitment who would have claimed a pew in the church even if he could not have told the difference between a Bach Cantata and a Sandy Patty gospel song. David found a profound joy in the just and saving message of the gospel. God gave David the gift of faith and *called* him to that organ bench, to a ministry of music.

This could get too clinical and professional—"church and seminary community loses gifted church music professional"; as true as that may be, it is partial. Daniel Beckwith, a conductor at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, told me that David could "pick up a stone and teach it to sing a descant." That's the man we are celebrating!

David was a great guy; a bright, gifted, funny, lovely person. For all his Manhattan sophistication, he was refreshingly down to earth. Sure, he would treat his student assistants to lunch at the Peacock Inn, but if you wanted to find David during the lunch hour on most days you had to go to Harry's Luncheonette on Witherspoon Street, where he'd be devouring a greasy cheeseburger. Do you know, as I do, what a delicious pleasure it was to be in his good company?

"Michael honey, that's enough." We were in his hospital room and I was trying, too diligently, to get him to finish a cup of water. Enough, "that's enough." David had had enough of the fight, the struggle he waged for life. He fought longer than any of us knew, and he fought on his terms. Much to

our regret, our sorrow, perhaps even our anger, he chose to struggle without inviting our love and support in the ways we would have wished to give it.

Had we known, we would have called to talk with him, prayed with him, visited with him—we would have lovingly invaded his life for his sake and for ours. He did not ask this of us. Instead, he asked us, begged us, to let him work; to let him play and conduct. David had a desire for normalcy, which was disconcerting, unfathomable to us—but there was no denial, rather an urgency wed to a commitment to task. I asked him once, in the hospital, why he insisted on continuing when it was so clear he was seriously ill. "I had to get the work done, I had too much to do," he said.

David came to the Seminary chapel day after day, of course, with less frequency toward the end. He kept teaching his courses and rehearsing the choirs and traveling with the touring choir. He kept this up for longer than he was able to be effective. Left alone, David would never have stopped; he would have died sitting on the organ bench or traveling with the touring choir.

When we insisted that he rest, finally, he did just that. In the company and care of his dear companion, David MacPeek, he laid down until he died.

Many of the tensions, paradoxes, pathologies in our church and society were enmeshed in the tortured silence, the whispered painful conversations, the fear and grief—present and anticipated—that were part of our experience with David these last months. He would have abhored being made an object lesson, and that is not my intent, but God help us if we do not mine what treasures of truth and grace, justice and love are buried in our hearts by his graceful presence and his grand work in our community.

I will miss watching him direct the choir. For our annual Service of Lessons and Carols at the Seminary, I sat at the lectern and watched from the side, just a few feet away, as he passionately led our gifted singers through hauntingly beautiful music. His face, hands, arms were alive with speech as he talked with the choir by baton, facial nuance, subtle gesture. With his direction the choir could shake the chandeliers or sing in sustained whispers of thrilling intensity.

With his death we must be content with our memories of him. We must find some comfort in his release from the agony of awful disease.

David died too young and too soon. I pray you share my confidence in the new life David has found in the promises of God. And I pray you trust that the God who welcomes David will not leave us alone. May God's grace and peace surround us all.

BOOK REVIEWS

Seow, Choon-Leong, ed. *Homosexuality and Christian Community.* Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996. Pp. xiii + 159. $14.99.

As Nancy J. Duff writes near the conclusion of her contribution to *Homosexuality and Christian Community*, "the real dilemma resides in the question of whether we can live *together* as members of the one Body of Christ even when divided by an issue on which both sides know with such certainty that they are right." While not resolving the dilemma, *Homosexuality and Christian Community* certainly addresses this challenge and provides resources for those willing to struggle with it for the sake of Christian community.

Choon-Leong Seow, editor and contributor, has done an excellent job of bringing together thirteen quite varied essays, written by his faculty colleagues at Princeton Theological Seminary. Seow provides a helpful introduction, setting the context for the essays and summarizing each. Vigorous discussion has gone on at Princeton during the three-year period mandated by the 1993 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for a study of homosexuality. Seow and his colleagues offer the wider church the opportunity to reflect with them on the multitude of concerns involved in consideration of this issue and its impact on Christian community.

Besides the two contributors already mentioned, Nancy J. Duff, theological ethics, and Choon-Leong Seow, Old Testament, the other eleven participants in the project include: A.K.M. Adam, New Testament; Charles L. Bartow, communication; Brian K. Blount, New Testament; Thomas W. Gillespie, New Testament; James F. Kay, homiletics; Thomas G. Long, homiletics; Mark McClain-Taylor, theology and culture; Ulrich W. Mauser, biblical theology; Patrick D. Miller, Old Testament; Max L. Stackhouse, ethics; and Richard E. Whitaker, Old Testament. All write clearly, having in mind a broad audience of church members, students, and pastors, as well as specialists.

Among the contributors there is a great variety of positions. They are arranged into three sections: part 1: "What Do the Scriptures Say?" part 2: "How Do the Scriptures Inform Our Theological Reflection?" and part 3: "How Do We Live Faithfully?" Some are certain the Bible and confessional tradition call the church to acceptance of homosexuals into every phase of institutional church life. Others are equally convinced that the tradition precludes such participation on the part of gays and lesbians. Whether same-sex relationships should be recognized and blessed is likewise debated.

Biblical texts, confessional statements, pastoral issues, and personal experiences are examined. Some may say that there are no new arguments presented in these essays, but there is a clarity, freshness, and conciseness that many will find most helpful.

Furthermore, there is a "tone," a "quality, a "spirit" about these essays that is refreshing and instructive. While the writers know they differ (dramatically at times) with each other in their conclusions and suggestions, they also recognize they belong to a larger company. There is conviction and humility, critical argument and a recognition of remaining unanswered (unanswerable?) questions. An example is offered of how to struggle with one another around a difficult issue where agreement is unlikely if not impossible. All who read this volume will gain from the respectful, clear, passionate arguments presented with the aim of strengthening, not destroying, the church. It is possible for sincere, faithful Christians to disagree and yet continue to love one another and work for the common good.

Near the conclusion of the introduction, Seow summarizes the character of the volume well and underscores its importance for those concerned with life in the church. He writes: "Clearly, the contributors to this volume are not of one mind on the issue of homosexuality. Like our forebears in biblical times, we find ourselves in substantial disagreement. At stake for us all is the gospel: How are we to understand our obligation as a people of faith? We struggle to balance two biblical portrayals of God: a God whose name is Jealous and a God whose name is Compassionate. There are risks that we may err by overemphasizing one or the other divine reality. Yet it is imperative that the church live with this risk and decide what it means to be faithful to the gospel in our day and age."

W. Eugene March
Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

McCormack, Bruce L. *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology: Its Genesis and Development, 1909–1936*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995. Pp. xx + 499. $65.00.

In this expanded version of his Princeton Seminary dissertation (1989), McCormack, now a member of the Seminary's faculty, has surely provided a benchmark for any future discussion of Barth's theological development. Making good use of materials newly available in the *Gesamtausgabe*, and in continuous dialogue with other Barth specialists in Germany and America, he has challenged the dominant view that Barth's progress was marked by *two*

decisive turning points: from Protestant liberalism to dialectical theology and from dialectic to analogy. Against this reading of the story, associated with the name of Hans Urs von Balthasar, McCormack states his thesis: "Subsequent to his break with 'liberalism' in 1915, Barth became what we shall call a critically realistic dialectical theologian—and that is what he remained throughout his life" (p. vii). No second turning point ever happened.

The importance of this formidable, richly documented study goes far beyond the cogency of the thesis, which I must leave for the Barth experts to assess. (The firmness with which McCormack puts down their mistakes guarantees that some of them will respond energetically on other disputed questions as well.) I have been asked to comment on the author's placement of Barth in the history of Protestant theology, especially in view of his insistence that however critical Barth may have been of modern theology, his own dialectical theology was a "thoroughly *modern* option" (p. 466). I have space only to raise three questions.

First, would not a *thoroughly* modern "theological epistemology" (as McCormack calls it) use Kant to challenge revelation claims rather than to insulate them against philosophical criticism? Barth cheerfully appropriated Kant's critical philosophy insofar as it blocked the old theistic arguments from the empirical world to its putative source or ground in a first principle (God). But to move from there to the announcement that God has *revealed* Godself does not look like progress in the project of modernity. It is a bit Pickwickian even to speak of a "theological epistemology" here at all. The move is reminiscent rather of the misuse of Kant by his contemporary Gottlob Christian Storr, who appealed to Kant only to clear the way for some very old-fashioned revelation claims of the sort Kant judged even more suspect than metaphysical arguments for God. Right or wrong, Barth's project, like Storr's, was at most only half modern.

From the perspective of Barth's place in modern theology, one of the most valuable features of McCormack's study is the care with which he portrays Barth's relation to his teacher Wilhelm Herrmann. Barth carried some things over from this "great nineteenth-century liberal theologian," and yet it was Herrmann's variety of liberalism that he rebelled against. But—my second question—is not the price paid for this important contribution a surprising curtailment of the much more urgent question of Barth's relation to Schleiermacher? When it comes right down to it, it is as unhelpful to call Schleiermacher "liberal" as to call Barth "neoorthodox." And it was, after all, on Schleiermacher that Barth trained the muzzle of his gun (as he put it) in 1921. If there was in truth only one break in Barth's theological progress, the "break

with liberalism," then it becomes all the more critical to determine its precise nature. McCormack would agree, I think, that this calls for more detailed tracking of Barth's thoughts on Schleiermacher than could be offered even in this marvelously rich volume. And if the question is about Barth's place in the history of theology, not simply his own development as he himself saw it, then the truth or falsity of his interpretations of Schleiermacher must also be held up for scrutiny.

Finally, the question of Barth's place in the theology of the last two hundred years is not unrelated to the continuing debate about the legacy of the Reformation. By 1922, Barth was claiming an affinity between his theology and Luther's *theologia crucis*, and he traced an ancestral line that ran back through Kierkegaard and the Protestant Reformers (but *not* through Schleiermacher!) to Paul and Jeremiah. But he later testified that the Luther renaissance associated with Karl Holl did not impress him favorably, and that in 1919–20 the Reformers still did not evoke much of a response from him. The truth appears to be, as Barth himself said, that a new interest in the Reformation was not the source, but a consequence, of his efforts. Still, the question of material continuity remains—all the more so because Barth knew perfectly well what some of us seem to have forgotten: that the liberals, too, claimed to be Luther's offspring. Barth took their claim seriously enough to warn that anyone who aimed a blow at Bultmann, for instance, should take care not to hit Luther; and he conceded that Herrmann represented an authentic, if narrow, continuation of the Lutheran tradition. It is by no means self-evident who the legitimate heirs of the Reformation are—the liberals or the critically realistic dialectical theologians. My third question, then, quite simply, is whether McCormack should tell us more than he does about Barth's ancestral line through the Reformers. Perhaps he will, when he turns to the second part of his project: a study of Barth's Göttingen lectures on dogmatics (1924–25). I, for one, look forward to its completion. It will no doubt be as learned, instructive, and provocative as part one.

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Olson, Dennis T. *Numbers*. Louisville: John Knox Press, 1996. Pp. 196. $22.00.

In his doctoral dissertation written for Brevard Childs at Yale University, Dennis Olson proposed that Numbers was structured around two census lists

in Numbers 1 and 26. Numbers 1 is a census of the first generation of Israelites to leave Egypt. They die in the wilderness as a result of their fear to follow God into the promised land of Canaan. Numbers 26 is a census of the second generation, who survive the wilderness march and are on the verge of claiming the promised land of Canaan. The thematic development of this repetition was captured in the title of Olson's published dissertation, *The Death of the Old and the Birth of the New: The Framework of the Book of Numbers and the Pentateuch* (1985). Other commentators also saw this repetition, but they tended to structure Numbers around Israel's journey toward Canaan rather than the transition between generations. Dennis Olson's contribution was to focus firmly on character development (the two generations) as opposed to setting (the journey through the wilderness) in determining the central theme of Numbers.

This commentary provides Olson the opportunity for a more thorough interpretation of character development in Numbers between the first and second generation of Israelites who left Egypt. And, indeed, this is the strength of the commentary. A primary goal of the commentary is to explore how faith is transferred from one generation to another. The census of the first generation introduces a story of rebellion and death in Numbers 1–25. The census of the second generation, by contrast, introduces a story of hope and life in Numbers 26–36. Within this framework, Olson looks for other repetitions that serve as points of comparison. Examples include the census of Levites (Numbers 3 and 26), laws involving women (Numbers 5 and 27), as well as narratives like the spy story (Numbers 13–14 and 32:6–15). Olson uses these repetitions to explore character development between the two generations. Thus, for example, the rebellion of the first generation in refusing to enter Canaan (Numbers 13–14) contrasts with the negotiated settlement of Reuben and Gad, who also initially refuse to enter Canaan (Numbers 32). Differences within the repetition contain a message: "The final lesson in [Numbers 32] is not judgment but promise and encouragement. Rather than rebel against Moses and the old tradition, Reuben and Gad take Moses' words to heart and propose a compromise" (p. 182).

In addition to the emphasis on character development, Olson keeps his eye on larger structural developments in the Pentateuch that influence interpretation of Numbers. Parallels to the exodus in the wilderness stories of Numbers 11–20 and in the quotation of confessional material like Numbers 14:18 are two examples of how earlier passages in the Pentateuch inform one's interpretation of Numbers. Olson also explains literature that has become obscure to

modern readers. Much of Numbers is written by priestly theologians, who construct their theology around the purity laws issuing from the presence of a holy God in the midst of Israel. Such purity laws are essential for understanding Christian sacramental theology, yet they are all too often neglected in the contemporary church. Olson provides a helpful introduction to "Purity in the Bible" and illustrates how purity law provides an important hermeneutic for interpreting priestly tradition.

No commentary can explore all the dimensions of a rich biblical book like Numbers. With that in mind, two reservations linger after reading through this commentary. The first is that the contrast of rebellion and obedience or death and life between the two generations is too rigid. Certainly, this contrast is firmly anchored in Numbers, but there is far more to Numbers 1–25 than illustrations of rebellion. These chapters are replete with positive stories of healthy community organized around a holy God (chapters 1–10) and ideal models of leadership in the wilderness march of the first generation (chapters 11–25). Many of these stories have no parallel in literature surrounding the second generation of Israel (chapters 26–36).

The second reservation is that the focus on two generations as the organizing device for Numbers is too narrow. It gives the impression that salvation is only about character or community development rather than God's quest to reclaim creation itself. Character development between the generations is important to the book of Numbers. In fact, the birth of the second generation in the wilderness carries forward one of the central organizing themes in the Pentateuch, namely the promise of descendants to the ancestors (see Gen. 12:1–4). But the Pentateuch is also organized around the theme of land, beginning with the divine promise to the ancestors in Genesis 12:7. And the theme of land anchors Numbers more broadly in a theology of creation, which is also essential to the Pentateuch. Numbers is about both community and creation. In fact, by incorporating more clearly the promise of land, it may be possible to avoid a too rigid contrast between the first and second generation in Numbers, since neither generation actually inherits the land.

There is much in Numbers that can speak to contemporary Christians. As Olson notes in his introduction, the wilderness has reemerged as a powerful symbol of contemporary religious experience. His commentary provides an excellent map for preaching, teaching, and studying Numbers.

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Adam, A. K. M. *Making Sense of New Testament Theology: "Modern" Problems and Prospects.* Macon: Mercer University Press, 1995. Pp. x + 238. $18.00.

A. K. M. Adam, Assistant Professor of New Testament at Princeton Theological Seminary, propounds in this book a simple but provocative thesis: since the operating principles that govern the production of New Testament theologies are neither transcendent nor necessary, the way is open for the formulation of nonmodern New Testament theologies.

These operating principles are familiar to those of us trained in the historical-critical approach to the biblical text whether in seminary or elsewhere, even if we've never thought about them. They are: the Renaissance humanists' claim to stand over against the Classical tradition; the compulsory power that time exercises over modern consciousness; the pivotal importance of disciplinary autonomy and specialization; and the distinction in kind between an expert's knowledge of a subject and a commoner's knowledge. Their perceived hegemony derives not from insights into the nature of interpretation but from the cultural situation of modernity. This condition Adam proceeds to analyze in detail in the opening chapters of the book.

After a composite sketch of modernity, the work of three influential New Testament scholars, Johann Philipp Gabler, William Wrede, and Krister Stendahl, is shown to presuppose modernity. Adam thus constructs the *Wredestrasse*, the path of modern New Testament theology. He then challenges the exclusive legitimacy of this highway. Other criteria for evaluating New Testament theology than the strictly historical exist. Theological, ecclesial, aesthetic, and ethical gauges, in addition to local criteria such as defending biblical inerrancy or the liberation of women from structures of oppression, are some of them.

The last chapter, "Prospects for Nonmodern New Testament Theology," examines whether any other sort of New Testament theology is legitimate. The answer is "Yes, for those interpreters who do not grant primary allegiance to the imperatives of modernity." If, for example, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza is certain that gender equality is the basis of any sound relation between Christians and their Bible, then she may rightly reject modern readings that limit the theme of sexual equality to the margins of the Bible. Charges of anachronistic tendentiousness do not show the necessity of modern New Testament theology since there are no transcendent criteria for interpretation but only local customs and guild rules. Such charges merely demonstrate imperialistic xenophobia.

Thus, historical gauges provide only one among many approaches to judging a New Testament theology. However, Adam does not propose to jettison historical judgment but merely to describe its contingencies. His book paves the way for recognizing and legitimizing alternatives. If he spends more time in creating a clearing within the forest than actually exploring the paths that already exist alongside the *Wredestrasse*, that is perhaps the consequence of where he himself stands today. For some of us, this book may be a very helpful exercise in epistemology. For others, it may serve as a reminder of how far we have come.

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Plantinga, Cornelius, Jr. *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin.* Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; Leicester, England: Apollos, 1995. Pp. xiv + 202. $19.99.

"Theologically astute" and "entertaining" are adjectives not usually conjoined. But Cornelius Plantinga's treatment of the nature and dynamics of sin summons both. Combining his gifts as a professor of systematic theology (at Calvin Theological Seminary), Reformed minister, and discerning observer of contemporary culture, Plantinga brings to life this neglected, suppressed, unstylish doctrine.

Plantinga initially defines human sin in relationship to God: God's shalom is the blessed harmony and flourishing intended for creation; sin is "blamable human vandalism of these great realities and therefore an affront to their architect and builder" (p. 16). With captivating illustrations throughout, he sharpens this definition by comparing sin with its relatives (crime, immorality, disease, error) and by making distinctions within the conception of sin (objective and subjective, "wrongness" and "badness," voluntary and involuntary). Engaging the reader with examples from literature and life, Plantinga unfolds sin's corruption of goodness, the spread of that corruption, and the "spiritual hygiene" that opposes its "perversion, pollution, and disintegration." In his consideration of the parasitic and deceptive natures of sin, Plantinga gives full voice to the complex intertwining of good and evil, to the ambiguities, hybrids, and tragic ironies of sin. With creative precision, Plantinga portrays sin's affinity with folly and opposition to wisdom. The chapter on the relationship of sin and addiction uncovers complex interactions, though the ways in which addiction is distinct from or similar to other

encounters with sin is not always clear. The book concludes with two characteristic "postures" or movements of sin: attack and flight. The epilogue reminds us that sin is part of a larger story, defining and being defined by God's grace.

Plantinga's goal is not to break new ground; someone desiring theological reflections on genetic discoveries or the latest sociological/psychological theories and their relationships with traditional doctrines of sin must look elsewhere. Nor is Plantinga proposing solutions for the social and intellectual forces that have challenged the centrality of sin. Rather, Plantinga's work is a powerful restatement of this Christian doctrine, persuasive in his vibrant illustrations and penetrating analyses. The result is a coherent, substantive theological treatise with a wealth of homiletical insights and real-life connections.

Acknowledging the limited purposes of his exposition, the reader may still desire elaboration of certain positions. What is the relationship between corporate and individual sin? Plantinga elucidates a personal, individualistic understanding of sin. Although sin is related to wider social-cultural realities in its transmission and its effects and in discussions of culpability, it is not at all clear that one can speak of sin itself as a social reality. Plantinga's brief references to original sin come closest to exploring this corporate dimension, but it is not clear how the elaboration of a corporate nature of sin would cohere with his individualistic framework. This is particularly pertinent given Plantinga's apt conjunction of sin and redemption. Does corporate sin correspond with corporate atonement?

Such questions internal to Christianity raise a further issue concerning Plantinga's intended audience. Plantinga rightly acknowledges the way in which his presentation of sin is shaped by a Christian framework, yet he nevertheless hopes to address adherents of other religions and secularists, as well as Christians. Yet it is not at all certain that those rejecting his Christian context and presuppositions will find central affirmations of the book entirely comprehensible. Our pluralistic world is able to offer alternative conceptions of "the way things ought to be," the nature of the present disparity, and the proposed remedy. I will leave this question to secularists and members of other religions; this book clearly deserves their attention. As a Christian, I highly recommend it to pastors and laity alike.

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Lehmann, Paul L. *The Decalogue and a Human Future: The Meaning of the Commandments for Making and Keeping Human Life Human.* Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995. Pp. 232. $17.99.

With the posthumous publication of this book, Paul Lehmann fulfills a promise he made over thirty years ago to produce a volume on the role the commandments properly play in Christian life. To this end he creatively brings together catechetical insights from Martin Luther; doctrinal guidance from John Calvin, Karl Barth, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer; the sociological categories of Louis Dumont and Peter Blau; the feminist critiques of Phyllis Trible, Carol Christ, and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza; and the artistic sensibilities of Auden, Milton, Shakespeare, and Yeats.

In the first of the book's two sections, entitled "Disregard, Disarray, and Discovery," Lehmann sets forth the methodological framework that shapes his contextual approach to the decalogue. In the first chapter he rejects a prescriptive reading of the decalogue that emphasizes "a calculus of permissions and prohibitions," arguing instead that the commandments are descriptive statements that enable humans to discern the pathways and patterns marking the way toward the future that God is making fit for human life. In chapters 2 and 3 Lehmann brings catechetical insights and sociological analyses to bear on the question of what constitutes the contours and boundaries of human relations, concluding that patterns of reciprocal responsibility form a tertium quid beyond the inadequacies of hierarchical and egalitarian social structures.

In the second part, "Pathways and Patterns of Reciprocal Responsibility," Lehmann examines what he considers to be pressing moral implications of each commandment. He covers a broad range of topics, for example, the patriarchal co-optation of God's name, the family caught between the expansion of rights and the abrogation of responsibilities, abortion, homosexuality, and the humanizing relationship that properly exists between the possession and use of property. With each new commandment Lehmann gives the reader a compelling argument, inviting us to take up and take seriously the matters under consideration and to probe even further into the questions and opportunities that make up the moral fabric of human life.

There are, nonetheless, questions in the book that need to be addressed. Most pressing is the need to elaborate more precisely the redemptive nature of the connection that Lehmann identifies between the behavioral thrust of the decalogue's "structural realism" and the sociological categories supplied by Dumont and Blau. He states, for example, that the decalogue is the sum of what the gospel affirms about life in this world, and he alludes often to the

covenantal-messianic story, yet he rarely takes time to show us how a descriptive reading of the commandments is decisively shaped and directed by the face-to-face encounters that comprise the story of Messiah Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

In like fashion, insufficient attention is paid to the church as an eschatological gathering or *koinonia.* As Nancy Duff points out in her excellent introduction to the book, ecclesiology is crucial to Lehmann's theology. The point here is not that the church is a perfect company of the sinless, in possession of concise moral formulas into which one only need plug in the variables to know exactly what to do. Rather, as Lehmann puts it in his best known work, *Ethics in a Christian Context,* the continuing life of the *koinonia* is the context within which the discernible difference that the triune activity of God makes in the world comes into view.

All things considered, however, *The Decalogue and a Human Future* represents a fitting conclusion to a distinguished career that spanned seven decades, leaving to future generations a legacy of artistry and erudition that will inspire and instruct for years to come.

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Wolterstorff, Nicholas. *Divine Discourse: Philosophical Reflections on the Claim That God Speaks.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. Pp. x + 326. $59.95/$18.95.

This book, based on the Wilde Lectures at Oxford in 1993, is probably the most extensive and penetrating philosophical discussion of the idea of divine speaking ever undertaken. In part, it is an essay in conceptual analysis, attempting to clarify the concept of a divine speech and to distinguish it from revelation and other related notions. It explores the possibility of such speech, and the possible modes in which it might be actualized. And it includes an extensive discussion of what Wolterstorff takes to be the appropriate procedure for biblical interpretation as a way of hearing that speech.

When Wolterstorff writes about the divine speaking, he intends "speech" in much the same sense as that in which we say that humans speak. So he explores the various ways in which we can say speakers make statements, ask questions, etc. He then explores the analogous possibilities for the divine speaker.

Wolterstorff construes speech as essentially a method of altering the normative landscape. When I speak, according to him, I acquire new rights

and duties, and I confer new rights and duties on others. The same goes for God. The divine speaker enters into a normative interchange with us and thus generates, and accepts, a new normative configuration.

It is important to Wolterstorff's argument to observe that there are many modes of human speech—it is not limited to making vocal sounds or marking paper with one's own hand. Wolterstorff is especially interested in two modes of "mediated" speech. There is "authorized" speech, in which one agent authorizes another to speak for him or her. When the second agent speaks (in the specified circumstances), that counts as a speech by the authorizing agent. He or she thereby acquires the corresponding normative status. Wolterstorff cites examples like that of the ambassador who is authorized to speak for the president, and the secretary who is authorized to write letters and sign them on behalf of the boss.

Another form of mediated speech consists of one agent's "appropriating" something said by someone else and making it his or her own. So, in a public meeting, someone may hear a speech and follow it up by saying, "That expresses my sentiments, too." Or, in writing an article, one may quote another author "approvingly." And Wolterstorff takes both authorization and appropriation to be among the most important modalities for the divine speaking.

Two areas invite further exploration. Wolterstorff seems to construe authorization as essentially a two-agent relation. President Truman authorizes Kennan to speak for him in the Kremlin, the boss authorizes the secretary to sign letters, and God authorizes a prophet to speak in God's name. But this seems to leave out an important element. The fact is that nothing that transpires between Truman and Kennan can make Kennan's words, spoken in Moscow, count as Truman's message to Stalin. Kennan's authorization cannot be a private affair between him and the president. It must be "public" in a sense. Kennan needs credentials, and credentials of a sort that can be recognized in Moscow. (I suppose there are standard forms for diplomatic credentials.) Without such credentials, nothing that Kennan says in the Kremlin will confer the desired normative status on Truman in the White House. To whatever extent the divine speech to us is construed according to this model, must there not be some element that is analogous to the ambassador's credentials? How, when, where, and to whom are these credentials presented?

The second problem involves one of Wolterstorff's principles of biblical interpretation. More than once, he says that our interpretations must never attribute a falsehood to God. But he gives no reason, I think, to support this

rule. One might, however, think that a speaker utters a falsehood either as a result of some ignorance or mistake, or else as a deliberate attempt to deceive. In the one case it stems from a cognitive defect, in the other from a moral defect. But God has neither of these defects. So God says nothing false.

The possibility of mediated speech, however, undercuts this argument, for it suggests a way in which God may come to assert falsehoods without either of these defects. If I authorize someone to speak for me, then I accept the responsibility for what she says, even if I would not have said that thing with my own mouth. If the governors of Baring's Bank authorize an agent in Singapore to trade on the Tokyo stock exchange with bank money, then Baring's Bank sustains the losses, even if none of the governors would themselves have made those trades. But according to Wolterstorff's analysis, acquiring the normative status associated with the assertion of a certain proposition is essentially what *saying* that proposition amounts to. Perhaps we should explore the possibility that God authorizes someone to speak for him, and thus (willingly) accepts the responsibility for what is said, including the falsehood that is said, even if God would not have said those things in an unmediated way.

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Albertz, Rainer. *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period.* 2 vols. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994. Pp. 740. $32.00; $32.00.

Rainer Albertz, Professor of Biblical Exegesis and Biblical Theology at the University of Siegen, Germany, first came to prominence in 1978 with the publication of *Persönliche Frömmigkeit und offizielle Religion: Religionsinterner Pluralismus in Israel und Babylon*, a comparative study of the contrast between personal piety and official religion in Israel and Babylon. The present two-volume work, originally published in German in 1992, represents a continuation and broadening of the research interests found in that earlier work.

Albertz wants to rehabilitate a history-of-religions approach to the study of the Old Testament in contrast to the biblical-theology approach that he thinks currently dominates the field. He has also made a serious attempt to incorporate the results of recent sociological study of the Old Testament. Yet the structure of his treatment is strikingly similar to historically arranged theologies of the Old Testament, such as that of Gerhard von Rad. History or the history of religious traditions is actually more important in Albertz's work

than the nuts and bolts of religion. This is not the work to consult to learn about the actual cultic practices in ancient Israel. In contrast to such a work as Mark S. Smith's *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel* (1987), which has detailed discussions of the various symbols, sites, and practices of the Israelite cult, Albertz's discussion of such phenomena as the cultic stela, the ashera, the high place, sacrifice, etc., tends to be cursory, scattered, and episodic. One never gets much sense how the various elements of the cult cohere in any kind of system at any particular period.

Moreover, Albertz's reconstruction of the historical development of Israel's religious traditions depends on a number of problematic literary judgments. He assigns a very late date to the whole process of Pentateuchal composition, rejecting the traditional preexilic sources J and E. He also assigns the Book of the Covenant (Exodus 21–23), traditionally dated to the early monarchical or even premonarchical period, a date in the reign of Hezekiah in the late eighth century B.C. Further, while offering no explanation for Deuteronomy's obvious northern elements, Albertz turns it into a purely southern work whose composition could not have begun before 631 B.C. There was no preexilic edition of the deuteronomic history; according to Albertz it took shape only gradually after 561 B.C., developing out of the work of theological discussion groups. Neither Albertz's late datings nor the prominence he gives to composition by committee provide adequate explanations for the literary character of these works. If his literary judgments were correct, one would be able to say very little about the nature of Israelite religion prior to the very end of the eighth century, and even what one could say about the eighth and seventh centuries would be suspect as revisionist deuteronomistic ideology. Albertz wants to say a great deal about the earlier periods, but his treatment of the sources has provided no convincing rationale for why one should trust any reconstruction of Israelite religion for the periods prior to the eighth century B.C.

Despite his failure to isolate early sources, however, Albertz's reconstruction of the royal theology of the Davidic-Solomonic period is probably the strongest part of his work. His recognition of the strong Egyptian influence on the Israelite coronation ritual and his refusal to allow apologetic concerns to undercut that observation is a case in point. Yet methodological weaknesses still undermine confidence in details of his sketch of the historical development of the monarchy. He tries to draw a very sharp distinction between the tribal chieftainship of Saul and the full-fledged monarchy of David, but when he begins describing the taxation necessary to support the changes under David and Solomon, he actually cites texts purporting to deal with the

situation under Saul. If taken seriously, these texts suggest a significant development of the monarchy already under Saul.

Albertz makes a great deal of the supposed contrast in the early period between the personal piety of Israelites, directed toward many gods, and the state religion, directed toward the national deity, Yahweh. His evidence for this is primarily based on Israelite personal names, many of which, on his source analysis, cannot be assigned an early date, and his results are contradicted by Jeffrey Tigay's more thorough and judicious study of the biblical and inscriptional material (*You Shall Have No Other Gods: Israelite Religion in the Light of Hebrew Inscriptions* [1986]). But if the supposed contrast between personal piety and state religion is hard to demonstrate for the earlier period, one must be very dubious of Albertz's claims that a change in personal and family piety in the later period played a major role in the transformation and preservation of Yahwism at the time of the exile. His dating of the idea of the covenant between Yahweh and Israel to the late seventh century B.C. is also problematic. It must cavalierly delete the contrary evidence in the eighth-century prophet Hosea and ignore obvious contrasts in important structural elements between the Israelite covenant and Assyrian covenants of the first millennium. Oddly, Albertz also follows the apologists in dismissing the evidence for child sacrifice in Israel. The attempt to turn the burning of the child on the tophet into a harmless dedication ritual analogous to infant baptism will not wash. Such allusions to the practice as that found in Isaiah 30:33 clearly imply the fiery death of the human sacrifice.

These critical comments should not be misconstrued as a totally negative judgment on the books. Albertz offers many acute observations, and his construals of Israelite religion, even when one remains unconvinced of his historical schema, are often suggestive and productive of new lines of thought. It is a work worth reading both for its ideas and for its marvelous bibliographical resources. But it has not adequately met the need for a reliable reference work on the history of Israelite religion in the Old Testament period. Such a work remains to be written.

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White, L. Michael, and O. Larry Yarbrough, eds. *The Social World of the First Christians: Essays in Honor of Wayne A. Meeks.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995. Pp. xxix + 418. $54.00.

Social World is a fitting tribute to the legacy of social analysis that Wayne A. Meeks leaves for future biblical interpreters. The book is divided neatly into

four parts. Nine essays in part 1 deal with Paul and his communities. The first five "treat patterns of argument in Paul's letters as they relate to the social and interpretive context of his communities." The last four examine Paul's method of organizing and exhorting his communities; in the process they help to demonstrate how social conventions of the time influenced both the content and manner of the Apostle's activities. In part 2, themes that highlight writings from other Christian communities, those represented in Matthew, Luke-Acts, John, and James, are considered in light of their social contexts. Part 3 extends the study away from a direct consideration of Christian issues into the broader social environments of magic, pagan Greek religious sacrifice, and gnosticism. Finally, the brief concluding section looks at the impact of Pauline traditions in shaping later Christian life and thought, especially as it develops through an Augustinian lens.

I find parts 1 and 2 extremely exciting. Direct links are established between the social context in which the biblical materials were written and the manner in which conclusions about the meaning of those materials are acquired. Each of the authors helps us to see how the material would most likely have been understood given the sociohistorical filters of the period. Often implied is the suggestion (and I believe it appropriate) that Paul and his audience, because of their shared social circumstance, assumed a common meaning for many of the rhetorical terms and devices that now seem puzzling to contemporary readers and interpreters.

Ronald F. Hock's article, "A Support for His Old Age: Paul's Plea on Behalf of Onesimus," is a case in point. Paul does not spend time explaining terminology like πρεσβύτης (old man or ambassador) in Philemon 9 because he knows his readers understand him. We, however, do not. We know that Paul wanted Philemon to allow his slave, Onesimus, to return to Paul's side. We are not certain, however, whether the Apostle based his appeal on the authoritative self-designation "ambassador" or on the self-effacing qualifier "old man." We must, therefore, reconstruct the rhetorical relationship that existed between Paul and his intended audience in Philemon's household. Hock does this through the use of Greco-Roman literary and social parallels. The comparisons prompt the conclusion that Paul referred to himself as an old man; in so doing, he represented Onesimus as a son whose proper place is at the side of his aging spiritual father, Paul. Common social convention demanded compliance. Paul, then, like Greco-Roman literary figures of the time, personalized his relationship with both the slave Onesimus and his owner, Philemon, in order to make his point and obtain his desire.

This work is a substantial one that has much to contribute to the field of New Testament research and professional biblical interpretation. I do have two concerns. My first has to do with the final two sections of the book. While I find the material illuminating and often provocative, especially Segal's discussion of magic, the material in the end seems less "useful" for illuminating issues of interpreting the New Testament. Certainly this is not the case with Stowers' study on Greeks who sacrifice and those who don't. Indeed, his work gives the reader a clearer understanding of the importance of sacrifice in the ancient world and, therefore, the precarious position into which a Christian who refused to sacrifice would place him- or herself. For the most part, however, these latter materials serve their own historical purposes of social evaluation and investigation; the reader is left to connect the conclusions drawn from the studies of the social world of the first Christians to the interpretation of the literature those Christians produced.

My second concern stems from the apparent unwillingness to make the move from considering the first-century context of interpretation to examining the contemporary context. Certainly, this concern is often implied and/or stated; rarely, however, is the investigative skill, patience, and resolve that went into these articles directed toward contemporary social-analytical issues and how they affect not only how we reconstruct the first-century social world but also how we interpret the biblical materials that developed in it.

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Betz, Hans Dieter. *The Sermon on the Mount: A Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, including the Sermon on the Plain (Matthew 5:3–7:27 and Luke 6:20–49).* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995. Pp. xxxvii + 695. $72.00.

With this addition to the Hermeneia commentary series, Hans Dieter Betz brings to a magisterial culmination his exegetical labors on the Sermon on the Mount. This massive examination of the Sermon draws on Betz's intimate familiarity with Hellenistic rhetorical culture, on his thorough acquaintance with the history of interpretation of the Sermon, and on his immersion in the exegetical tradition of source and redaction criticism. With these tools, he constructs a powerful argument that the Sermon as it appears in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke represents independent, pre-Gospel redactions of a shared collection of sayings; the compilers of these collections have shaped the two "sermons" into *epitomai*, compendia of Jesus' teachings, for catechetical purposes.

The introductory section rehearses the history of the interpretation of the Sermon, from the earliest Christian writings to the present. Betz then considers the structure, the genre, and the function of the Sermon(s), concluding that these categories all support his hypothesis that these texts represent divergent complementary representations of the Jesus movement's central doctrines—the Sermon on the Mount compiled by Jews for their mission to other Jews, and the Sermon on the Plain compiled by Jews for the mission to Gentiles. He supports his introductory explanations with detailed rhetorical outlines of the two Sermons.

The remainder of the volume undertakes a detailed analysis of the two texts (first the Matthean Sermon, then the Lukan). Betz devotes almost a hundred pages to the beatitudes (Matt. 5:3–12; Luke 6:20b–26), more than a hundred pages to the antitheses (Matt. 5:21–48), and copious attention to virtually every aspect of this crucial text. He calls constant attention to illuminating material from the Greek primary sources, though he alludes to rabbinic sources principally through secondary reference works. The commentary follows the Hermeneia pattern of translation, general analysis, and detailed verse-by-verse examination (with copious footnotes) into which Betz incorporates significant excursuses on "Jerusalem," Socrates' defiance of the law, oaths, and ancient theories of vision, to name but a few. A select bibliography concludes the volume (Betz allows works of limited importance simply to remain in the footnotes to the passages they illuminate).

This commentary is a treasure of insights from ancient parallels, from the history of interpretation, and from the author's encyclopedic familiarity with the best of contemporary scholarship. Even if one is not convinced by Betz's suggestion that the Sermon(s) reflect separately redacted presynoptic versions of a common stock of material, the notes and analysis are quite valuable (Betz's familiarity with the Greek literature is evident on every page). It is regrettable, though, that he devotes less attention to specifically Jewish traditions, especially since much of the Sermon(s) involves legal/ethical reasoning (and since his thesis proposes the Jewish origin of both Sermons and the Jewish destination of the Matthean Sermon). While there is much that is precious in this volume, the high cost and the attention to minutiae mean that many pastors would find this monumental reference volume an expense disproportionate to its usefulness.

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Gold, Victor Roland, et al., eds. *The New Testament and Psalms: An Inclusive Version.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1995. Pp. xxii + 535. $14.95.

Any translation of the New Testament described as "an inclusive version" is likely to have an immediate appeal for many readers. But it is no use having politically correct language if the meaning of the original text is not conveyed. Unfortunately, in spite of its extravagant claims, this version fails to live up to its promise to present the true meaning of the text.

In the preface, the editors set out the reasons for "another version." Changes in the English langage and developments in our understanding of Greek and Hebrew have necessitated new translations, and the New Revised Standard Version and Revised English Bible are excellent examples of such translations. In fact, however, the only differences between this present "translation" and the NRSV, on which it is based, are concerned with issues of "inclusive language." It is these changes that "justify" the present version.

The NRSV itself had already made numerous changes to the RSV in the interest of using inclusive language. Many of the changes were simple and necessary: There can, for example, be no justification for modern translators using the word "man" in any passage in which there is no reference to a man in Greek. The changes made in this version, however, go far beyond this. The editors attempt to remove "all gender-specific language not referring to particular historical individuals, all pejorative references to race, color, or religion, and all identifications of persons by their physical disability alone." In doing so, they claim that they have brought out "the underlying meaning of the text more explicitly than ever before." In fact, they have done the very reverse: by attempting to make the text "relevant," they have succeeded in hiding its original meaning. At the same time, a few passages remain, still expressed in politically "incorrect" langage, to show how impossible it is to conceal the Bible's cultural relativity.

The New Testament was written in a male-dominated society. One should not try to disguise this. Paradoxically, in their attempts to do so, our editors lose one of the points they are trying to emphasize—the universality of the gospel. One of the remarkable things about the New Testament is how often, in a male-dominated world, women were being treated as equals. By removing references to "Son" and "sons" in Galatians 3–4, for example, we lose sight of Paul's remarkable claim that women were now being treated as "sons of God"—sons of God and therefore (like men) inheritors of God's promises. Of course the language of sonship jars us—and so it should, but at the time it must have jarred ancient readers far more, because the very idea it expressed

was so shocking! Ancient readers must have been shocked, too, by the references to the three women who are specifically named by Matthew in his version of Jesus' genealogy. All three are gentiles and outsiders. Why does Matthew mention them, and what is he hinting about the gospel? These gentile women (doubly second-class!) had fulfilled an important role in God's plan. But our editors miss the point entirely, by inserting the names of other (perfectly "acceptable") women into the list!

So, too, with the references to people with disabilities. The editors have rejected the normal translations such as "the blind," "the lame," or "lepers," in favor of phrases such as "people who are blind," "those who are lame," and "persons with leprosy," on the basis that "they are people first and they have disabilities second." But the point of the gospel story is that in the biblical world these people were *not* regarded as "people first": they were regarded as maimed, imperfect, unclean, outsiders. And Jesus healed even them! Not only that, he made them members of the community. Women, gentiles, the sick, and the unclean were all members of God's people.

It is a strange phenomenon that the attempt to achieve "greater specificity" in language in fact often succeeds in making it more remote: there is nothing more impersonal than the word "person"! Take, for example, the story in Mark 1:40–45. Gone is "the leper"; instead we have "a person with leprosy." Instead of touching "him," we have "Jesus . . . touched the person." When we come to Mark 14, however, we find that the woman who anoints Jesus is still "a woman"! There is surely sexist bias here: the women remain real people, but the men are reduced to being "persons" and lose their personality.

This version will, of course, have nothing to do with masculine terms for God. "Father" has become "Father-Mother." This can hardly be said to convey the meaning of the original! Certainly it avoids the danger that it might be taken literally. But does it function successfully as a metaphor? It jars because it is so obviously artificial and conveys nothing of the sense of a loving relationship. Again, the editors have dropped "Lord" as a designation for Christ, but in doing so they obliterate very interesting and significant evidence regarding the development of Christology. The one change that could perhaps be regarded as an improvement is the use of "dominion" for "kingdom"—not because it avoids the "sexist" term "king" but because it arguably conveys the idea of rule as well as realm. Here, at last, we have a change that *does* convey the underlying meaning of the text better!

Verbs, as well as nouns, convey the mores of another era. Take the admonition to women to obey their husbands in Ephesians 5:22. The revisers have changed this to "Be committed to your husbands." But this is not what

the verb *hypotassō* means; it means "to be subject to" or "to obey." And if women in the ancient world were expected to obey their husbands, children were also expected to obey their parents (Eph. 6:1), not to "heed" them. In this version, parents are no longer said to "discipline" their children in Hebrews 12:7 but to "guide" them, for fear that the passage might be used to justify child abuse (p. xx)! But Romans 13, used by some Christians in Nazi Germany to justify their failure to withstand Hitler, remains unchanged, to remind us that the New Testament was in fact written in a very different world.

The Bible was written in another age and another culture, and it is foolish to try to disguise this fact by tinkering with the language. In attempting to do so, the editors of this version have in fact obscured the radical nature of the gospel. We shall never understand the Bible if we treat it in this way. We may not like what it says, but we are not being true to its underlying meaning if we change the bits that do not fit with our modern perceptions.

Morna D. Hooker
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Charlesworth, James H., and Walter P. Weaver, eds. *Earthing Christologies: From Jesus' Parables to Jesus the Parable.* Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1995. Pp. xiv + 111. $13.00.

This is a revised and updated edition of a collection of essays first published by Exodus Press, Nashville, in 1989. The essays constitute a fresh attempt to assert the significance of the historical Jesus in the light of and in response to the issues still raised particularly by Rudolf Bultmann.

Walter Weaver of Florida Southern College begins the sequence by relating his own personal odyssey on the importance of the historical Jesus (through Bultmann, the New Hermeneutic, and so on) and drawing out conclusions that are in effect those of the so-called New Quest before outlining the model that has proved fruitful for him, namely, Jesus as Parable. This model has four characteristic elements: "identity with the dispossessed," "true life as cruciform," "God as parabolic," and "eschatological hope."

James H. Charlesworth of Princeton offers an interesting comparison between the Teacher of Righteousness and Jesus. Assuming that 1QH 8:4–11 is a psalm composed by the Teacher, we have an insight into his self-understanding. The position is somewhat similar with regard to Jesus in Mark 12:1–9. Despite these similarities, the endings of the story are rather different,

which raises the question: Is there a clue to the diversity of these outcomes in the different albeit similar self-understandings?

Leander Keck of Yale provides a finely nuanced treatment of Jesus *and* Judaism in the New Testament. Jesus *in* Judaism is no answer to the question Who is Jesus? To answer that question adequately an "interpretive framework" is required; otherwise, "Jesus in Judaism is just another interesting first-century Palestinian teacher." Keck proceeds to set the answer within the frameworks of Matthew, John, and Paul. In the first case, it becomes clear that Jesus and Judaism cannot simply be set in antithesis. "Matthew's Jesus stands over against Judaism just like the Old Testament prophets stood over against the religion of Israel." John uses his material to force his readers to face the same decision regarding Jesus as had the Jews. Paul is different again. Keck concludes that we need to continue speaking of the historical Jesus *in* Judaism "to keep us honest," and that "the formulation 'Jesus AND Judaism' is essential theologically if the integrity of Christianity is to be preserved," but that they are not the same.

Hugh Anderson of Edinburgh winds up with a somewhat wandering piece perhaps appropriately entitled "Christology: Unfinished Business." It includes a rather stringent critique of C. F. D. Moule that seems to have been somewhat misdirected. The real thrust of the essay is its poignant attempt to speak realistically of the resurrection of Christ in a world where death still seems unfettered. Anderson can achieve no confidence regarding Jesus' resurrection, but his challenge is effective in its own way: "Where Christian believers have opportunity to improve the human condition, and yet death is somehow permitted to stalk all around them in life, by oppression, injustice, falsehood, and lovelessness, then we can say that Jesus is not risen." In his conclusion to the whole, Weaver notes that the point of Anderson's essay was well summarized by Keck: "The real test of the validity of the Christ idea is not in its theoretical appeal to reason or logic, but how the divine-human Christ is experienced by men and women and the effect that has on their lives."

The collection is something of a mixed bag, but in the honesty of Weaver's and Anderson's testimonies, in the fresh insights afforded by Charlesworth's comparison, and in the sharpness of Keck's theological observations and analysis, there is a goodly amount of grain to be gleaned.

James D. G. Dunn
University of Durham

Butin, Philip Walker. *Revelation, Redemption, and Response: Calvin's Trinitarian Understanding of the Divine-Human Relationship.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1995. Pp. xiii + 232. $39.95.

Revelation, Redemption and Response is a splendid study of Calvin's understanding of the divine-human relationship ("the knowledge of God and ourselves") expounded, as Calvin does, in terms of the doctrine of the Trinity. This trinitarian reading of Calvin's theology—from which his anthropology cannot be separated—is not only a major contribution to Calvin studies but—one would hope—to twentieth-century dogmatics as well.

Concerning the first contribution, modern Calvin studies (and debates) between and among Brunner and Barth, Dowey and Parker on God the Creator and Redeemer, Willis on Christology, and Krusche on pneumatology prepared and produced the need for this synoptic trinitarian reflection. To the studies of what God has done *for* us, and *in* us, this one focuses on what God does *with* us. Additionally, using the doctrine of the divine triunity as integrating paradigm advances the continuing discussion concerning whether Calvin thinks from a single, central dogma or from an interlocking set of essential doctrines. The doctrine of the Trinity offers a synthesis (perichoresis) to the discussion of Calvin's starting point—or points—and one based on the theological dialectic of revelation rather than on a philosophical dialectic of reasoned opposites. As an interpretation of Calvin's theology it has the immensely persuasive advantage of being obviously read directly off the form and content of the *Institutes.*

Concerning the second contribution, Calvin's trinitarian understanding of anthropology—based on confidence in divine revelation rather than appeal to human reason—is a denial of, and perhaps a recoverable alternative to, the pervasive Cartesian model of the self in essential separation from God, whose very existence is a secondary and logically derived inference from the undoubtable certainty of human existence. According to Calvin, human being is properly understood from the revealed being of God as Father, Son, and Spirit. Butin underlines the essential fact that Calvin, unlike Thomas, does not develop a doctrine of God in general and then proceed to the Trinity in particular.

The discussion in part 1 (chapters 1–3) includes the importance of the academic approach to Calvin as an historical figure while correctly insisting that judicious and careful study does not exclude Calvin from being seen as a continuing resource for the church's theology. The central section (chapters 4–6) focuses on the revelation of God and what we can learn about ourselves

in reflecting on the divine perichoretic reality. Chapter 4 considers the revealed basis of the authentic knowledge of God the Father who is both the source and "subject" of revelation. Chapter 5 expounds the redemptive pattern as demonstrated in God the Son. Chapter 6 considers the dynamic response as enabled by the work of God the Holy Spirit. Part 3 (chapters 7–9) carries the trinitarian thesis through the doctrine of the church (and election), with special focus on the sacraments.

The "central problem" of the study is defined as "How can what *God* does in us also and simultaneously be authentically *human* response?" (pp. 92–93). Butin grants that book 3 of the *Institutes*, with its "apparently Christological title" (p. 80) and its "absence of a discrete discussion of the deity of the Spirit" focuses not on the person but "on the specific work of the Spirit in the divine-human relationship" (p. 81), thereby appearing "to shift attention to the human side of the divine-human relationship" (p. 76).

Butin's carefully nuanced conclusion is that while "faith and the Holy Spirit sometimes appear in Calvin's thought to represent two complementary levels of explanation for the same phenomenon" (p. 86), "there is no intrinsic incompatibility between attributing the same human actions primarily and fundamentally to God's grace, and yet concurrently (in a second and wholly derivative sense) to human beings" (p. 78). According to Butin, the divinely enabled human response means that believers, as members of Christ's body, are included in the divine perichoresis (p. 43).

Butin helpfully reviews and evaluates the state of Calvin studies in general and specifically in regard to the doctrine of the Trinity. Ministers will read this study with intellectual joy and spiritual profit.

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Puckett, David L. *John Calvin's Exegesis of the Old Testament.* Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995. Pp. ix + 179. $17.00.

Rather than being a general study, as the title might imply, David L. Puckett's *John Calvin's Exegesis of the Old Testament* is built around a focused question. The question grows from a late-sixteenth-century polemical accusation: The Lutheran theologian Aegidius Hunnius charged Calvin with being too "Jewish" in his interpretation of the Old Testament. In Reformation polemics every Christian faction accused its opponents of being "Judaizers" on all manner of issues, and biblical interpretation was no exception. The contemporary methods of interpretation of the Old Testament ranged from

traditional Christian attempts to find Jesus Christ on every possible page to Jewish commentators who, not surprisingly, found no such references. Puckett sorts out the reality behind the polemics, and he finds Calvin exemplifying a middle way that critiques both extremes.

After laying out this scenario in the first chapter, Puckett examines the question piece by piece. The second chapter lays out two of Calvin's primary presuppositions about the Bible: First, the scriptures are of both divine and human authorship, so the exegete's task is to discern the very thoughts and intentions of these two sources. Second, there is a deep unity throughout the Bible between the Testaments and within the Old Testament. Both Testaments proclaim salvation through a mediator, promised in the Old and present in the New. Within the Old Testament, the prophets are interpreters of the law.

The third and fourth chapters comprise the core of Puckett's argument, respectively discussing aspects of Calvin's exegesis that seem "Jewish" and "Christian." He is taken as Jewish for reading the text in light of its human author's historical context. Calvin was critical of traditional Christian interpretations of Old Testament texts that supported Christian doctrine by ignoring the original meaning. Hunnius thought Calvin was supporting Jewish positions and undercutting Christian ones even though Calvin did not critique the doctrines themselves but only the faulty interpretations used to support them. Calvin also risked appearing a Judaizer for his careful attention to the proper understanding of the Hebrew language. He attempted to determine the meaning of words and passages based on their usage throughout the Hebrew scriptures and on the literary and historical contexts of passages being interpreted. He even gave favorable judgments on conclusions of rabbinic commentators regarding the definitions of words.

The more traditionally Christian aspects include Calvin's critique of the conclusions of Jewish interpreters and his use of the New Testament as a guide to his interpretation of the Old. Calvin strained to affirm the New Testament's use of Old Testament texts, and he used Jesus and Paul as authoritative guides to understanding the Old Testament. Anti-Semitism is not among the most prominent features of Calvin's theology or his exegesis. However, Puckett shows that Calvin held the negative assumptions typical of his age. Calvin portrayed Jews as blind to the christological meaning of scripture because they lacked piety, and he accused them of twisting the scriptures away from true meanings willfully and even diabolically.

In the fifth chapter Puckett illustrates Calvin's middle way by examining the troublesome issues of allegory, typology, and prophecy. In each of these

Calvin approves less than some Christians, who deny the historical reference of the text, but more than Jews, who deny its christological reference. In each area the question of literal fulfillment weighs heavily: Old Testament passages that were not fulfilled literally or fully before Christ are more open to christological interpretations. Some allegory is approved when the literary characteristics of the text require it. A great deal of typology and predictive prophecy can be related to Christ and his reign, though usually the text must be allowed to have at least partial reference to its own time.

Puckett's study is useful for those interested in Calvin's biblical interpretation and how it fits within the polemics of his age. We see Calvin standing confidently in the middle with his intellectual and spiritual integrity intact. It also provides a good window into the sources of Reformed theology. Puckett shows Calvin's priority on honest, open-minded study of scripture, and his trust that, when studied rather than twisted, scripture will provide the resources for the church's doctrinal reflection.

Gary Neal Hansen
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Morimoto, Anri. *Jonathan Edwards and the Catholic Vision of Salvation.* University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995. Pp. vii + 178. $33.50.

Anri Morimoto, currently teaching theology and ethics and University Minister at International Christian University in Tokyo, is the author of this accessible and well-written study of Jonathan Edwards' understanding of justification and sanctification. Morimoto shows how Edwards tried to do justice to the Pauline affirmations that "we are justified by faith" and that "in Christ we are a new creation." His thesis is that Edwards combined the Protestant concern that justification is the work of God with the Roman Catholic emphasis that God's saving action produces an abiding change in the believer, thus providing a unique, ecumenical understanding of justification and sanctification.

Morimoto argues that Edwards' view is able to preserve the meaningfulness of the Christian message while including nonbelievers and members of other religions in a Christian understanding of the economy of salvation. The key to this lies in Edwards' conception of justification and sanctification in terms of his dispositional ontology. All this is argued through a careful study of Edwards' understanding of conversion, justification, and sanctification, which compares Edwards to classical and contemporary Roman Catholic and Protestant positions along the way. The result is a very readable and thought-

provoking study introducing one aspect of Edwards' thought and showing its relevance for the present. Those used to understanding justification as God's paradoxical acceptance of a sinner will find a very different view here. Justification according to Edwards follows upon conversion, in which the Holy Spirit establishes in the person a new saving disposition of love for God. In justification, this new saving disposition, "though not counted as the qualification for justification, is given due recognition." For Edwards justification is not so much the acceptance of the ungodly, though it is that, as God crowning God's own previously given gift of faith.

While he admirably shows how Edwards holds together many traditional concerns of Protestant and Roman Catholic theology, Morimoto does not suggest how Edwards' position could be expressed today. How are we to understand the change wrought in the believer in conversion by the Holy Spirit? If grace is infused into the believer as a new disposition, where does it lodge? Edwards attempted to answer this question in a realistic way with his notion of the new spiritual sense, pointing to the imagination as the place where the change of sanctification occurs. Gregory Baum and Garrett Green have recently developed similar positions, though without reference to Edwards. The believer becomes a new creation as the symbols of the faith come to structure the imagination, thus shaping the perception, judgments, and actions in the world. It would be worthwhile to bring Edwards into this contemporary discussion. But even without this, Morimoto has succeeded in showing the ecumenical relevance of Edwards' understanding of how God's grace takes effect in people's lives. Through this he has contributed to the understanding of Edwards and the Christian faith.

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Gaustad, Edwin S. *Sworn on the Altar of God: A Religious Biography of Thomas Jefferson.* Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1996. Pp. xiv + 246. $15.00.

Once again Edwin S. Gaustad has demonstrated that first-rate scholarship and sparkling prose can live together happily in the same book. One of the premier historians of American religion and a former guest professor at Princeton Seminary, Gaustad turns his skills in *Sworn on the Altar of God* to depicting the religion of America's third president. Conventional wisdom often defines Jefferson's religious views in terms of what he opposed. For

example, he stood against efforts to breach what he called "a wall of separation between Church and State," denied that the doctrines peculiar to individual denominations had moral significance for the welfare of society at large, and railed privately against the corruptions with which he believed Christians had overlaid the teachings of their founder. While recognizing and brilliantly illuminating these aspects of Jefferson's thought, Gaustad shows that there was much more to Jefferson's religion than negations.

Shaped by the Enlightenment, Jefferson's faith centered on nature and reason. Nature, though a concept filled with shifting and sometimes contradictory meanings, signified for Jefferson primarily an orderly, benevolent universe sustained by the God who created it. Through patient observation, reason discerned the laws of nature (thus of God, too), disclosed the path of virtue, and permitted humankind to cooperate with these laws to build a better world. To realize the promise of reason, one needed only to leave the mind free to investigate, for in Jefferson's matchless phrase, "truth is great and will prevail if left to herself." The quest for truth moved away from the local or provincial to the universal and cosmopolitan. Jefferson ardently believed that all religions, however perverted and encrusted with error, had a common essence. All alike taught the existence of a moral God, the necessity of virtuous living in accord with laws applicable to every place or time, and a future life in which cosmic justice would reward people according to their moral desserts. Jefferson believed that this simplified creed would serve as the basis for a reformed Christianity, and he looked for the triumph of Unitarianism. Although we might style him a deist, Jefferson considered himself a Christian, at least according to his understanding of Jesus. He spent evenings in the Executive Mansion cutting and pasting portions of the Gospels to create a condensed Bible embodying what he deemed the genuine sayings of Jesus. It was a text shorn of the miraculous and the mysterious, a text presenting Jesus as a teacher of simple moral truths rather than as the divine Son of God.

Jefferson often avowed that individual religious belief was of no concern in the public domain. "It does me no injury," he declared, "for my neighbour to say there are twenty gods, or no god. It neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg." Yet as Gaustad ably illustrates, this was not Jefferson's last word on the subject. Although he wished to exclude sectarian dogmas from the civic realm, the president's belief in the self-evidence of the laws of nature and nature's God pushed him toward a public theology of sorts. The universal moral laws visible to reason's eye provided the moral commitments that sustained shared discourse and civility within society. Of all his ventures, his labors on behalf of

education most clearly testified to his belief that religion, rightly understood, played an essential role in public life. Believing that an educated populace was essential for the success of democracy, he strove to create in Virginia a comprehensive system of schooling from grammar schools to a university. All sectarian religion was, of course, to be excluded from this instruction or at least relegated to its margins; but the moral precepts allegedly taught by nature and reason were to be an essential component of a system designed to produce virtuous republicans.

In assessing the abiding significance of Jefferson's legacy, Gaustad suggests that the third president has much to teach us about civility and the common moral good in an era when "racial, ethnic, and gender tribalisms" may cause us to wonder if the nation is tied together "by something more than a network of interstate highways." Gaustad also offers the provocative suggestion that evangelical Christians ought to take another look at Jefferson, for he and their spiritual forebears may have had more in common than is commonly supposed. Jefferson and many nineeteenth-century evangelicals shared a passion for republican values, an emphasis upon private and public morality, a "spirited optimism," and a similarly primitivist desire (albeit differently interpreted) to repristinate the earliest forms of the Christian faith.

In several places, Gaustad notes the inconsistencies between Jefferson's soaring affirmations and his attitudes toward slavery. One might wish that the author had explored this issue a bit further. But this minor reservation aside, Gaustad has produced in *Sworn on the Altar of God* one of those gems increasingly rare in scholarly publishing: a volume equally valuable to specialists and to beginning students of American religion alike.

James H. Moorhead
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Erskine, Noel Leo. *King among the Theologians.* Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1994. Pp. xv + 208. $13.95.

Claiming that very little attention has been given to Martin Luther King, Jr. as a theologian, the author of this book aims at providing a corrective to that neglect. His laudable endeavour will certainly give readers many important insights into the theological thought of America's foremost twentieth-century theologian.

In order to demonstrate the truth implied by the title of the book, *King among the Theologians*, Noel Erskine, himself a theologian, decides to place King in conversation with a few of the most representative theologians of our

time. Thus, the first two chapters focus on the two most renowned theologians of King's day, namely, Paul Tillich and Karl Barth. Similarly, the third chapter centers on James H. Cone, the most important African American theologian since King's assasination and the progenitor of the Black Theology Movement. After a splendid constructive chapter on King's theology, Erskine discusses in an all too brief chapter King's relation to womanist theology.

Although this reader was a bit frustrated in his discovery that Erskine devotes more than half of the book to the perspectives of the above-named theologians, Erskine's wisdom in doing so becomes clear in chapter 5, where he gives a splendid, comprehensive analysis of King's theological perspective. Here we can see the author's methodological wisdom. The analytical work of the first three chapters enables him to demonstrate the ways in which King could affirm and reject varying aspects of the theologies discussed. Most important, the reader is given an excellent, constructive analysis of King's own theology, the most distinguishing characteristics of which are the concepts *love* and *reconciliation*. More specifically, Erskine argues that King's theology is praxiological. In other words, King works from within the struggles of oppressed peoples to relate the Christian faith to their struggles for freedom. Thus, the claims of social justice assume a central place in King's theology, and *liberation* and *reconciliation*, rather than being contraries, are viewed by him as necessary dimensions of the same process.

Thus, King rightly places his argument for nonviolent resistance in that context. The doctrine of reconciliation designates God's convenantal relationship with the world, and that covenant requires that the means to liberation be commensurate with its end, namely, the restoration of God's sovereign rule over the world. Hence, instruments of hate and violence can never serve the goal of restoring God's covenant of love, justice, and peace.

It would seem that Erskine's argument is complete at the end of chapter 5. Yet the author does not end there. Rather, he introduces an abbreviated sixth chapter on "King and Womanist Theology." Despite the accuracy of his analyses of womanist theologians Jacqueline Grant and Katie Cannon, the chapter has all the marks of being an addendum and does not fit well into the overall argument. Further, given the title of the book, *King among the Theologians*, does the author really wish to imply that King is *king* among womanist theologians as well? If he does, then much more needs to be said about King's contribution to womanist theology in order for such a claim to become palatable.

Finally, both the subject matter of the book and Erskine's constructive argument concerning King's theology merit a more substantive conclusion than the one he provides. Nevertheless, in spite of these minor shortcomings, the book is a notable contribution to the corpus of King scholarship, and theological scholars especially will be greatly helped by it.

Peter J. Paris
Princeton Theological Seminary

Raboteau, Albert J. *A Fire in the Bones: Reflections on African-American Religious History*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1995. Pp. xi + 224. $23.00.

In this long-awaited volume Albert J. Raboteau, the Henry W. Putnam Professor of Religion at Princeton University and a former dean of Princeton's graduate school, offers eleven insightful essays focusing on the religious history of African American peoples. Seven of the eleven essays have been published previously. Collectively these essays document the persistent and dynamic faith that has helped to shape African American lives, religious institutions, and social ethics. In addition, these essays cogently demonstrate how this same faith gave African Americans the courage to fight injustice and continue the struggle for civil rights in the United States. A common theme throughout is the abiding belief that God is an actor in all of African American history.

Raboteau touches on a wide variety of African, European, and African American religious traditions, topics, and concerns. The volume includes lucid and illuminating discussions of Richard Allen and the origins of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (chapter 4), black Catholics in the United States (chapter 6), the chanted sermon (chapter 7), and the conversion experience itself (chapter 8), as well as useful data on Pentecostals, Baptists, Methodists, and *Orisha*-based religions in the New World such as Haitian Voodoo, Brazilian Candomble, and Cuban Santeria. An epilogue presents an elegant and heart-felt testimony of the author's own life and spiritual journey as a black Catholic.

Chapter 9 is a sensitive and insightful comparison of the spiritual lives of Thomas Merton and Martin Luther King, Jr. Raboteau points out that at the time of his assassination King had planned a retreat with Merton at Our Lady of Gethsemani Abbey. He underscores commonalities that would have brought the two men together. Both men's lives, he contends, were changed by unexpected events; both men converged on the issue of civil rights; and both men became committed to nonviolence. Merton's path and King's path, the

author concludes, "met at the symbol of reconciliation and compassion—the cross."

Raboteau argues forcefully that the history of African American religions is a history that has value for *all* Americans. He asserts that the "inclusion of African-Americans and other previously invisible groups in the history books is an extremely important development not just for academic study but for our understanding of American society and ultimately our understanding of ourselves, for history functions as a form of self-definition. In its pages we read ourselves" (p. 5).

A Fire in the Bones is an outstanding contribution to African American religious history. It possesses a unity of vision often missing from volumes of collected essays written over a period of years. The essays are of uniform quality, and the author provides a balanced treatment of his subject matter. Despite Raboteau's low-key presentation and his commitment to scholarly detachment, these essays are engagingly written and highly accessible. His prose is moving, especially as he attempts to come to grips with his own faith, the faith of his ancestors, and the place of Catholicism within his life and scholarship.

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Isichei, Elizabeth. *A History of Christianity in Africa: From Antiquity to the Present*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; Lawrenceville, NJ: Africa World Press, 1995. Pp. xi + 420. $19.99.

In 353 pages of text and fifty-nine pages of notes, Isichei succeeds in giving us a panoramic view of Christianity in Africa, well written, insightful, and with striking departures from current historiography of the African past. The author provides a balanced survey of the three families of Christianity extant in Africa touching even the most recent versions often referred to as "New Religious Movements." This review will highlight what in my judgment are the elements often excluded or not given enough space in writings on Christianity in Africa currently available to readers in Africa.

The shift from church history to the history of Christianity allows many actors hitherto undocumented or used only as foils and antagonists to play more direct roles in projecting the course of Africa's history. African religion (traditional) and Islam are shown as forces that, together with Christianity, are at work in the lives of Africans. Africa's full size and complexity are

constantly kept in view through the maps Isichei provides at crucial stages of the survey.

The section of church history usually designated "early church history" and often described as if it were solely European history is nuanced so that the relevant sections that are African are more accurately named as such. This is very important because many tend to forget that Christianity in Africa belongs to the genesis of that religion, and others would prefer not to recognize Christianity as an integral part of Africa's history. The first chapter, "North African Christianity in Antiquity," speaks of St. Mark in Alexandria (Egypt) and St. Augustine in Hippo (Tunisia) and thus reminds us that Africans and their continent have known Christianity since its inception. We are also reminded that the Sahara was a highway linking Mediterranean Africa with the rest of the continent, while the Mediterranean Sea linked Africa with Europe, making Africa part of the arena of Christian antiquity. By calling attention to the vitality of monasticism and to the theological debates that took place in Africa during this early period, Isichei reinstates the factor of religion in history, making God the active core of Africa's history.

The middle years (1500–1800), often passed over in studies of this kind, are not only germane but crucial to the understanding of Nilotic Christianity, especially of the ancient Churches of Egypt, Ethiopia, and Nubia (Sudan), which belong to the Orthodox family of churches. Here, as in Mediterranean Africa, we meet Christianity and Islam vying for converts from each other and from African religion. We see how division in the Coptic Church in Egypt made it easy for Islam to succeed. We come across cathedrals that were once traditional African shrines and mosques that were once cathedrals. We are reminded of "the fruitless attempts of Western Christians to convert Muslims." Often ignored is the Latin (Catholic) presence in the middle years, which produced African Christian bishops and scholars. Isichei has sketched profiles of these pioneer African Christians, some of whom were said to have been missionaries to places beyond Africa. She puts on record African churches that contributed to the relief of people outside Africa. We are led into the experience of "ambiguity and marginality" of converts to a faith whose adherents and propagators traded in human beings.

An important contribution to the study of Christianity in Africa is the profile of African evangelists. It is a great service that Isichei lifts up the agency of Africans in the Christianizing of Africa, but most significant is her naming of women and their acts. She does not simply give women a section; she integrates them fully. Eschewing the "unconscious sexism" that makes us talk about "Church Fathers," she recalls that Carthage was founded by a

woman, that Ethiopia's identity is grounded in the Queen of Sheba, and that thirty-year old Hypatia, the Neoplatonist philosopher and mathematician, was murdered by a Christian mob. These women come alive as one reads Isichei. They are bound to inspire more studies of women in Africa and especially of the contemporary African women's movements, which are often treated as if they have no roots in Africa's history.

Another ground-breaking vista opened in this work is the emphasis given to the social location of missionaries to Africa, which is often omitted from the hagiographies that pass for chronicles of achievements of Western missionaries. There were some saints, but there were villains too. Isichei does not gloss over uncomfortable facts like racism in the church, rivalry between Africans and Euro-American leaders, "the chronic lack of personnel," and the insecurity of Euro-American career missionaries.

A departure from current historiography of Africa that makes this book unique is the intentional citing of parallel phenomena that appear outside Africa. The author locates African Christianity in the development of world Christianity. Packed congregations, belief in witchcraft and magic, and "animistic worship of trees and stones" with Christianity as a veneer were features common to medieval and seventeenth-century Christianity in both Europe and Africa. Further, Isichei illustrates how classical issues such as religion and politics, church and state, were manifested in Africa, and she examines the role of economics, politics, and militarism in the Christianization process. Descriptions of the relationships between colonists, settlers, and missionaries, along with some crisp studies of contemporary African politicians, give the reader several points with which to connect.

Isichei has demonstrated a depth of understanding of Africa and African history that is remarkable. Reading this book was both elucidating and enjoyable.

Mercy Amba Oduyoye
Emmanuel College
Victoria University

Oduyoye, Mercy Amba. *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy.* Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1995. Pp. 229. $18.00.

Critically plumbing the depths of the Akan and Yoruba cultures and histories, as well as Christian traditions, Mercy Amba Oduyoye wends her way through the morass of patriarchal structures and customs—both native and imported to Africa—and births visions of new ways of being for African

women and men. Writing on the basis of her Christian conviction that the Christ event served as a commissioning of Jesus' followers completely to uproot "all limitations to the fullness of life," Oduyoye argues that it is African women's voices—not African men's—that must both articulate the current status of African women and name their vision of their response to God's gift of fullness for their future. In *Daughters of Anowa*, Oduyoye lends her voice to this corporate task.

To decipher the nature of "woman" in the psyche and culture of Akan and Yoruba peoples, Oduyoye carefully examines roles and representations of women, and manifestations of patriarchy, in three "cycles." The first cycle, on language, inspects teachings about the value and roles of women as found in mythical images, folktales, and proverbs. Next, the relationship of Akan and Yoruba women to their cultures; to Western feminism; to familial, economic, political and military power and authority; and to religion are all investigated in the cycle on culture. Particular attention is paid to marriage, procreation, and religion, as well as to issues of women's autonomy. The final cycle, "Dreams," is the point of synthesis where Oduyoye draws on the strengths of the Akan and Yoruba heritages and the normative core of the Christian faith to sketch a vision of wholistic social human being for African women.

While Oduyoye is critical of the oppressive dimensions and interpretations of Christian traditions and the Akan and Yoruba cultures, there is no tossing out of the baby with the bathwater here. Oduyoye's study is highly nuanced and finely balanced; her critiques are incisive and precise. This incisive precision enables her to pinpoint cultural and religious phenomena that are unjust while—virtually simultaneously—locating alternative, liberative phenomena from within the same pools of religious and folk resources.

Oduyoye's penchant for accuracy is evident in her refusal to make blithe generalizations about "Africans" or "African women," a practice not infrequently indulged in by Western writers, as well as some African scholars. She is consistently careful to make her claims with specific reference to the two ethnic groups with whom she is most familiar: the matrilinial Akan, to which she was born, and the patriarchal Yoruba, into whose group she married. When Oduyoye does suggest the generalizability of one of her observations, she takes care to justify the grounds on which she does so. The result is prescriptive analysis that is rooted in specificity, with sociopolitical and religio-hermeneutical implications that follow fluidly from the analysis.

"Anowa" is "the mythical woman, prophet, and priest whose life of daring, suffering, and determination is reflected in the continent of Africa." As such, Oduyoye considers Anowa to be Africa's ancestress. Oduyoye's vision for the

daughters of Anowa is a life free of patriarchy, wherein women will be able to fulfill their God-given potential in just religious and sociopolitical community with men. This will involve not only the replacement or revision of some social and political structures but also the reinterpretation or abandonment of many folk proverbs, tales, and myths that shape and saturate the consciousness of so many of Anowa's children. The churches, too, bear grave responsiblity, to organize ecclesial structures and engage in biblical-interpretive practices that embody the central Christian affirmation of the equality of all human beings. On the basis of her meticulous examination of folklore, history, social structures, and church practices, Oduyoye offers some praxiologically meaningful suggestions as to what changes are called for and how they can be approached, and she does so in a manner that invites and welcomes other African women to engage in the dialogue and the work. Oduyoye's is a project done, ultimately, in hope. As she says in closing, "Myth, history, and faith agree: people can change."

This book is not only of use to those with a specific interest in Christianity in Africa or in women's issues. Oduyoye's project also serves as a case study, marvelously illumining some of the interpenetrating dynamics among religion, culture, and society.

Willette A. Burgie
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Newbigin, Lesslie. *Proper Confidence: Faith, Doubt, and Certainty in Christian Discipleship.* Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995. Pp. 105. $7.99.

Seventy-five years ago Karl Barth was pleading for the church to acknowledge the God who is truly God, not a god crafted by our own hands, inspired by our own desires, molded by our own longings, a production of our own experience, but God who is beyond our control, whose purpose for the world and for our lives is revealed in the incarnation, in the life, passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Now, Lesslie Newbigen summons the church to recover the biblical story, to be grasped by the truth about God revealed in the Word made flesh, of whom the prophets and apostles passionately spoke, not the god of the philosophers or the mechanics of the Enlightenment but the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of whom the women testified breathlessly on Easter morning, the God who shatters all our preconceived notions of how

God should be, the God who takes a place alongside our broken, shattered, prejudiced, violent, fallen world and makes a home here.

This book offers a concise but incisive look into the religion shaped since the time of the Enlightenment by the human mind; a religion of the philosophers, great and impressive but lacking the compelling power to require the radical obedience to which the Gospels summon the church today, a religion inspired by the brilliance of Descartes, marked by a polarization between objective truth (science) and subjective claims to knowledge (art, poetry, literature, religion), a religion that shifted "the location of reliable truth from the story told in the Bible to the eternal truths of reason." Newbigin brilliantly explores how the Cartesian program has come crashing against the rocks in the age of postmodernity, in which there is a suspicion of all claims to universal truth, where skepticism rages like a howling wind through church and society, and where the truth about God is often bent out of shape in the vice of deconstruction.

This is an important book for pastors and teachers serving in church settings where the temptation to soften the scandal of the cross is present or where the good news, for all its outward acceptance, is thought (deep down) to be a source of embarrassment. It is a book for all of us for whom a god who can appeal to the many religious winds that blow, a god who will accommodate truth to the longings that move the human heart, is never far away. It is a book that takes seriously the mighty ideas that have been shaped by the Enlightenment and reveals how they have devastated the proclamation of the church, a book that beckons us to recover the biblical story, apart from which Christian discipleship cannot breathe.

Lesslie Newbigin writes for those who are called to preach and teach, to administer the sacraments, and to summon the community of faith to a joyous discipleship that is passionate, humble, marked by hope, and vital for our times amid the many variations on the theme of "God" that would divert our attention and devour our energies. The book is beautifully written, a powerful statement of faith in God, whose incarnation has changed the nature of human life forever and whose call to the church cannot be altered by the temptation to believe that the human being is the center of the universe.

Newbigin challenges not only natural religion but Christian fundamentalism and liberalism. Acknowledging the reality of doubt and the frailty of our faith, Newbigin affirms the ultimate mystery and wonder of human existence. That mystery and wonder have little to do with "the infinity of space and time" and everything to do with the "mystery of the incarnation and the cross, of the holiness that can embrace the sinner, of a Lord who is servant, and of

the deathless one who can die." With Augustine, Newbigin argues that a Christian believes in order to understand. Proper theological work *begins* with the gospel. The gospel is the lens through which we look in order "to begin to truly understand our experience in the world."

Faith and doubt exist. They are companions. But faith, Newbigin insists, is always primary. Doubt is secondary. Borrowing from Bonhoeffer's *Ethics*, Newbigin begins this book with the stunning confession that "Faith alone is certainty. Everything but faith is subject to doubt. Jesus Christ alone is the certainty of faith." To look elsewhere for certainty, Newbigin concludes, "is to head for the wasteland."

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Colby, Gerard, with Charlotte Dennett. *Thy Will Be Done: The Conquest of the Amazon: Nelson Rockefeller and Evangelism in the Age of Oil.* New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995. Pp. xvi + 960. $35.00.

This book, say the authors, took eighteen years to research and write. Readers who have the tenacity to read the entire 927 pages of text, appendices, and notes will see why. Colby and Dennett simply could not bring themselves to leave out anything. They first went to the Amazon Valley in 1976 to investigate allegations being made against missionaries of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, better known as the Wycliffe Bible Translators, allegations that they were aiding U.S. business interests in ways that were destructive to the indigenous peoples, and that they sometimes acted as intelligence gatherers for the CIA. This initial probe eventually led Colby and Dennett far afield—how far readers will quickly discover—and after nearly two decades, resulted in this massive work detailing the authors' findings, findings that will not surprise those acquainted with some of the questionable and sometimes seamy aspects of U.S. involvement in Latin America. Less clear, however, is the relationship between Nelson Rockefeller and the founder of the Wycliffe Bible Translators, William Cameron Townsend.

In many respects, no two people could have been more different. Rockefeller was a child of privilege, born into exorbitant wealth, who throughout his life moved in the highest circles of political, economic, and religious power. Townsend, on the other hand, came from a working-class family and was a college drop-out who served briefly as a "faith" missionary in Central America before deciding that his calling was to give the Bible to every tribal group in the world in their own language. Through faith, dogged determina-

tion, and opportunism, he founded in 1934 what became the largest independent missionary agency in the world.

Colby and Dennett's conclusions, though unambiguous, are debatable. While not totally negative toward the missionaries, the authors obviously believe that contacting, evangelizing, educating, and attempting to integrate isolated tribal peoples into their national societies and cultures are not in their best interests. Neither is providing them with Bibles in their own languages, for usually, the authors assert, this is followed by indoctrination to make them submissive to governments, even governments that are oppressive or genocidal. Multinational business expansion into Latin America is likewise deleterious because it destroys indigenous lives and cultures. Finally, since World War II, a vast strategy has been in place to bring all of Latin America, along with other parts of the world, into the capitalist orbit regardless of the ecological consequences or the cost in human life. Nelson Rockefeller and William Cameron Townsend, Colby and Dennett maintain, were active promoters of this strategy.

Few will fault the benevolent intention of the authors to protect indigenous peoples from exploitation and extermination. Neither should readers fail to be impressed by the incredible amount of research Colby and Dennett have done. Their case has merit and is passionately argued, but their inferences at points are forced if not fabricated. Moreover, they see little if any good in what Rockefeller or Townsend accomplished. In terms of the overall record, other than mountains of detail, the book discloses little new about Latin America, Rockefeller, or Townsend.

The story nonetheless is fascinating and engrossing, albeit entirely too long and cluttered with minutiae. The authors simply try to cover too much territory and are in fact all over the map. For example, no scandal in U.S. politics is omitted. Franklin Roosevelt's infidelity, Watergate, and Iran-Contra are all dragged into the story. Likewise, Rockefeller's and Townsend's actions are routinely portrayed as crass examples of self-interest, calculation, or intrigue, whether it is a program of dispensing medicines along the Amazon or teaching indigenous people to read. Furthermore, Colby and Dennett see conspiracies everywhere, from the establishment of the Wycliffe JAARS base in Waxhaw, North Carolina, to Rockefeller's agricultural programs in Venezuela and Brazil. Not a little distracting are the mistakes made in names, places, and events, as well as certain inexplicable oversights.

Unquestionably, the book merits reading by anyone seriously interested in the history of Latin America during the last fifty years, particularly those concerned with the role of Protestant missionaries, but what the authors say

would be more persuasive—though not necessarily more widely read—were the text less an exposé and more a focused recounting and impartial analysis of that history.

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Princeton Theological Seminary

Soards, Marion L. *Scripture and Homosexuality: Biblical Authority and the Church Today.* Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995. Pp. x + 84. $9.99.

Marion L. Soards, Professor of New Testament Studies at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, has undertaken in this book to argue for an ecclesiastical judgment on the place of homosexuality in the church based on what he calls a Reformed understanding of scripture. For him the cornerstone is the authority of scripture, as defined in various confessions (which he liberally cites) of the Reformed Church. The author knows, of course that scripture means *interpreted* scripture and that interpretation requires a basic perspective, which he calls a "standard." For him the basic standard is "Jesus Christ himself." What *that* can mean is not very clearly stated, but Soards will return to that standard later in his argument.

The author discusses succinctly the few scriptural passages that are relevant for the issue but finally leans on Romans 1:26–27 as the decisive text. His general conclusion is sharply stated: "Homosexual activity is not consistent with the will of God . . . and there is no way to read the Bible as condoning homosexual acts" (p. 24). At this point Soards returns to his "standard" of interpretation, "Jesus Christ himself," which now seems to mean the teaching of the historical Jesus. While Jesus made no judgment on homosexuality, he does express, in the pericope on divorce (Mark 10:2–9), views that lead the author to conclude that, from Jesus' perspective, "Marital heterosexual unions and abstinence from sexual involvement are the options for human sexual behavior that accord with the will of God" (p. 29).

The author boldly takes on other points of view that would ameliorate his single-minded conclusion. He rejects John Boswell's reading of church history. He rejects my arguments about the Greco-Roman cultural context. Similarly, he rejects Victor Paul Furnish's suggestion that, had Paul known what we now know, the Apostle might have expressed himself differently. The matter is ultimately very simple. For one who accepts the authority of scripture, the *univocal* (a word he uses several times) rejection of homosexual

acts is enough to settle the issue. Homosexuals may be admitted to the church (God accepts all sinners), but practicing homosexuals should not be ordained.

I think it is fair to the author's intent to suggest that in his book he summarizes the arguments, as he sees them, from the Reformed tradition. There is little that is new (what *can* one do in eighty-four pages?). The value of the monograph lies in its summary character, written from the standpoint of a professional scholar. It will be read with joy by those who accept his conclusions.

For those who disagree, there is, again, little new that can be brought to bear. Everything has been said over and over. At the cost of repeating, however, I point out to the reader some places where it seems there are slippery slopes.

(1) To appeal to Jesus Christ as the perspective from which scripture should be viewed is tricky, since it is only through scripture that Jesus Christ is known (apart from claims to present experience). It is, in fact, a circular argument. Furthermore, to read out of the pericope on divorce (assuming it is authentic Jesus material) the sweeping conclusions Soards does is not, I think, very careful exegesis.

(2) I can only be disappointed by the superficial manner with which the author deals with my discussions about the model of pederasty. It is not apparent that he understands the significance of how models function. His attempted counterexample of Julius Caesar, taken from Suetonius, actually strengthens rather than weakens my argument.

(3) Finally, I return to a very old argument. There are *many* issues about which the New Testament is very sure and univocal, that the church blithely (and no doubt correctly) ignores. As far as I know, there is no counterclaim in the New Testament to Paul's contention that female worship leaders should wear something on their heads. That is univocal New Testament witness. Granted, that is a trivial counterexample; but it highlights the question of the *logic* one uses, and to pay attention to the logic of arguments is not trivial.

Robin Scroggs
Union Theological Seminary

Cooper-White, Pamela. *The Cry of Tamar: Violence against Women and the Church's Response.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995. Pp. xiv + 334. $19.00.

Pamela Cooper-White offers the reader a comprehensive look at the issue of violence against women in contemporary culture. Her aim in writing this book is twofold: to educate those who seek to learn more about violence

against women, and to advocate for institutional and pastoral strategies that utilize both theology and theory to evoke change.

In the first section Cooper-White frames the issue by positing a power model of male domination over females as operative in this culture, a "power-over" model that originates from loss of connection with the world and other human beings. This loss of relationality lies at the center of violence against women. In the second section Cooper-White focuses on "one central cluster of abuses" traced back to the patriarchal imbalance of power that forces women into positions of vulnerability. She describes a spectrum of violence, beginning with an exploration of the connection between pornography and violence against women, proceeding to an examination of sexual harassment, rape, battering, clergy sexual abuse, child sexual abuse, and ending with an assessment of ritualistic abuse. The final section offers suggestions to pastors and churches on how effectively to advocate for victims of abuse, as well as how best to minister to abusers themselves.

The first two sections offer prolonged and sometimes wandering accounts of theological, psychological, legal, and cultural perspectives on the position of women in a misogynist world. While Cooper-White's task was to organize into one work the various strands of the violence-against-women movements, the text often becomes weighed down with extraneous and disparate information. She relies on standard traditional feminist arguments of power and female positionality while omitting more recent feminist scholarship on female desire, the history of the body, psychoanalysis, and subjectivity. Cooper-White operates on the absolute truth of the assumption that the power differential between men and women is a given, always fraught with danger. Relegated to a footnote are several more interesting and complex theories of power through which Cooper-White could have examined male violence. By employing the "power-over" model she leaves her position vulnerable to charges of oversimplification. Also, readers may wonder at her glossing over of some crucial theological issues that impact women's lives in churches and seminaries. One such example is her unwillingness to engage the theory that suffering can be redemptive. Surely this issue raises crucial questions around the importance of the atonement and Christology. Such powerful images deserve more space.

In spite of these shortcomings, the first two sections offer help for those with little previous knowledge of theological or secular literature on violence against women. While Cooper-White's arguments may often be too simplistic, and her profiles of people at risk as abusers or abused too general, she

presents enough valid information for readers to begin effectively to analyze violence and its patterns.

It is in the third section that the book takes off and Cooper-White's own skills as a priest and pastoral counselor come to the fore. She opens with caveats to the "wounded healers" who seem to occupy the ministry in such high percentages. Her advice is beautifully simple, a mixture of common sense, astute psychology, sound theology, and deep spirituality. "Know your limits," she warns—solid advice to the newcomer as well as to the old pro. She includes immediate crisis response to sexual assaults and suicides, with guidelines for counseling beyond the emergency. These guidelines alone make it necessary to keep this book within reach of any ministerial hand. She also details the differences between pastoral care and psychotherapy, a must read for anyone who finds her/himself in the position of pastoral counselor. Included in this section is a concept that challenges many Christian sensibilities. Here Cooper-White takes the reader "beyond an ethic of instant forgiveness" and reconsiders turning the other cheek. She reminds us that forgiveness is a gift of grace. Until there is "reconciliation" and thorough change, forgiveness need not happen.

Seminarians, pastors, pastoral counselors, and facilitators of church groups will find this book quite useful. Although one may have to wade through long introductory sections, the end rewards are substantial.

Maureen A. Wallin
Drew University

Shupe, Anson. *In the Name of All That's Holy: A Theory of Clergy Malfeasance.* Westport: Prager, 1995. Pp. xii + 173. $52.95.

Anson Shupe, Professor of Sociology at the joint campus of Indiana State University-Purdue University at Fort Wayne, is author of numerous books and articles on family violence, religious movements, and criminology/deviance theory as applied to religion. His focus in this book is clergy malfeasance, and his method is application of deviance theory to this phenomenon. By "clergy malfeasance" he means "the exploitation and abuse of a religious group's believers by the elites of that religion in whom the former trust." The types of malfeasance that most interest him are instances where clergy have misused funds or engaged in acts of sexual exploitation. As a sociologist, not a psychologist of religion, he does not discuss what may predispose individual clergy to exploit and abuse the trust vested in them.

Instead, his interest is "structural" issues, the institutional aspects of clergy malfeasance.

He focuses on power and specifically on the fact that power is unequally distributed in every organization. This power inequality is complicated in the case of religious organizations because they are "trusted hierarchies" in which "those occupying lower statuses . . . trust and believe in the good intentions, nonselfish motives, benevolence, and spiritual insights/wisdom of those in the upper echelons (and often are encouraged or admonished to do so)." Thus, paradoxically, religious organizations, as "trusted hierarchies," offer special "opportunity structures" for potential exploitation and abuse. Rather than attributing clergy malfeasance to the fact that there are "a few bad apples in every bushel," Shupe argues that "the nature of trusted hierarchies systematically provides opportunities and rationales for such deviance and, indeed, makes deviance likely to occur."

He distinguishes two types of religious organizations, *hierarchical* (with episcopal and presbyterian subtypes) and *congregational.* Hierarchical organizations have relatively more levels of accountability than congregational organizations. This distinction is his primary unit of analysis throughout the book. Thus, in discussing the problem of recidivism he offers these propositions: (1a) Hierarchical groups promote more long-term recidivism of clergy malfeasance than do congregational groups, but (1b) hierarchical groups ultimately do better in discouraging normalization of clergy malfeasance than do congregational groups.

In other words, the offender is able to get away with it longer in a hierarchical group, but the hierarchical group is less disposed to view these activities as acceptable behavior. For example, the Roman Catholic Church (hierarchical) has systematically protected its malfeasant priests but has not accepted their actions as "normal" or "acceptable." In contrast, the elite in pentecostal groups, new religious movements, and televangelism (congregational) are more vulnerable to sudden disclosures leading to mass defections but are more successful in persuading their members or supporters that what the world calls "deviant behavior" is a higher form of spirituality.

In discussing the fact that religious elites try to "neutralize" victims' complaints, Shupe offers these propositions: (2a) Hierarchical groups provide greater opportunities for neutralization of clergy malfeasance than do congregational groups, but (2b) hierarchical groups ultimately are more likely to develop policies addressing clergy malfeasance than are congregational groups. In other words, there are more ways in which cover-ups may be employed in hierarchical groups, but in the end hierarchical groups are more

likely to develop policies for controlling clergy malfeasance. Methods of neutralization (or cover-up) include bureaucratic inertia, sentimentality, "reassurance and reconciliation," bargaining, and intimidation.

In discussing the fact that organizational polity is an important factor in whether victims will succeed in having their grievances redressed, Shupe offers these propositions: (3a) Victims in hierarchical groups tend to experience more ambivalence and reluctance to whistle-blow about their abuse than those in congregational groups, but (3b) victims in hierarchical groups are more likely to become empowered to focus their grievances on group-specific reforms than those in congregational groups. His point here is that hierarchical groups are less permeable to grievances, as there are various levels of authority that a victim needs to confront, and each of these levels is strongly motivated to neutralize the complaint (to do "damage control") so that the complaint does not reach the next organizational level. On the other hand, hierarchical organizations provide "paradoxical" advantages, first to elites but ultimately to their victims, as victims eventually "obtain a structural focus for redress that aids their mobilization of grievances."

Shupe distinguishes between "primary victimization," or the immediate realization one has been exploited or abused, and "secondary victimization," the long-term consequences of primary victimization. Common to the former are feelings of ambivalence, fear, guilt, and shame, while typical of the latter is the suppression (or in some cases repression) of emotional pain. Victim mobilization, a third response, involves redressing injuries and wrongs and is more common among hierarchical than congregational groups. One reason for this is that hierarchical-group members are more likely to believe that the group to which they belong is their only choice, so they choose redress rather than defection. The episcopal type of hierarchical organization is more likely to retreat to formal guidelines or procedure, protocol, and legality, whereas in presbyterian hierarchical organizations the initial neutralization attempts by elites are more likely to inspire efforts to redress, and such grass-roots redress activities become institutionalized.

Much of his discussion of victims focuses on children who have been sexually abused by Catholic priests and adult women who have had nonconsensual relations with Protestant clergy. Like Fortune, LeBacqz and Barton, Cooper-White and others, Shupe contends that "consent" cannot be present when there is a power imbalance, which is invariably the case in pastor-parishioner relations. He also considers the victimization suffered by the clergyman's family (noting the expectation that his wife will "forgive and forget with the best of the congregation, an extension of her expected role as

his primary supporter") and by the congregation itself, a volatile situation that is likely to create future victims, as such congregations often become locked into complementary and destructive conflict with successor clergy.

By viewing clergy malfeasance as deviant behavior made possible by the very fact that religious institutions are "trusted hierarchies," Shupe shows that the "a few bad apples in every bushel" explanation is itself a rationalization in behalf of the institution and its trusted image. His theory also explains why *clergy* malfeasance is more scandalous than similar malfeasance in other institutions (as religious organizations are "trusted hierarchies") and why religious institutions are so slow to hear and redress grievances (as preservation of their "trusted hierarchy" status encourages denial and efforts to suppress the charges). But this leads to still another paradox that Shupe does not explicitly identify, namely, the fact that when the elite close ranks behind the clergy offender in order to maintain membership trust, it thereby damages trust by seeming to condone behavior that it would otherwise denounce. Moreover, the unscrupulous offender may thereby play the institutional elite and his victims off one another. Normalization of his conduct is officially rejected but recidivism is subtly encouraged.

Shupe goes further than most writers on clergy malfeasance in addressing the structural issues involved. Because he does, his book breaks important new ground on this vexing and volatile issue. However, his theory is strongest in its exposure of institutional bureaucracies. It is less effective in explaining why clergy malfeasance occurs in some local congregations and not in others. Is this due entirely to psychological factors, or is there something structural going on here as well? Do some congregations provide greater opportunities for neutralization of clergy malfeasance than others? It should not be too difficult to study congregations where clergy malfeasance has and has not occurred, and to determine whether the primary methods of neutralization (inertia, sentimentality, pseudo-reconciliation, bargaining, and intimidation) are more typical of the ways that the former regularly function.

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REVIEW ARTICLE

Koester, Helmut. *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development.* Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990. Pp. xxxii + 448. $19.95.

Schneemelcher, Wilhelm, and R. McL. Wilson, eds. *New Testament Apocrypha.* Rev. ed. 2 vols. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1991–92. Pp. 560; 771. $32.00; $40.00.

Elliott, J. K. *The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993. Pp. xxv + 747. $45.95.

Where can one obtain insight regarding what is reliably a New Testament apocryphal or pseudepigraphical work? The search begins with the definition of such a corpus. A working definition seems to be the following: The New Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha is a modern collection of writings that were composed before the end of the fourth century, when there was not yet an accepted definition of orthodoxy, heresy, or canon; they were usually written in imitation of the documents eventually considered canonical; hence, the New Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha contains letters (or epistles), gospels, acts, and apocalypses. Fortunately, now is an opportune time to assess what is available. I shall focus on three major publications that have appeared this decade: *Ancient Christian Gospels* (1990), *New Testament Apocrypha* (1992), and *The Apocryphal New Testament* (1993).

Ancient Christian Gospels (1990). The John H. Morison Professor of New Testament Studies and the Winn Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Harvard Divinity School, Helmut Koester, is famous for his insistence that Christian origins must not be reconstructed with only, or primarily, the canonical writings in mind. He has argued since the early sixties that some so-called apocryphal writings are early and independent of the New Testament works. For example, he claims that the Gospel of Thomas is not dependent on the canonical Gospels; it often preserves sayings of Jesus as early and reliable as those in the Synoptics and John. In *Ancient Christian Gospels*, Koester argues persuasively that the Gospel of Thomas was composed in eastern Syria. Most important—in contrast to R. M. Grant and E. Haenchen, who brand it heretical and reject it as a fabrication—he contends that *the tradition* of Jesus' sayings in the Gospel of Thomas predates the canonical Gospels. The author of this work "was certainly not trying to compose a 'gospel' of the type that is known from the Gospels of the New Testament" (p. 80), and the sequence of sayings is "most puzzling" (p. 81). In

light of the penchant among many scholars to view the *Gospel of Thomas* only with an eye on the Synoptics, Koester shows how important it is for an interpretation of the Gospel of John. He argues that in certain passages Thomas and John preserve early traditions about Jesus, which each developed in often strikingly different ways.

Koester demonstrates that originally "gospel" (*euangelion*) denoted not a literary genre but the message of salvation (1 Thess. 3:6; 1 Cor 1:17; 15:1–15; cf. Acts 15:7; 20:24). He shows that the titles of the "Gospels" were clarified only in the late second century (a claim that will be debated by experts, notably M. Hengel) and that none of the Nag Hammadi "gospels" were designated by their authors with this term.

Koester's book begins with an examination of the development of "gospel" from oral preaching, through "memoirs of the apostles," to a literary genre. After examining collections of Jesus' sayings (in Paul and the postapostolic writings, the Gospel of Thomas, and Q), he traces the development of gospel dialogues from the Dialogue of the Savior through the miracle catenae to the Gospel of John. He then studies the Synoptic Gospels in light of such compositions as the Secret Gospel of Mark and the Proto-Gospel of James. He concludes by exploring the origin of Gospel harmonies, which do not appear for the first time with Tatian (who composed the Diatessaron in Syriac) but can be traced back through Justin Martyr to harmonizations in Matthew and Luke. Particularly appealing is Koester's full view of Christian origins, his recognition that we must be sensitive to the ways many early Christians revered writings that Western culture eventually rejected or ignored, his perception of the significance of Eastern Christianity, and his appreciation of Thomas and his importance in the development of Christianity.

New Testament Apocrypha (1992). After the fervent interest in early sources and the intermittent excitement with the discovery of such treasures as Codex Sinaiticus, Syrus Sinaiticus, the Didache, and the Oxyrhynchus Papyri, the need was felt for a handy edition of the New Testament Apocrypha. A scholarly yet convenient collection of translations was required. This was supplied by Edgar Hennecke in 1904, and a subsequent edition was edited by Wilhelm Schneemelcher of Bonn University and translated into English by R. McL. Wilson of the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. In 1989 the fifth edition of volume two and in 1990 the sixth edition of volume one appeared in German. They were edited by Schneelmelcher alone, since Hennecke had died in 1951, and were then edited and translated into English by R. McL. Wilson.

The first volume contains the so-called apocryphal gospels and related writings. It also presents a general introduction that discusses the time in which these apocryphal works were composed and the processes, sociological and theological, that led to a closed canon. Of considerable interest to pastors and laypersons will be the discussions not only of unknown and lost gospels but also of "gospels" attributed to Jesus' disciples and people linked with him according to the canonical Gospels, notably introductions to and translations of the following: the Secret Gospel of Mark, the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Philip, the Gospel of Peter, the Gospel of the Twelve Apostles, the Gospel of the Seventy, the Gospel According to Matthias, the Gospel of Judas, the Gospel of Bartholomew, the Gospel of Mary, the Protevangelium of James, the Gospel of Nicodemus, the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, and the Gospel of Gamaliel. Sections on the infancy and on the passion of Jesus, as well as on the relatives of Jesus, are full of data important for an understanding of Christian origins.

The second volume presents introductions to and translations of documents attributed to the apostles, apocalypses, and related subjects. The volume also contains a reliable introduction, including a section on "apostle" in early Christian tradition. The various Books of Acts attributed to Jesus' apostles Andrew, John, Paul, Peter, Thomas, and Peter and the Twelve Apostles are also discussed. The second volume further contains a study of apocalypticism in early Christianity and apocalypses attributed to Peter, Paul, and Thomas. Wisely included are the Christian sections of the Ascension of Isaiah, the Fifth and Sixth Books of Ezra, the Sibyllines, and the Book of Elchasai. More than a dozen European New Testament and early church history experts have contributed to these volumes. R. McL. Wilson informs the reader that while the English is based on the German introductions, the German translations of the apocryphal works themselves have been checked with "the Latin, Greek or Coptic"—he should also have included Syriac.

The Apocryphal New Testament (1993). Long before Hennecke and Schneemelcher's massive work was first translated into English in 1962–65, the need was felt in the English-speaking world for a translation into English of the major apocryphal works. This desideratum was supplied in 1924 with the handy volume of translations by M. R. James, Provost of Eton and "Sometime Provost of King's College, Cambridge." It was titled *The Apocryphal New Testament*. Now this work is updated in a volume about the same width but an inch taller by J. K. Elliott, Senior Lecturer in Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Leeds. It is not as extensive as *New Testament Apocrypha*, and it perpetuates some of James' errors; but it is

intermittently more up-to-date and a direct English translation of the ancient texts.

These modern collections of the "noncanonical" gospels, epistles, and apocalypses present in attractive formats documents that were written in the early centuries of this area and were once considered authoritative and inspired within numerous Christian circles. In some communities several were accepted as part of the New Testament canon, and many were read with the understanding that they were full of God's revelation. As well as the so-called Patristics, the New Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha are simply indispensable documents for reconstructing the origins of Christianity and its sacred texts.

Unfortunately, the word "apocrypha" connotes that which is spurious or unauthentic, and hence, some Christians avoid the writings as if they would be contaminated by reading them. These writings should not be considered "scriptural" in a theological sense, but they were considered scriptural by some early Christians and are as important for understanding the early centuries as some of the writings of the early scholars of the church (like Ignatius, Justin, Irenaeus, Origen, and Eusebius). They also are essential in discerning the developments in the transmission of Jesus' sayings, and they contain insights for helping us reconstruct what Jesus intended to teach. It is a pity that they do not receive the attention they deserve in theological and academic circles and in seminary and university curricula.

What is most surprising about these new editions of the New Testament Apocrypha? It is the incorporation of the so-called Secret Gospel of Mark. An introduction to and translation of this work appears in each collection, but it may well be spurious and late. It was allegedly found in 1958, but searches for the document have all ended in failure. Elliott includes the work but rightly warns that "its antiquity and genuineness are questioned by scholars."

Perhaps a section concerning documents not to be considered among the New Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha would be a helpful addition in future editions of the two major collections. Likewise, many works listed in The New Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha are not even mentioned in any of the recent collections. It is disappointing also to observe that none of the recent collections offers the reader a translation of the earliest Christian hymnbook, which is attributed to Solomon. One was included in earlier editions of Hennecke and Schneemelcher's collection, but it was relegated to an appendix in the English translation of 1965. R. McL. Wilson justified the omission of the Odes of Solomon because the volumes needed to be reduced in size and the Odes were available in other editions. These "Odes" are

poetical compositions that are full of beautiful theological insights and are worth reading for numerous reasons, including devotional ones.

If one is looking for a full introduction with comments by an international team of experts, then the best collection of the early Christian apocryphal works is the *New Testament Apocrypha*. If one prefers a more succinct collection with translations by an English scholar, then the choice is *The Apocryphal New Testament*.

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INDEX TO VOLUME 17
1996

Articles and Sermons

Bartlett, David L. "Preaching as Interpretation" 154
Bartow, Charles L. "Who Says the Song? Practical Hermeneutics as Humble Performance" 143
Bassler, Jouette M. "A Plethora of Epiphanies: Christology in the Pastoral Letters" 310
Evans, James H., Jr. "Health, Disease, and Salvation in African American Experience" 326
Faculty Publications (1995) 225
Florence, Anna Carter. "The Voice You Find May Be Your Own" 211
Gaventa, Beverly Roberts. "Our Mother St. Paul: Toward the Recovery of a Neglected Theme" 29
Gillespie, Thomas W. "Growing in the Knowledge of God" 1
_____. "Jehovah's Bystanders?" 279
Guthrie, Shirley C. "The Way, the Truth, and the Life in the Religions of the World" 45
Hanson, Geddes W. "Heavenly Soundings" 219
Jacks, G. Robert. "Just Do It" 202
Juel, Donald H. " 'Your Word Is Truth': Some Reflections on a Hard Saying" 9
Livingston, Michael E. "Remembering David" 351
Long, Thomas G. "Bruised Reeds and Dimly Burning Wicks" 196
Macleod, Donald. "Conrad H. Massa: A Personal Tribute" 129
Mattison, Joel. "Secondary Gain" 216
Migliore, Daniel L. "Mission in a Violent World" 71
Sakenfeld, Katharine Doob. "David Weadon: A Tribute" 348
_____. "Fences and Neighbors" 58
Seow, Choon-Leong. "The Socioeconomic Context of 'The Preacher's' Hermeneutic" 168
Tisdale, Leonora Tubbs. "Leaders with Heart" 283
_____. "Preaching as Local Theology" 132
_____. "Serving Lessons" 64
Waetjen, Herman C. "The Actualization of Christ's Achievement in Our Historical Existence: Breaking out of the New Babylonian Captivity" 291

Book Reviews

Adam, A. K. M. *Making Sense of New Testament Theology: "Modern" Problems and Prospects* (Deirdre Good) 359

Albertz, Rainer. *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period*, 2 vols. (J. J. M. Roberts) 365
Allen, Joseph J. *Widowed Priest: A Crisis in Ministry* (Edward M. Huenemann) 127
Anderson, Herbert, and Susan B. W. Johnson. *Regarding Children: A New Respect for Childhood and Families* (Carol A. Wehrheim) 126
Ashjian, Mesrob. *Armenian Church Patristic and Other Essays* (S. Peter Cowe) 113
Banker, Mark T. *Presbyterian Missions and Cultural Interaction in the Far Southwest, 1850–1950* (Paul E. Pierson) 119
Betz, Hans Dieter. *The Sermon on the Mount: A Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, including the Sermon on the Plain (Matthew 5:3–7:27 and Luke 6:20–49)* (A. K. M. Adam) 369
Boyarin, Daniel. *Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* (Robin Scroggs) 101
Brueggemann, Walter. *Texts under Negotiation: The Bible and Postmodern Imagination* (Thomas G. Long) 249
Brueggemann, Walter, Charles B. Cousar, Beverly R. Gaventa, and James D. Newsome. *Texts for Preaching: A Lectionary Commentary Based on the NRSV—Year A* (Ronald J. Allen) 242
Butin, Philip Walker. *Revelation, Redemption, and Response: Calvin's Trinitarian Understanding of the Divine-Human Relationship* (Charles Partee) 375
Calhoun, David B. *Princeton Seminary*. Vol. 1, *Faith and Learning, 1812–1868* (James H. Moorhead) 266
Camp, Carole Ann, ed. *From Flicker to Flame: Women's Sermons for the Revised Common Lectionary Year A*. Vol. 1, *Advent to Pentecost* (Leonora Tubbs Tisdale) 250
Carter, Warren. *What Are They Saying about the Sermon on the Mount?* (A. K. M. Adam) 100
Charlesworth, James H., ed. *The Lord's Prayer and Other Prayer Texts from the Greco-Roman Era* (Randall D. Chesnutt) 88
Charlesworth, James H., and Walter P. Weaver, eds. *Earthing Christologies: From Jesus' Parables to Jesus the Parable* (James D. G. Dunn) 373
Cherry, Kittredge, and Zalmon Sherwood, eds. *Equal Rites: Lesbian and Gay Worship, Ceremonies, and Celebrations* (Ruth C. Duck) 262
Colby, Gerard, with Charlotte Dennett. *Thy Will Be Done: The Conquest of the Amazon: Nelson Rockefeller and Evangelism in the Age of Oil* (Alan Neely) 390
Cooper-White, Pamela. *The Cry of Tamar: Violence against Women and the Church's Response* (Maureen A. Wallin) 393
Davis, Ellen F. *Imagination Shaped: Old Testament Preaching in the Anglican Tradition* (Walter Brueggemann) 254
Duck, Ruth C. *Finding Words for Worship: A Guide for Leaders* (N. J. Robb) 261
Elliott, J. K. *The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation* (James H. Charlesworth) 399
Erskine, Noel Leo. *King among the Theologians* (Peter J. Paris) 381

Fernandez, Eleazar S. *Toward a Theology of Struggle* (William Greenway) 108
Fortune, Marie M., and James N. Poling. *Sexual Abuse by Clergy: A Crisis for the Church* (Donald Capps) 82
Gaustad, Edwin S. *Sworn on the Altar of God: A Religious Biography of Thomas Jefferson* (James H. Moorhead) 379
Gaventa, Beverly Roberts. *Mary: Glimpses of the Mother of Jesus* (John T. Carroll) 271
Gold, Victor Roland, et al., eds. *The New Testament and Psalms: An Inclusive Version* (Morna D. Hooker) 371
Goldingay, John. *Models for Scripture* (Donald K. McKim) 90
Greenspahn, Frederick E. *When Brothers Dwell Together: The Preeminence of Younger Siblings in the Hebrew Bible* (Patrick D. Miller) 93
Guthrie, Shirley C. *Christian Doctrine.* Rev. ed. (A. J. McKelway) 273
Harris, James H. *Preaching Liberation* (Alyce M. McKenzie) 248
Hodgson, Peter C. *Winds of the Spirit: A Constructive Christian Theology* (Cyril O'Regan) 106
Hubbard, Dolan. *The Sermon and the African American Literary Imagination* (Henry H. Mitchell) 245
Hunsinger, Deborah van Deusen. *Theology and Pastoral Counseling: A New Interdisciplinary Approach* (Elisabeth Koenig) 272
Isichei, Elizabeth. *A History of Christianity in Africa: From Antiquity to the Present* (Mercy Amba Oduyoye) 384
Jacks, G. Robert. *Getting the WORD Across: Speech Communication for Pastors and Lay Leaders* (Neil Clark Warren) 244
Koester, Helmut. *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development* (James H. Charlesworth) 399
Lehmann, Paul L. *The Decalogue and a Human Future: The Meaning of the Commandments for Making and Keeping Human Life Human* (Barry Harvey) 362
Long, Thomas G. *Whispering the Lyrics: Sermons for Lent and Easter: Cycle A, Gospel Texts* (Patrick J. Willson) 241
Luedemann, Gerd. *The Resurrection of Jesus: History, Experience, Theology.* Trans. John Bowden (Reginald H. Fuller) 98
Mays, James Luther. *The Lord Reigns: A Theological Handbook to the Psalms* (Werner E. Lemke) 91
McCormack, Bruce L. *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology: Its Genesis and Development, 1909–1936* (B. A. Gerrish) 354
Meier, John P. *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus.* Vol. 2, *Mentor, Message, and Miracles* (Warren Carter) 96
Minear, Paul Sevier. *Christians and the New Creation: Genesis Motifs in the New Testament* (Kathryn Greene-McCreight) 95
Morimoto, Anri. *Jonathan Edwards and the Catholic Vision of Salvation* (Don Schweitzer) 378

Myers, William H. *God's Yes Was Louder Than My No: Rethinking the African-American Call to Ministry* (Cleo J. LaRue, Jr.) 246
Neely, Alan. *Christian Mission: A Case Study Approach* (Dana L. Robert) 269
Newbigin, Lesslie. *Proper Confidence: Faith, Doubt, and Certainty in Christian Discipleship* (Frederick R. Trost) 388
Norton, David. *A History of the Bible as Literature.* Vol. 1, *From Antiquity to 1700;* vol. 2, *From 1700 to the Present Day* (Bruce M. Metzger) 276
Oduyoye, Mercy Amba. *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy* (Willette A. Burgie) 386
Olson, Dennis T. *Numbers* (Thomas B. Dozeman) 356
Pannenberg, Wolfhart. *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2. Trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Ted Peters) 105
Pelikan, Jaroslav. *Christianity and Classical Culture: The Metamorphosis of Natural Theology in the Christian Encounter with Hellenism* (Edward F. Duffy) 112
Plantinga, Cornelius, Jr. *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin* (Stephen L. Stell) 360
Puckett, David L. *John Calvin's Exegesis of the Old Testament* (Gary Neal Hansen) 376
Raboteau, Albert J. *A Fire in the Bones: Reflections on African-American Religious History* (Stephen D. Glazier) 383
Robb, Nigel. *Let All God's People Say Amen* (Donald Macleod) 252
_____. *Sermons at St. Salvator's* (Donald Macleod) 252
Rohler, Lloyd. *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Preacher and Lecturer* (Charles L. Bartow) 258
Sakenfeld, Katharine Doob. *Journeying with God: A Commentary on the Book of Numbers* (Walter Brueggemann) 268
Sample, Tex. *Ministry in an Oral Culture: Living with Will Rogers, Uncle Remus, and Minnie Pearl* (John W. Stewart) 256
Schmidt, Gary D. *John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.* Illustrated by Barry Moser (Conrad H. Massa) 260
Schneemelcher, Wilhelm, and R. McL. Wilson, eds. *New Testament Apocrypha.* Rev. ed. 2 vols. (James H. Charlesworth) 399
Seow, Choon-Leong, ed. *Homosexuality and Christian Community* (W. Eugene March) 353
Shupe, Anson. *In the Name of All That's Holy: A Theory of Clergy Malfeasance* (Donald Capps) 395
Sloan, Douglas. *Faith and Knowledge: Mainline Protestantism and American Higher Education* (Daniel Sack) 121
Soards, Marion L. *Scripture and Homosexuality: Biblical Authority and the Church Today* (Robin Scroggs) 392
Stern, Ephraim, Ayelet Lewinson-Gilboa, and Joseph Aviram, eds. *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land,* 4 vols. (James H. Charlesworth) 275

Tamburello, Dennis E. *Union with Christ: John Calvin and the Mysticism of St. Bernard* (Luke Anderson) 116
Thistlethwaite, Susan B., and George F. Cairns, eds. *Beyond Theological Tourism: Mentoring as a Grassroots Approach to Theological Education* (David L. Lindberg) 122
Torrance, Thomas F. *Preaching Christ Today: The Gospel and Scientific Thinking* (Robert A. Cathey) 110
Wakefield, Gordon. *Bunyan the Christian* (Conrad H. Massa) 118
Westerhoff, John H. *Spiritual Life: The Foundation for Preaching and Teaching* (J. Randall Nichols) 253
White, L. Michael, and O. Larry Yarbrough, eds. *The Social World of the First Christians: Essays in Honor of Wayne A. Meeks* (Brian K. Blount) 367
White, Susan J. *Christian Worship and Technological Change* (W. Jack Coogan) 264
Willimon, William H., and Richard Lischer, eds. *Concise Encyclopedia of Preaching* (James F. Kay) 238
Wind, James P., and James W. Lewis, eds. *American Congregations.* Vol. 1, *Portraits of Twelve Religious Communities;* vol. 2, *New Perspectives in the Study of Congregations* (John W. Stewart) 85
Winter, Miriam Therese, Adair Lummis, and Allison Stokes. *Defecting in Place: Women Claiming Responsibility for Their Own Spiritual Lives* (Janet R. Walton) 124
Witherington, Ben III. *Paul's Narrative Thought World: The Tapestry of Tragedy and Triumph* (John Reumann) 103
Wolterstorff, Nicholas. *Divine Discourse: Philosophical Reflections on the Claim That God Speaks* (George I. Mavrodes) 363

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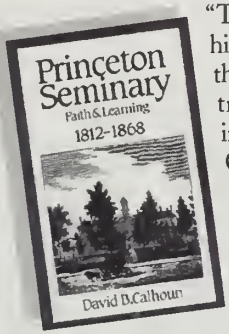

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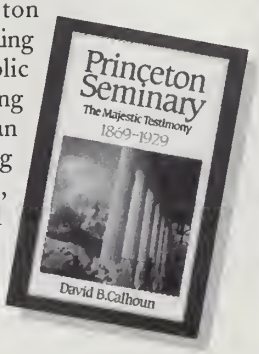

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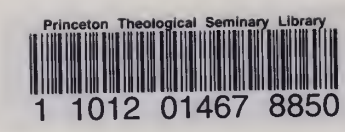

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