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EDITORIAL

A question that students often seem to find illuminating is, 'What kind of authoritative textual tradition did each of the three "Abrahamic" faiths produce?' Judaism and Islam both tended to produce *codes*. Whether the Mishnah and Talmud of Judaism, or the Hadith literature in Islam, both codified traditional practice for the guidance of the life of the community. Christianity, however, produced *creeds*. These formed statements of right belief, rather than right practice. This was in part a Christ-centred activity: at the heart of many credal statements Christological cadences may be found, bounded by formal statements on the character of God and nature of humanity and hope.

It is not that Jews and Muslims are uninterested in aspects of belief, nor that Christians are uninterested in ethical living, but the comparison brings to light something noteworthy all the same. It is safe to say that it is trickier to derive 'guidance for living' from creeds than it is from codes. The code will (often) simply tell you what to do under given circumstances, from prayer to property, handling corpses or crops—instructions have been provided. It is different for the Christian believer (there is a clue in that term). The leading concern is with orthodoxy rather than orthopraxy—with belief. Theology of the 'systematic' or 'dogmatic' flavour rather than 'moral' claims pride of place.

At one level, this gives Christian mission some clear advantages. It has often been noted that the lack of detailed prescription regarding worship practice for the nascent churches in the writings that would become the New Testament has led to widely divergent practices embedded in equally divergent cultural settings. The stirring vision of such worship being offered by innumerable worshipers, 'from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages' (Rev. 7:9)—like the evangelists' record of Jesus' ministry in Greek rather than Aramaic—lends authenticity to the translation of Christian scripture into every language, rather than restricting 'Scripture' to its original languages. A contrast here is often drawn to the traditional Islamic teaching that the fixed form of the Qur'an must be Arabic.

At another level, however, there can be frustrations. Derek Webb's incisive lyrics in his song 'A New Law' capture this sense with an acerbic undertone: 'I don't want to know if the answers aren't easy / So just bring it down from the mountain to me.' Painting is so much easier when it's done by numbers. Caricature? Perhaps. But like all good caricature, it has readily recognizable elements within it that tell some home truths.

The Psalms provide glimpses of another way of thinking about the relationship between 'creed' and 'code', between belief and behaviour.

Like many others, I have found helpful John Piper's catena of prayers from the Psalms with the acronym 'IOUS' (see http://j.mp/pray_IOUS). In my personalized version, I inject a 'T' before the 'U'—but still from the same verse in the Psalms, 86:11, 'Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may walk in your truth; unite my heart to fear your name.' If I had been composing that Psalm, I would have inverted the terms in the first part of the verse: 'Teach me your *truth*, so I may walk in your *ways*.' The psalmist's inspired prayer has different priorities. It is the rightly orientated and ordered walk that inclines the psalmist towards the truth that otherwise would be missed. And that truth provides the avenue along which the psalmist walks. The indissoluble relationship between the way and the truth leads to life. The second part of the verse reinforces this perception. It is not, as might it might seem at first blush, a prayer for 'unity'. Rather, accurately diagnosing the fragmentary shards splintering the mind turned in on self, the psalmist prays for the unified, whole heart (86:12) which has at its centre the fear of the Lord.

So perhaps I got it wrong as I began this brief reflection. For the Christian, it is not a matter of deriving right action from right belief. From the psalmist's perspective, character and clarity are very much of a piece. I wonder if it would make a useful thought experiment to consider what it might mean for moral theology to provide a framework for systematic theology, rather than the other way round? Or rather, for that dividing wall to be broken down completely!

IN THIS NUMBER

Among the articles in this number, the first two have their origins in the 2010 Spring SETS Conference, held at Rutherford House from the 6th-7th of April. Tom Houston was this year's Finlayson Lecturer, adressing the conference theme of 'Globalization' out of his many years of international experience with of British and Foreign Bible Society, World Vision International, and the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization. Ken Ross, now minster in the west of Scotland, but formerly professor in the University of Malawi then General Secretary of Church of Scotland World Mission Council, offers an analysis of the southward drift of Christianity's 'centre of gravity'.

The relationship of justification and sanctification, treated in the Spring number of the *Bulletin*, attracts contributions attending to different facets of that relationship, now from the vantage point of the writings of the magisterial reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin: John Fesko, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Westminster Seminary

California, examines Luther's views, while Ashish Varma, pursuing doctoral studies at Wheaton, tackles Calvin.

The potential contribution of Hans Frei to an evangelical handling of Scripture is explored by Bruce Ashford, Dean of The College at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, and David Nelson, Chief Academic Officer at the University of North Carolina's School of the Arts.

Our reviews in this issue cluster around those latter two topics. First, an array of titles relating to the Calvin Quincentenary are reviewed, followed by a number works focusing on aspects of Scripture.

David Reimer

Globalization: Opportunity or Threat?[1]

Tom Houston

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R.A. Finlayson was a kind of hero preacher to me in my late teens and early twenties when I was in Glasgow University. I heard him twice in a double bill with Martin Lloyd Jones in the St. Andrews Halls and in an SEC conference in Rothesay. 'There were giants in the land in those days.' Prof. Finlayson had the gift of lifting you into the presence of God even while he spoke. I hope with the help of the same Spirit who inspired him, I can do justice to his memory.

My subject is 'Globalization: Opportunity or Threat?' Between 1994 and 1998 I gave six substantial lectures on several aspects of Globalization in Europe, USA and Canada. So, I have had my turn at dazzling audiences with displays of facts and figures, mesmerizing or boring them with Sociology-speke, and pontificating on where it was all likely to lead. The major additional factor since then has been the Internet and the World Wide Web, but I do not intend to weary you with a tendentious update of where we are now in the light of recent advances in technology, like Google, mobile phones, MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, blogging, iTunes, iPad, etc.

Rather I will try, like Prof Finlayson, to treat the subject in common language, within a biblical framework, relate it to our everyday experience and leave us with something to do at the end.

I will also state the obvious that Globalization is both opportunity and threat and try and spell out the threats and opportunities that affect this audience. The subjects set for the Conference we are having will be a good enough guide for that. That means I will try to cover:

- the progress of the gospel in the South;
- the retreat of the gospel in the West;
- the shape of churches in multi ethnic societies;
- the advocacy of the gospel in religiously and philosophically pluralist cultures.

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[1] The Finlayson Lecture, delivered at Rutherford House, 6 April 2010.

Perhaps a text would be in order. I refer you to the words of Daniel to Neb-uchadnezzar, 'The stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth' (Dan. 2:35).

To make sure we are all talking the same language, I will take a moment to say what globalization I am talking about.

1. WHAT IS GLOBALIZATION?

Globalization is a social process in which (1) locality, nationality and geography control societies and cultures have a lessening, and (2) international cultural trends have an increasing effect on human behaviour.

This became is a key concept in the nineties.

The world is becoming more and more one place. Many kinds of boundaries that were previously important are crumbling. The most important of these are national boundaries. For four hundred years we in Europe have all lived in Nation States, England, Britain, Germany, France, the United States, and so on. These states had rulers and governments which looked after things for their citizens, made and enforced laws, defended their territory and their rights and directed their economies. The structures by which these functions are carried out are called bureaucracies. All our institutions even Christian institutions have been heavily influenced by these nation state structures and tend to be highly bureaucratic.

On the world scene, these nation states had related to each other through their Foreign Offices and their Embassies and in International organizations like the United Nations. This is 'internationalization'; Each nation retained its distinctiveness. We called it 'sovereignty'. Globalization is the stage beyond internationalization. It tends to undermine both the national and the international. Every kind of bureaucracy is under fire.

Globalization came about first through the de-linking of finance from national controls. We called it offshore finance. The multinational companies came into being, many of them with budgets greater than nations where they had businesses. Then with the advent of computers and related technology, it became possible to transfer vast sums of money at lightning speed anywhere in the world. Events like our recession happened when the banks used this facility and overextended their borrowing and lending. Further effects were felt as it became possible to mass produce goods incredibly cheaply, to transfer production anywhere in the world to take advantage of cheaper costs, and to outsource even services to call centres

in India and elsewhere in Asia. Several major airlines do all their ticketing in Bangalore, India.

Linking the computers to radio and TV and other media, it became possible to market any product anywhere in the world. When I was in Beijing as early as 1996, all the main neon signs that you would see in Europe and America lit up the skyline there and all the brand name goods that you see here, I could have bought there. This link also democratized taste and fashion. It is not only the rich who control and enjoy culture any more. There are growing popular cultures within the reach of everyone. This has created the consumer culture, where the key values are now individual choice, self expression and quality of life.

At the same time the speed of travel has increased and its cost has come down. This has resulted in great mobility in people and the internationalizing of labor—just think of the names of foreign doctors that you hear every day—the mixing of cultures, with the east coming to the West and vice versa in massive migration, and the rubbing shoulders of the religions and the worldviews in both east and west.

The final step came through the Internet and the World Wide Web which has made knowledge universally accessible at the click of a computer key or mobile phone button. We have become societies where knowledge is the most significant commodity.

You could say everything is everywhere and if you have the technology, it is open to everyone. This means that every culture's story is no longer a stand-alone story. It has to live alongside everyone else's story. This is true about our gospel story. We no longer have any fields to ourselves. We share the faith marketplace and our goods are in competition with all the 'other faith' or 'no faith' goods that are there. That is globalization and that is the new context in which we have to live as Christians.

2. HOW DO YOU THINK BIBLICALLY ABOUT GLOBALIZATION?

I find the most helpful biblical framework for this is in the apocalyptic parts of the OT and NT. The book of Daniel, the Olivet discourse in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21, and the book of Revelation. That is why I took my text from Daniel: 'The stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth' (Dan. 2:35).

The bookends that mark the beginning and end of the nation of Israel were the two tyrants, Pharaoh in Egypt and Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon. Captivity was ended under Pharaoh to return under Nebuchadnezzar. It is not surprising that the LORD had something to say about how his people should live now that their nation was no more (Dan. 2:1-49.)

Daniel was an exile (2:25) who had been given a place in the king's service and a name to go with it (1:26). He and his people were far from home and learning a totally new life. Until recently, their horizons had been limited to the very small nation state of Judah, with its capital at Jerusalem (1:1). Disaster had struck and now the country was occupied, the city destroyed and he and his friends deported about a thousand miles from home (1:2).

There was panic because Nebuchadnezzar had a disturbing dream. Like most of us, he forgot what it was, but not how it had disturbed him. So, he asked all his advisers to tell him the dream and what it meant. Now they were threatened with execution if they could not tell the King what he had dreamed and what it meant (2:5-6).

In fact, they were about to receive a revelation from God that they probably would never have had back home in Jerusalem. Their new circumstances and Daniel's job as a top official in an alien palace made them pray harder and think bigger than they had ever done before (2:17-18). Daniel, like Joseph before him, had started to develop skill in interpreting dreams and visions. 'To these four young men, God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds' (1:17).

Even then, a heathen king was not a likely person to receive a revelation from God. You sense this in the way Daniel asked his friends to pray the God of Heaven for mercy. They were to ask him to explain 'the mystery' so that they and the other advisers would not be killed. It was a desperate prayer. This is often how God works in our lives. Disasters can lead to new discoveries.

Daniel received more than he thought he was asking. It was an unparalleled revelation for a heathen king. It makes Daniel burst out in praise. (2:20-23) There are two notes for us:

• God controls the times and the seasons of history.

• He makes and unmakes all rulers. (2:21)

This was a bigger view of God and a distinct philosophy of history and it was given in a dream through a pagan despot. God was concerned not just with Israel or Judah but with the whole world. Revelation was going global! Daniel is the Biblical writer that first speaks about 'every people nation and language'. This inclusive way of speaking was taken up later by John in the book of Revelation. The Bible does not recognize a distinction between secular and sacred history. They are all one. This comes out very strongly in the king's dream. It talks about God's kingdom and human empires.

3. HOW DOES THE KINGDOM OF GOD RELATE TO EMPIRES? (DANIEL 2:31-45)

I use 'Empires' to mean political units that are made up from a number of territories or nations ruled by a single supreme authority.

The dream was of a Statue and a Stone. The Statue was made from different metals. Each represented successive Empires that were to arise in the period covered by the prophecy, until the Messiah Prince would come (9:25). There are many interpretations of this vision but as our purpose is history rather than prophecy, I accept broadly that: the head of gold was Babylon, (2:32a, 37-38); the chest and arms of silver was Persia (2:32b, 39a); the waist to the knees of bronze was Greece (2:32c, 39b); and the shins and feet, of iron and clay, was Rome (2:33, 40-43). The Stone that became a Mountain that covered the whole earth was the Kingdom of God which would supersede them all. During the time of these Empires that 'the rock cut out of the mountain would itself become a huge mountain and fill the whole earth. The God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will endure forever' (2:35).

If we review history in this light, I believe that we can see that it was not just a matter of God's people surviving and growing in a succession of empires. The empires themselves are a part of the tide of the kingdom of God coming in. Every Empire is a wave, a coming further up the shore of God's purpose to bring back the whole world to himself. Each successive empire contributes something to the universalizing purpose of God. We have the feel of that in Daniel's stories of Babylon. Even secular historians name Nebuchadnezzar as the greatest king of any until that time, who saw himself as responsible for assuring the order of the world.

The Persian Empire suddenly pulled many peoples of the world into a common experience. Indians, Medes, Babylonians, Lydians, Greeks, Jews, Phoenicians and Egyptians were for the first time governed by one empire whose eclecticism showed how far civilization had come. They drew from all the cultures they ruled in deciding how to organize and live.

Greek culture replaced the organizing principle of *kinship* with that of locality: local attachment, your city, became more important than the family you belonged to. The Greek philosophers, like Plato, first gave us the idea of 'universals'. These were values and concepts that applied all over the world to all peoples. Alexander the Great introduced this Greek culture to the East. There was a mixing of Greek and Oriental cultures. Greek now became the official language of the whole near East.

The Roman Empire was never an exclusive racial entity whose leadership was closed to non-Italians. And it made the whole world physically

accessible by the roads it built. It did more than any previous culture to establish the principle of rule by law and move it towards being universal. Now this divine strategy did not stop with the Roman Empire. Acts 17:26 says that God determined the limits of the territory and the eras of the history of every nation, in order that they might seek after God and find him.

There have been several empires since the Roman Empire and we need to try and discern how they were part of the purpose of the Lord of History. It is not easy. It is like the tide coming in. Sometimes the water recedes very far before it comes in again in a big wave further up the shore. I cannot help feeling that some empires were like a very great undertow. These incoming waves of God's historical purpose include the fifth century invasions of the Northern and Eastern peoples that conquered the Roman Empire only to be converted by the faith of those whom they conquered. Some of the receding waves can be seen in the Islamic Empires, The Umayyad, the Abbasids, the Saracen and then the Ottoman Empires, which resulted in what we are now beginning to see as the European Captivity of the Gospel.

In Asia, there had been Empires too. China had become one nation in the Ch'in dynasty around 400 BC. Successive dynasties followed with some astonishing achievements and reversals. During the Ming Dynasty, China was the most technically advanced nation in the world. Almost inexplicably, an Imperial decree of 1436 halted Chinese exploration and prompted the scuttling of Cheng Ho's warships. It urged China to turn inward in order to protect her cultural heritage against contamination by foreign barbarians. So successful was this campaign that China experienced almost 500 years of scientific, technological and cultural stagnation.

The period of the European maritime Empires started with the Portuguese within about ten years of the Imperial edict recalling China's navy. These empires were a major means of the gospel going global. World history might have been very different if the Imperial edict had not been issued and it is these things that make me believe that it is Jesus Christ who is the Lord of History. I am not saying that each empire was progressively more like the kingdom of God. There was good and bad in them all. They usually ended badly. I am suggesting that something was achieved or finished off that moved the world in the long term to a place where the impact of the kingdom of God could be felt in all the world in every people and nation and language.

What the achievement or change or negative purpose of each empire was, will, I think, need to be discerned by the inheritors of these empires. People like me can only very dimly discern what the Lord of History

was working in the Mongol empire in Asia, the Mogul Empire in India, the Aztecs and the Incas in South America, the Ottoman Empire in the Middle east and North Africa, the successive dynasties in China, the Russian and Soviet Empires in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and the short lived Japanese Empire in the 20th. Century.

Acts 17:26-7 and Matthew 24:7, 14 both indicate that this is the way to understand history from God's point of view. We have traveled a long way from Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the statue and the stone. We are still talking about the same thing. As the hymn says,

So be it Lord, thy throne shall never
Like earths proud empires pass away.
Thy kingdom stands and grows forever,
Till all thy creatures own thy sway.

4. WHERE ARE WE NOW?

There are few Empires left in the world. The Chinese, perhaps the Russian and the Indonesian. What we do have is the process of *globalization*. This is a subtle economic and cultural empire that transcends political boundaries. It is the new imperialism within which the gospel has to survive and grow. In broad terms the imperialism described in Revelation 13, is an economic imperialism where only those who had the mark of the Beast could buy and sell. Globalization is breaking down economic, demographic, cultural and ethnic walls faster and more effectively than anything else in history. That is surely an opening for God to bless *all* the families of the earth with the gospel and not just some.

If we go back to Daniel receiving this preview of history, we should not be surprised or afraid. He and his people were still first generation forced migrants in Babylon with all the upheaval that forced deportation causes to the spirit of the people. The message, delivered to the people through their pagan King was that Judah may be conquered, but God is still on the throne and his kingdom will never end. We ourselves are evidence that the message through Daniel is true as is the whole church of Jesus Christ throughout the world.

So, our task is that we like them, remain steadfast and grow in likeness to Jesus, and not sell out and continue our decline. I will look at each of our heads in turn.

The progress of the gospel in the South.

We are beyond numbers in this matter by now. I have them, but I will not weary you with them. It is time to learn the detail. For this I recommend

the recent books by Philip Jenkins starting from *The Next Christendom*.[2] Friends, we in the West are a side show and need to start behaving as a side show. Let me tell you of my visit in January 2010 to my old Church in Nairobi. When we started in 1959, we had a Sunday attendance of 40 including children. When I returned 50 years later, on the first Sunday I preached to 2,000 at the family service in a building that seats 3,000. They opened it in 2005 at a cost of $1.5m which they raised themselves without foreign money – a beautiful but very functional building. The next Sunday I preached at the two other morning services. Young Adults = 600, Youth Church = teenagers 700. Total 3,300 worshippers.

In the meantime they have planted four other churches in Greater Nairobi all of which are thriving and one of which has more attending that the mother church and is embarked on a wide ranging programme of church planting in a very responsible manner. It was very humbling, but wonderful to be there. I recalled to them that in 1967 I came to the conviction that they could be ten times more effective if they were under African leadership and set about finding an African and leaving, as I did in 1971. Now I was able to say, 'You are ten times larger than you were then and it has all been under African leadership under God.'

We need to come to terms with the fact that very often the growth of the church arises in situations of persecution. We trip out the quote, 'The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church,' but do we ask why. It seems to me that the reason is that believers under persecution behave like Christians and it is attractive. They have no trappings of power struggles. They are not in it for what they can get. They are not rice Christians a major stumbling block where they are seen to be.

China has been the main field of church growth in the world for the last forty years. I was in Nanjing in 1996 meeting with the leadership of the registered churches (TSPM). They told me why the churches both registered and unregistered had grown. They said the believers pulled their weight in the factories and delivered on their five year plan quotas. They were reliable. Many others had mental illness under the strain. It was the Christians that showed care and concern and prayed for their healing which often took place. The churches in China are still persecuted and they are still growing.

Or take the church planted by the Mennonites in Ethiopia. They grew from 5,000 to 50,000 between 1975 and 1985, when all their pastors were put in prison and their buildings were closed. They had to meet as small

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[2]   Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

mutually caring groups in homes and have quiet meetings in case the Communist committees would hear and detect them.

Nepal is another kind of growth in the last 40 years, from few to over half a million now through Communist coups and place revolutions. In October 2009, there was a meeting in Katmandu of representatives of all eight South Asian countries. It was the first time this coalition of their Diasporas had actually met in South Asia. The local believers wanted to involve their government officials in the opening of their meeting. The visitors were not so sure. But the Prime Minister sent the Minister for Tourism and Aviation to attend and he spoke to them. He said, 'I do not like Christianity, but I love Jesus.' And gave then permission to quote him that. Later they had an audience with the Prime Minister.

Now, it is not all sweetness and light. The same Kenya that is 80% Christian is the leading country in the world for its culture of impunity in the face of corruption. In fact the structures and ethos of the churches reflect the culture of the society. Even the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches that are growing so spectacularly have imbibed the culture of the big man who is the autocratic pastor and they cut little ice in influencing society.

We should keep informed and rejoice and draw inspiration from it. God is not dead! We should get to know about it, not just in our papers and missionary magazines but through having in our homes their people who are here as students, refugees and economic migrants. The major gift needed in the world today may be hospitality. With limitations, if we are able to travel we should also go on mission trips and see for ourselves.

We can contribute financially but we ought to do it with caution. There is a lot of Christian work done and the only reason is that there is money to pay for it. It is not all or always valuable. The emphasis needs to be to let nationals lead and do work that is within their means. If they are financed, let them set and monitor the accounting standards that you can agree to. We need to avoid reverse cultural dominance, where the national slips into an autocratic role.

The retreat of the gospel in the West.

There is no doubt we are in trouble everywhere in the West, though not always in the same ways and for the same reason. I do not need to rub it in. I am not sure anyone has accurately discerned the reason for this or we would be on the way out of it by now. I cannot come to you with any prescriptions of my own. My best guess is that it has to do with the degree to which we have been seduced by the secular emphasis that is so valuable in other respects. We have edited God out. This takes different forms in different parts of the West. It is clearest in the places that have

been most under Marxist control. Next probably comes the French type of secularization that made such a clean sweep at the French Revolution and was fostered in mainly Roman Catholic areas that Napoleon overran. The Slavic Orthodox areas have been greatly infected. In the Anglo Saxon West, we and the Commonwealth countries are worst affected and USA probably comes off best for the acknowledgement of God.

It is my own belief that we need to rediscover the LORD with capital letters, but I will defer treatment of this until we get to our last section.

The shape of the churches in multi ethnic societies.

It is not just that everything is everywhere. Everyone is everywhere. The scale if migration is as great as the enormous migrations from Europe to America, Australia New Zealand and South Africa in the 19th and 20th. Centuries. The scope of migrations in the last 60 years is wider than it has ever been in recorded history. It is from everywhere to everywhere!

We see it here in UK. It will be a major consideration in the election next month.[3] It seems to me not to be so pronounced in Scotland, but in many cities in England the number of immigrants is very great. We see it in church life. The largest congregations in UK are immigrant congregations. Kingsway International Christian Church in the East End of London has more than 10,000 members. They are on SKY TV's religious channels practically every day. They are largely West African/Nigerian. Kensington Tabernacle runs a close second. They are mainly from East and Central Africa. Korean Congregations abound and the Chinese are growing significantly. My Iranian friends tell me that they are growing significantly but their numbers are still small. In my view, mega-churches have their origins in migration movements whether from country to country or just from the countryside to the cities or from city to city in the highly mobile USA.

Not surprisingly the main reactions against globalization are from ethnic separatists and religious fundamentalists. Migrants feel at home with their own and feel very protective and defensive about their new young communities and develop fortress mentalities. Their leaders can exploit this.

There is an idealism in white Christians that asks why they could not have just joined our churches and swelled their number. That is a subject for another day. But, as one who has worked at this in Africa, USA and UK, let me give you my present estimates. Only 10% of any normal congregation will ever be given to hospitality and it will be less than half of that who welcome strangers of another tribe or race. This is because

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[3]   The general election was held in the U.K. on 6 May 2010 [ed.].

we have not recognized that one consequence of being born again is that kinship can no longer be our primary value. Until we do there will not be much serious integration.

So what do we do if we are to work within such parameters? We stop beating up people for not doing what is not within their gift. Hospitality in the sense of entertaining strangers is a gift. Not everyone has it. Encourage those who have the gift to use it and acknowledge and support them in it. Work to get people to have fellowship with their own kind in their homes either informally or in fellowship groups. I do believe that hospitality may be the primary evidence of a Christian Lifestyle in our day. It could be the key to handling globalization. If you can let them see what you are at home you let them see what you are. That then becomes the witness.

When Jesus said, 'You shall be witnesses to me,' it was 'you' plural. It is corporate witness. To me the Kingdom of God is where things work. Why do they work? They work because they do the right things and they do them right. Churches are meant to be outposts of the Kingdom. The right things are done in the right way and they work and are seen to work. Do people look at churches here and see them as places where things work? Certainly not in Africa. Very often, nothing seems to work in Africa. The message that we have to get across is that if our churches don't work, we should shut up about the government. We have nothing to say!

The advocacy of the gospel in religiously and philosophically plural societies.

Since Globalization is here to stay, this is possibly the churches' primary challenge. It will take different forms in different places. It is not a philosophical or theological question only although it is seriously both of these. It is a worldview question and it is a lifestyle question. Worldview questions affect what people believe without thinking. Lifestyle question affect how people think, feel, live and behave. We have to go back to the drawing board and challenge all our assumptions.

Let me be frank with you. I am a Modernity man to my back bone. Classically educated at Glasgow University I value all the facets of the enlightenment and I am happiest within that framework. I am intensely proud of the lead that Scotland gave in the development of the enlightenment and of the age-long commitment to higher education in our small country. This is home. Until fairly recently all my Christian apologetics were shot through with Modernity arguments, but what if that is not where the worldview is anymore? The longer I live and go to church, the more I am convinced that many of those who do not darken our doors have not rejected our gospel. They reject what they think the gospel is

that we have been trying to tell them. If I pray for one thing more than another it is that people like that may learn of the true God, The LORD with capital letters, and what he has done for them and all the world in Jesus the Messiah.

In more recent times, I am just as excited by the explosion of globalization. In the providence of God I retired to Oxford and have access to the Bodleian library and use it with great delight. But now I have the Web and the Internet and access to even more than the Bodleian can give me in a much more accessible form. I am beginning to realize what it means to say that God loves the world. Not just my world, but the whole world. I am becoming conscious of great gaps in my knowledge and understanding. That is why I was drawn to mention all the empires down through history and on every continent earlier. God loved and loves those worlds too.

At the moment in my studies in governance I am very interested in the Islamic Empires and their scope and achievements. It gives me a new view of how Muslims think. Bannockburn is important to us Scots. Can you be a Scot and not be proud of Bannockburn and what it stands for? Cordoba in Spain is important to Muslims. What do you know about Cordoba? I am asking, 'Is there another aspect of the gospel that I need to learn that would help me to open it up to those mistaken unbelievers.'

This has to be an unfinished piece, for I do not pretend to have answers and it is late for me. I pray that there may be those here who will take this matter up and show us how to advocate the gospel in religiously and philosophically pluralist cultures. The we shall be part of Daniel's word to Nebuchadnezzar, 'The stone became a great mountain and filled the whole earth'.

The Church Moves South: Elucidation and Implication[1]

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The flagship Commission One of the 'Edinburgh 1910' World Missionary Conference was entitled 'Carrying the Gospel to all the Non-Christian World'. It was based on a simple binary concept: there was a 'Christian world' which had been fully evangelised and there was a 'Non-Christian' World which was bereft of the gospel. These two 'worlds' were geographically understood: Europe and North America was the 'Christian World' while Asia and Africa formed the 'Non-Christian' World. (It was agreed not to discuss areas like Latin America which did not fit neatly into this binary division.) On this conception, the project of the missionary movement was essentially very simple: 'carrying' the gospel from where it was well established to areas where it was unknown. Beyond the wildest imagination of the delegates was the possibility that within 100 years the geography of Christianity could turn by almost 180 degrees. As Andrew Walls writes,

> By a huge reversal of the position in 1910, the majority of Christians now live in Africa, Asia, Latin America or the Pacific, and ... the proportion is rising. Simultaneously with the retreat from Christianity in the West in the twentieth century went—just as the visionaries of Edinburgh hoped—a massive accession to the Christian faith in the non-Western world. The map of the Christian Church, its demographic and cultural make-up, changed more dramatically during the twentieth century than (probably) in any other since the first.[2]

The stark geographical framework which guided the 1910 Conference is clearly not serviceable today. However, it is abundantly clear that there has been a recession in Christianity in the West while the faith has spread pro-

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[1] This article is based on a paper presented at the Scottish Evangelical Theology Society Conference on Mission and Globalisation, Rutherford House, Edinburgh, 6-7 April 2010. The author is grateful for the discussion which took place on that occasion.

[2] Andrew F. Walls, 'Commission One and the Church's Transforming Century', in *Edinburgh 2010: Mission Then and Now*, ed. by David A. Kerr and Kenneth R. Ross (Oxford: Regnum, 2010), p. 33.

digiously in the great continents of the South. As Philip Jenkins observes, 'The era of Western Christianity has passed within our lifetimes, and the day of Southern Christianity is dawning. The fact of change itself is undeniable: it has happened, and it will continue to happen.'[3] While there are formidable challenges facing the young churches of the South, there is no mistaking the fact that they demonstrate a vitality and a confidence which is almost completely absent in the historic churches of Europe. No wonder that the missionary and ecumenical leader Lesslie Newbigin liked to quote General Simatoupong of Indonesia: 'Of course, the number one question is: can the West be converted?'[4] A further question is what part, if any, the Christian faith of the South will play as an agent of such conversion? There is growing talk today of 'mission in reverse', i.e., to use Edinburgh 1910 language, the gospel is being 'carried' from the South to the West.

MAPPING CHRISTIANITY'S DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSFORMATION

Edinburgh 1910's flagship Commission I, chaired by John R. Mott, charged a sub-committee of its members convened by James S. Dennis to prepare a *Statistical Atlas of Christian Missions* which was published as an appendix to the Report of the Commission.[5] It is this volume which prompted the effort to produce a new atlas for the occasion of the centenary of Edinburgh 1910. *The Statistical Atlas* aimed to present a comprehensive picture of the progress of Christian mission worldwide as things stood in the year 1910. The new atlas has the same ambition one hundred years later. There are, however, important changes to be taken into account. Perhaps the biggest change is that it is no longer a matter of red dots marking European and American mission stations in Asia and Africa but rather an attempt to take account of the entire presence of Christian faith on a worldwide basis.

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3   Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 3.

4   Lesslie Newbigin, *A Word in Season: Perspectives on Christian World Mission*(Grand Rapids: Eerdmans & Edinburgh: St Andrew Press, 1994), p. 66.

5   *Statistical Atlas of Christian Missions: Containing a Directory of Missionary Societies, a Classified Summary of Statistics, an Index of Mission Stations, and a Series of Specially Prepared Maps of Mission Fields. Compiled by Sub-committees of Commission I, 'On Carrying the Gospel to All the Non-Christian World,' As an Integral Part of Its Report to the World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh, June 14–23, 1910* (Edinburgh: World Missionary Conference, 1910).

The methodology which created the atlas was to take the statistics of the World Christian Database, compiled and tested over many years by David Barrett, Todd Johnson and their team, and to project these on to maps. They have used both Government census statistics and the membership records of churches to build an authoritative enumeration of Christian profession. Drawing on the statistics of the World Christian Database, the atlas offers a variety of maps, tables, charts and graphs to indicate key trends. However, being an atlas its primary offering is the maps.[6]

The principal finding of the Atlas is that, whereas in 1910 it was a religion largely concentrated in Europe and the Americas with much of the rest of the world being regarded as a 'mission field', by 2010 it is strikingly evident that Christianity enjoys widespread allegiance and has become a dynamic force in much of Africa and parts of Asia. The atlas plots this dramatic change. Each 2010 map is accompanied by an inset which shows the situation which obtained in 1910. The map showing the relative strength of Christians by province shows how much the situation has changed certainly in Africa and to some extent in Asia in the course of the past 100 years.

In the case of Africa, the total number of Christians in Africa was just under 12 million in 1910 (9.4% of the population) and that by 2010 the total has risen to almost 500 million (47.9% of the population). Besides continental analysis, the atlas examines each of the 23 United Nations regions. The regional level can show the extent of the change in some areas even more vividly. The UN region of 'Middle Africa', for example,had very few Christians in 1910, whereas by 2010 a majority of the population is professing the Christian faith

Perhaps more surprising is the extent of the growth of Christianity in Asia. Though Christians form a small minority of the population, in the course of 100 years their growth in numbers has been very significant. The total number of Christians in Asia in 1910 was just over 25 million (2.4% of the population) while in 2010 it is just over 350 million (8.5% of the population). This gives grounds for Paul Joshua, one of the Atlas contributors, to argue that the shifting centre of gravity in world Christianity

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[6]   See Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross (eds), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910-2010* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009). In an attempt to offer a global perspective on the question at hand, this article draws heavily on the interpretative essays found in the Atlas, almost invariably written by an author who originates from the region about which he or she is writing.

may need to be seen 'not as a movement to the Global South alone but equally as a movement to the Global East.'[7]

One device used by the atlas to trace the demographic change is to identify the statistical 'centre of gravity' of a religion in a particular year. This is the geographical point at which an equal number of believers in a given religion live to the north, south, east and west of that point. In the case of Christianity, in global terms the centre of gravity has shifted from a point in south-west Spain in 1910 to a point near Timbuktu in 2010. It has moved in the course of the century in a decidedly southern and slightly eastern direction. This demonstrates the shift of the preponderance of adherence to Christianity from Europe and Northern America to Africa, Asia and Latin America. The comparative use of the 'centre of gravity' can also be revealing in relation to particular regions. For example, in the course of the century Asia's 'centre of gravity has moved from Bengal in north-east India to a point in southern China just north of Viet Nam'.[8] This vividly demonstrates the extent of the growth of Christianity in eastern Asia in the space of the last 100 years.

While in global terms the story is clearly one of Christianity becoming more southern and eastern, the pattern is not uniform. It is important not to overlook cases where the trend is quite different. Western Asia stands out as a region where the Christian proportion of the population has fallen from 22.9% in 1910 to 5.7% in 2010. As Anthony O'Mahony observes: 'For Christianity in the Middle East the last hundred years has witnessed a profound series of crises. Displacement by war, genocide and interreligious conflict, leading to loss, emigration and exile, has been the main experience of Christianity in the modern Middle East.'[9]

In terms of demography, the Atlas shows only a slight decline in adherence to Christianity in Europe. The demography works on the basis of self-identification and most Europeans still identify themselves as Christians. What the demography cannot assess is how far this reflects a matter of cultural memory rather than actively practised faith. It takes the essay of Andre Droogers to point out that:

> Within a century the churches in Western European countries have been moved from a central position to the margins of society.... A small flock has difficulty in maintaining the infrastructure of the church, including buildings and clergy. In all churches the leadership has to reformulate the church's

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[7]   Paul Joshua Bhakiaraj, 'Christianity in South-central Asia', in Johnson and Ross, *Atlas*, p. 143.

[8]   See Johnson and Ross, *Atlas*, p. 137.

[9]   Anthony O'Mahony, 'Christianity in Western Asia, 1910-2010', in Johnson and Ross, *Atlas*, p. 151.

task in the current constellation, since many of the standard practices reflect a situation that no longer exists. The language of liturgy, hymnbook and sermon is often that of previous centuries, incomprehensible to modern persons.[10]

Expansion in the global South has run in parallel to recession in the global North.

A notable feature of the Atlas is that the statistical tables and maps are complemented by interpretative essays which seek to account for the demographic changes which the statistics reveal. Setting the past 100 years in the context of 'Christianity across twenty centuries', Andrew Walls observes that

once more the pattern of Christian advance appears as serial rather than progressive, withering at the centre, blossoming at the edges. The great event in the religious history of the twentieth century was the transformation of the demographic and cultural composition of Christianity brought about by the simultaneous processes of advance and recession.[11]

Daniel Jeyaraj makes the point that, as a result of the demographic changes of the past century, Christianity is 'the most pluralistic living religion, because at any given time people worship Jesus Christ in the greatest number of languages, reflecting the diverse cultural contexts in which Christian faith finds expression.'[12]

CHURCH LIFE TODAY: THE EPHESIAN MOMENT

The demography makes it very clear that the church has 'moved south' in the course of the past century. What remains to be seen is what will be the implications of this for Christianity worldwide. A comment made again and again in the *Atlas of Global Christianity* concerns the diversity which is evident. While it may be a global religion, Christianity today is anything but uniform. As Dana Robert observes:

What at first glance appears to be the largest world religion is in fact the ultimate local religion. Indigenous words for God and ancient forms of spirituality have all become part of Christianity. Flexibility at the local level, combined

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[10]   Andre Droogers, 'Christianity in Western Europe, 1910-2010', in Johnson and Ross, *Atlas*, pp. 170-71.

[11]   Andrew F. Walls, 'Christianity across Twenty Centuries', in Johnson and Ross, *Atlas*, p. 48.

[12]   Daniel Jeyaraj, 'The Re-Emergence of Global Christianity, 1910-2010', in Johnson and Ross, *Atlas*, p. 55.

with being part of an international network, is a major factor in Christianity's self-understanding and success today. The strength of world Christianity lies in its creative interweaving of the warp of a world religion with the woof of its local contexts.[13]

The great change within our lifetime has been the unprecedented increase in the range and variety of these local contexts.

This can readily be seen if consideration is given to the question of the language in which Christian faith is expressed. Spanish replaced English as the mother-tongue of the greatest number of Christians around 1980. Today Christian faith is being expressed in a growing diversity of languages. Bryan Harmelink reports in the Atlas that in 2010 the total number of languages which have 'at least some Bible translation will surpass 2,500'.[14] As Lamin Sanneh remarks:

> The worldwide nature of Christian faith and practice is fixed in the multiplicity of languages employed in translation and worship, and that linguistic activity reached one of its high points in the twentieth century to stamp the religion with its peculiar indigenising character. Whatever the situation with regard to the core of the religion, there can be little doubt that it has never been about a universal linguistic or territorial core. The local idiom, not the language of social scale, is the original language of religion in Christianity.[15]

As it recovers its rootedness in local idiom, Christianity's theological development will be informed by experiences and concepts which emerge in a variety of linguistic contexts and require effective translation into international languages if they are to enrich the understanding of the church as a whole.

The work of Western missionaries over the past two centuries has often been presented as a matter of domineering Westerners imposing their system of thought on hapless natives. The diversity of local character now becoming apparent in Christianity worldwide shows that the reality was very different. As Dana Robert has pointed out:

> In retrospect it is evident that even during the colonial period, indigenous Christians—Bible women, evangelists, catechists and prophets—were all along the most effective interpreters of Christianity to their own people. The

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13   Dana L. Robert, 'Shifting Southward: Global Christianity Since 1945', International Bulletin of Missionary Research, 24/2 (2000), 56.

14   Bryan Harmelink, 'Bible Translation and Distribution', in Johnson and Ross, Atlas, p. 298.

15   Lamin Sanneh, 'Ethnolinguistic Diversity', in Johnson and Ross, Atlas, p. 210.

explosion of non-Western Christianity was possible because Christianity was already being indigenized before the colonizers departed.... Ultimately, the most interesting lessons from the missionary outreach during the Western colonial era is what happened to Christianity when the missionaries weren't looking, and after the colonizers withdrew.[16]

This widespread indigenizing of the faith makes the task of assessing global Christianity much more intricate and complex than would be the case if uniformity were the prevailing trend. The demographic change in the course of a century would be dramatic enough were it simply a matter of the Christian movement extending its 'home base' and continuing to operate on exactly the same basis. In fact, it goes much further. It presages new forms of Christianity and new forms of missionary engagement. Philip Jenkins poses the question: 'Southern Christianity, the Third Church, is not just a transplanted version of the familiar religion of the older Christian states: the New Christendom is no mirror image of the Old. It is a truly new and developing entity. Just how different from its predecessor remains to be seen.'[17]

Helpful initial assessment is offered by three commentators. Philip Wickeri, coming from long experience of Chinese church life, observes:

> ... the most dynamic sections of Christianity today are in movements emerging outside its established centres: The African Initiated Churches (or AICs), Pentecostals all over the world; the rural churches of China; new indigenous Christian communities throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America. They represent a popular Christianity, a mission from below, a mission of transformation. Their emphasis is on oral tradition, lay leadership and maximised participation confront historic Protestant churches with our carefully scripted, over-clericalised approaches to church life....[18]

Secondly, with a primary reference to the situation in Africa, Lamin Sanneh comments that:

> In the turn it took in its post-Western phase, charismatic religion was more than a spacey rhapsodic binge, just as its effects went far beyond wild spectacles and heady excitement. The West insisted that worship must be of a God who was intellectualizable, because intellectual veracity was the safeguard against mystification and superstition. Yet for Africans, the call for explana-

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16   Robert, 'Shifting Southward', pp. 53, 57.
17   Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, p.214.
18   Philip L. Wickeri, 'Mission from the Margins: *The Missio Dei* in the Crisis of World Christianity', *International Review of Mission*, Vol. 93 No. 369 (April 2004), 195.

tion was not equal in its drawing power to the appeal of the living God before whose eternal mystery explanation must exhaust itself in worship. Only the reality of a transformed spiritual life could commune with God, which, in part, was the need that the African charistmatic movement existed to meet. The religious experience is about intimacy, connection, trust, discovery, and an ethical life in community and solidarity.[19]

Thirdly, Jehu Hanciles, considering primarily the faith of migrant Christians coming from the global South to the West, draws the contrast that:

The old heartlands exemplified political domination, territorial control, national religion, cultural superiority, and a fixed universal vision. In sharp contrast, the emerging heartlands of the faith embody vulnerability and risk, religious plurality, immense diversity of Christian experience and expression, and structures of dependency.[20]

It is not only the demography but, with it, many aspects of the profile of global Christianity which are rapidly changing.

All of this brings us to what Andrew Walls has described as 'the Ephesian moment'. We have entered a time when, like never before, we have opportunity to bring to fruition the vision set out in Ephesians 2:22: 'In union with [Christ] *you too are being built together with all the others* to a place where God lives through his Spirit.' The possibility is there to engage not across two major cultures, as in New Testament times, but across a great many. The potential is there for a great enriching of the faith but it will not happen automatically. As Walls counsels:

The demographic transformation of the church brought about by the missionary movement opens the possibility of testing our Christian witness by that of others, of experiencing one another's gifts and sharing our combined resources. Equally, it opens the prospect of a score of local Christianities operating independently without interest or concern in one another. Either of these processes is possible; only one of them reflects the New Testament view of the church or the Spirit of Christ.[21]

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[19] Lamin Sanneh, *Disciples of All Nations: Pillars of World Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 193.

[20] Jehu J. Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom: Globalization, African Migration and the Transformation of the West* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2008), p. 135.

[21] Andrew F. Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History* (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark; New York: Orbis, 2002), p. 69.

Perhaps there lies the great ecumenical challenge of this century. As we consider how best to meet it, we turn to some of the prominent changes taking place through the southward shift in the Christian faith.

MISSIONARIES TODAY: FROM EVERYWHERE TO EVERYONE

Another change which is clearly demonstrated in the Atlas is that the 'from the West to the rest' pattern of missionary sending has given way to a movement which is 'from everywhere to everyone'. Even when the definition of a missionary is restricted to someone who crosses national borders in the interests of propagating the faith, there has been a dramatic change in missionary sending since 1910. Approximately 62,000 missionaries were in service in 1910 while in 2010 this number has increased to some 400,000. Of the 62,000 missionaries in 1910 all but 1,450 were sent from Global North countries. Of the 400,000 in 2010, 20,700 are sent from African countries, 47,100 from Asian countries, and 58,400 from Latin American countries. The 132,800 from Europe and 135,000 from North America ensure that the majority of missionaries still originate in the Global North.[22] However, the proportion coming from the Global South has increased exponentially. Africa, claims Tokumbo Adeyemo, has made the transition from 'mission field to missionary force.'[23] Moreover the indications are that the numbers of European and American missionaries are declining while their counterparts from the Global South are increasing in number.[24] Under the momentum of this change the pattern of missionary sending and receiving is markedly different from the 'one-way traffic' of 1910. As Jehu Hanciles remarks 'Within the emergent non-Western movement ... each nation sends as well as receives missionaries. Never before has the course of missionary movement been this multi-directional, disparate and global.'[25]

This shift in the pattern of missionary sending and receiving is even more marked if account is taken of the many individuals who fulfil a missionary vocation within the borders of their own nation. Though such missionaries do not undertake the kind of lengthy sea voyages of their European and American predecessors a century earlier, they may well undertake no less arduous journeys in terms of adjusting to a new environment, culture, language etc. 'A century ago,' observes Dana Robert, 'India and China had the largest foreign missionary presence, with "foreign" defined as mostly European. Today their governments keep out for-

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[22] See Johnson and Ross, *Atlas*, pp. 260-1.
[23] Tokumbo Adeyemo, cit. Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, p. 218.
[24] Johnson & Ross, *Atlas*, pp. 260-1.
[25] Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, p. 390.

eign missionaries through visa restrictions. But within their borders tens of thousands of "home" missionaries evangelize other ethnic groups.... A century after Edinburgh 1910, missionaries are more diverse than in any previous era of human history.'[26]

Certainly in the popular mind, and to a considerable extent in reality, missionaries of the Edinburgh 1910 era were working hand in glove with colonialism and imperialism. Most European missionaries clearly understood that their project was quite distinct from that of colonial rule. Nonetheless they found it difficult to avoid being in alliance for practical purposes with Western political aggression and economic exploitation. Notwithstanding the extraordinary personal sacrifices which were made by many missionaries, their work was often blighted by nationalist competition and ingrained racism. This complicity of Christian mission with Western imperial power sealed its foreign character and made it unappealing as a faith option, particularly in Asia.

By contrast, today's missionaries are ever more likely to share a similar racial, cultural and economic background to the people among whom they serve. Lalsangkima Pachuau gives the example of a Korean missionary in Thailand: 'We are easily accepted as one of their own, and we, on our part, understand better their situation and ways of thinking.'[27] To put this in historical perspective, Pachuau remarks: 'If the 1910 World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh represents the high point of the modern missionary movement from the West to Asia, Edinburgh 2010 marks another high point, namely Christian missions from Asia, by Asians, in Asia and around the world.'[28]

A similar pattern is observable in regard to Latin America. As Marcelo Vargas and Antonia Leonora van der Meer have observed:

> The first decades of missionary work on the continent relied heavily on the hundreds of devoted Northern American and European missionaries who dedicated their lives sacrificially for the sake of the gospel. Today foreign personnel are still active but not indispensable to the missionary task. What makes mission occur today are the thousands of local and national partners working every day as missionaries not only within their own continent but also all over the world.[29]

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[26] Dana Robert, 'Missionaries Worldwide, 1910-2010', in Johnson & Ross, *Atlas*, p. 259.

[27] Lalsangkima Pachuau, 'Missionaries Sent and Received, Asia, 1910-2010', in Johnson & Ross, *Atlas*, p. 268.

[28] *Ibid.*

[29] Marcelo Vargas and Antonia Leonora van der Meer with Levi DeCarvalho, 'Missionaries Sent and Received, Latin America, 1910-2010', in Johnson &

MISSION BY THE POOR

The missionary movement represented by Edinburgh 1910 was no stranger to vulnerability and relative poverty. However, by and large it was a movement resourced and funded by prosperous societies which undertook its work in much less economically developed societies. Hence a close interconnection was formed between mission and what was then called 'civilisation' and would now be called 'development'. One of the sharpest critiques of the Western missionary movement was published by Anglican missionary Roland Allen almost 100 years ago. In a book entitled *Missionary Methods St Paul's or Ours?* he contrasted the Pauline mission which was powerless in worldly terms and therefore dependent on the Holy Spirit with what he saw as the alliance of the modern missionary movement with the power of the Western world.[30]

Were Allen alive today he might be surprised to see that the identification of Christianity with the powerful is increasingly a thing of the past. More and more the agents of Christian mission come from among the weak, the broken and the vulnerable. It is a new kind of agency but is it not one which has greater affinity to Paul—and to Jesus—than the form of missionary presence which often appeared to be allied to imperial power and economic exploitation? Increasingly, we see a situation emerging which is quite opposite to the one which troubled Roland Allen. Swept by unmerciful currents of history, Christian believers bear witness to the suffering Lord in whom they find the strength to meet adversity. A new (or recovered) pattern of missionary activity is emerging in which the poor take the gospel to the rich.

Jehu Hanciles has observed: 'This non-Western missionary movement represents mission *beyond Christendom*: mission de-linked from structures of power and domination; mission undertaken from positions of vulnerability and need; mission freed from the bane of territoriality and one-directional expansion from a fixed centre; mission involving agents who reflect the New Testament reference to the "weak things of the world" (I Corinthians 1:27).'[31] The organisational pattern of mission also starts to look quite different from that which prevailed in the Western missionary movement. There is no mistaking the fact that the gospel is spreading through migratory movements but there is no sign of anything like a missionary society. There is no head office, no organising committee, no command structure, no centralised fund, no comprehensive stra-

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Ross, *Atlas*, p. 276.
[30] Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St Paul's or Ours?* (London: World Dominion Press, 1912).
[31] Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, p. 369.

tegic direction. It appears to be a disorganised movement of individuals making their own connections, developing their own perspectives and functioning within networks which they themselves have constructed. It has been characterised as a liquid movement, lacking in solid structures.

Those accustomed to living with vulnerability have little to lose and are often ready to take risks and be open to others in a way which would not come easily to those who are accustomed to positions of power and privilege. They also have a motivation, which could easily elude their more comfortable fellow Christians, to work with God for transformation. They are sensitive to the death-dealing forces, structures and systems which threaten human flourishing. Their prayer for the kingdom of God to come has a depth and potency which is rarely found amongst the prosperous. The poor therefore have a leading role in the mission of God in the world today. As Samuel Escobar remarks: 'There is an element of mystery when the dynamism of mission does not come from the people of a position of power or privilege ... but from below, from the little ones, those who have few material, financial or technical resources.'[32] Hanciles draws a contrast between the two eras of mission: 'Shaped by Christendom ideals, Western missions remain marked by an emphasis on distinctions and differences (territorial, cultural and racial). Shaped by the experience of plurality and diversity, non-Western efforts are oriented toward relational presence and interpersonal exchange.'[33]

How could the older missionary movement productively relate to the new pattern? What forms of connection and association will provide unity and synergy for such a diverse movement of faith? Samuel Escobar has thrown down the challenge:

> The Holy Spirit seems to be at work especially in the periphery of the world, giving Christian people a vision and mobilizing them for local and global mission in spite of poverty, lack of experience and absence of training.... If this is the way the Spirit is moving, what needs to be done in order to walk in step with his reviving and transforming activity? What kinds of global partnerships have to be imagined and developed for this new stage of mission history?[34]

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[32] Samuel Escobar, *A Time for Mission* (Leicester: IVP, 2003), p. 17; cit. Daryl Balia and Kirsteen Kim ed., *Edinburgh 2010: Witnessing to Christ Today* (Oxford: Regnum, 2010), p. 132.

[33] Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, p. 390.

[34] Samuel Escobar, 'Mission From Everywhere to Everyone: The Home Base in a New Century', in Kerr & Ross, *Edinburgh 2010*, p. 194.

MIGRATION AS HIGHWAY FOR MISSION

There has long been close connection between migration and mission. People moving, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, to a new place often take their faith with them. They plant congregations which may initially be expatriate in their composition but which, as they become established in their new environment, often have a missionary impact which extends far beyond their original constituency. In the context of the early 21st century it is strikingly apparent that there are large numbers of economic migrants and that the migration routes lead predominantly from Global South to Global North. This brings Christians from centres of renewal to the old heartlands of the faith where the fire is often burning low. This point is well illustrated by Jehu Hanciles' assessment of the missionary impact of African migration:

> By the end of the [20th] century, African migrants were widely dispersed among the wealthy industrialised countries of the North, and everywhere they went they established new Christian congregations. In effect, African migrations have provided a vital stimulus for missionary expansion, for the simple reason that every Christian migrant is a potential missionary. In both Europe and Northern America, African immigrant congregations have grown in unprecedented fashion and represent ... the cutting edge of Christian growth.[35]

I recall worshipping in a Zimbabwean congregation in the Wester Hailes district of Edinburgh at a time when there was a major national crisis in Zimbabwe. When the time came for intercessory prayers to be offered, I expected an outpouring of prayer for the homeland of the worshippers. Instead a series of passionate prayers were offered for the conversion of the people of Scotland. This was a group of worshippers who were very clear about the nature of their missionary vocation. Here were people who had taken to heart the injunction reported by Hanciles: 'Don't be refugees, be missionaries.'[36] Walter Hollenweger observes that: 'Christians in Britain prayed for many years for revival, and when it came they did not recognise it because it was black.'[37]

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[35] Jehu J. Hanciles, 'Missionaries Sent and Received, Africa, 1910-2010', in Johnson & Ross, *Atlas*, p. 265.

[36] Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, p. 330.

[37] Walter J. Hollenweger, 'Foreword', in *A Plea for British Black Theologies: The Black Church Movement in Britain in its Intercultural Theological and Cultural Interaction*, ed. by Roswith Geldoff, (Bern: Peter Lang, 1992), vol. 1, p. ix.

THE CHURCH MOVES SOUTH

This large-scale migratory movement has already brought a new dimension to church and mission in such centres of economic power as Europe, North America or the Gulf states. Jonathan Bonk observes that: 'Much contemporary evangelization is part of a vast migration surpassing in scale and potential import the one that saw Europeans sweep the globe.... A great majority of [the migrants] are deceptively inconsequential, profoundly Christian and explicitly evangelistic.'[38] The effects of this are evident in many different parts of the world. Roswith Gerloff and Abraham Akrong refer to 'religions on the move' amidst 'processes of transmigration and transculturation, which unleash dynamic, reciprocal, transitory and multidimensional creations in shaping a "poly-contextual world".'[39] They conclude that:

> ... the overall scene on all continents, including the migration of African, Asian or Caribbean Christians to Northern white-dominated societies, displays a reticulate structure—the vast variety and pluriformity of Christian families including traditional elements which overlap denominationally, culturally and linguistically.... Current trends suggest that this mobilisation of the masses in the South will be the driving force in Christian mission, with all promises and risks.[40]

At this point in history, when many of the migrants are first-generation, it is observable that they often worship in their own language and function as a support group for one another as they navigate the transition into their host society. Their social and cultural milieu is distinctive and not normally given to engaging the cultural mainstream of the host society in a missionary way. They bring a vital Christian presence but one which has something of a ghetto character, limiting its missionary possibilities. A key question will be what transpires in the second and third generations as greater assimilation takes place. Will the passionate faith of the immigrant community weaken as it encounters the acids of modernity? Or will it strengthen as the community employs growing bi-cultural competency to connect at a spiritual level with the society in which it is set?

MISSION AND BUSINESS

New mission dynamics are also emerging on what might be regarded as the opposite side of globalization from that represented by the poor. Sev-

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[38] Jonathan J. Bonk, 'Finance', in Johnson & Ross, *Atlas*, p. 295.
[39] Roswith Gerloff and Abraham Ako Akrong, 'Independents', in Johnson & Ross, *Atlas*, p. 76.
[40] *Ibid.*, p. 77.

eral powerful trends have coalesced to promote a reconfiguration of the relationship between business and mission. In the classic Western missionary paradigm, the role of business was to generate the income which could be used to support dedicated mission agencies. Many missions drew their financial resources from the support of successful business people. The change of paradigm now being proposed is that the business people themselves might be the missionaries. In a post-colonial world the missionary visa is increasingly becoming a thing of the past. On the other hand businesses, which are willing to invest and to offer employment, are welcome in many contexts. In terms of mission strategy this invites the creation of a new mission agent, described by Steve Rundle and Tom Steffen as a 'great commission company'. As they explain: 'the purpose of a Great Commission Company [is] to bring good news in word and deed to the neediest parts of the world. The good news about globalization is that the barriers that once prevented them from hearing this message are falling and the missions baton is being handed to a new breed of messenger.'[41]

At the same time as this new thinking emerges from the perspective of mission strategy, traditional approaches to development are coming under unprecedented critique. Both secular and religious agencies have worked for a generation on the premise that aid would provide a solution to underdevelopment in poor countries. This approach has recently been subject to scorching critique, such as that offered by Dambisa Moyo in regard to Africa: 'Has the US$1 trillion in development assistance over the last several decades made African people better off? No. In fact, across the globe the recipients of this aid are worse off; much worse off. Aid has helped to make the poor poorer, and growth slower.... Aid has been, and continues to be, an unmitigated political, economic, and humanitarian disaster for most parts of the developing world.'[42] Moyo methodically makes the case that: 'The cycle that chokes off desperately needed investment, instils a culture of dependency, and facilitates rampant and systematic corruption, all with deleterious consequences for growth. The cycle that, in fact, perpetuates underdevelopment, and guarantees economic failure in the poorest aid-dependent countries.'[43] Inasmuch as mission work has been inter-connected with development work in poor countries,

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[41] Steve Rundle & Tom Steffen, *Great Commission Companies: The Emerging Role of Business in Missions* (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 2003), p. 25.

[42] Dambisa Moyo, *Dead Aid: Why Aid Is Not Working and How There is Another Way for Africa* (London: Allen Lane, 2009), p. xix.

[43] *Ibid*, p. 49.

it is exposed to this kind of critique. Insofar as the promotion of business emerges as a better alternative to distribution of aid, business as mission looks like an idea whose time has come.

These new currents of connection between business and mission bring to fruition thinking about the role of 'kingdom professionals' in a post-missionary context which has been emerging since the mid-20th century. The Willingen conference of the International Missionary Council in 1952 had a vision of mission being expressed, 'through an increasing flow of Christian laymen and women who go across the world in business, industry and government and who do so with a deep conviction that God calls them to witness for Him in all of life'.[44] In the years which followed Lesslie Newbigin was a consistent champion of the conviction that, 'the primary witness to the sovereignty of Christ ... must be given and can only be given in the ordinary secular work of laymen and women' who are to be considered 'the church's frontline troops in her engagement with the world'.[45]

Indications are that the missionary outreach of the Asian and African churches, to which the initiative is increasingly passing, may give expression to this paradigm. Writing of south-east Asia, Violet James observes that: 'Many missionaries are entering countries as "tent-makers".... Indonesians, Filipinos, Malaysians and Singaporeans are part of a large missionary force in Asia today as educators, doctors, nurses, business people and consultants in information technology. Some businesspeople have started various micro-enterprise projects to empower the poor.'[46] CMS Africa, a mission agency weaned from its parent body, the (Anglican) Church Mission Society in 2009, has accepted the challenge of lack of true discipleship within African churches and aims to nurture faith which is culturally and socially transformative. Among the strategies being developed is 'Business as Mission' (BAM). As Serah Wambua explains: 'BAM is about establishing real businesses and not an excuse to enter into a community for evangelistic purposes. BAM is seen as the entry point for poverty reduction and it is empowering and inspiring businessmen in Africa to create jobs and make wealth strategically dealing with

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44 International Missionary Council, *The Missionary Obligation of the Church: Willingen, Germany, July 5-17, 1952* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1952), pp. 19-25; cit. Kool, 'Changing Images in the Formation for Mission', p. 162.

45 Lesslie Newbigin, cit. Michael W. Goheen, *'As the Father Has Sent Me, I Am Sending You': J.E. Lesslie Newbigin's Missionary Ecclesiology* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2000), pp. 44, 308.

46 Violet James, 'Christianity in South-eastern Asia', in Johnson & Ross, *Atlas*, p. 147.

the poverty challenge.[47] This African model of mission departs from the binary understanding where secular business and Christian mission are two separate watertight compartments. Seeking at one and the same time authenticity in discipleship and economic transformation in African societies, it sees business as a mode of mission whose time has come. The vision is that a more holistic faith, working through business initiatives, will deepen discipleship while mobilising people of faith to combat the acute poverty endemic across the continent.

FRESH IMPETUS FOR MISSION

Very different though it may be, the missionary movement driven from the south has undoubtedly invigorated Christian witness as we move into the 21st century. Despite its various blind-spots, weaknesses and mistaken alliances, the 20th century has witnessed a vindication of a fundamental conviction of the missionary movement which arose from the Evangelical Revival. It is apparent today, like never before, that the good news of Jesus Christ can take root in every culture across the world and produce fruit in church and society everywhere. The worldwide flourishing of the faith stands as a demonstration of the validity of the missionary vision that the gospel can be received and find expression in completely new contexts. Without the missionary movement, the prospects for Christianity as a world religion might well be doubtful today, particularly as its long-time European homeland is proving inhospitable. Largely as a result of the seeds planted by missionary endeavour, vigorous and numerous expressions of Christian faith are to be found on all six continents today. It has become the truly worldwide faith which, theologically, it always aspired to be. Beyond any question, this movement to the south has breathed huge new energy into the worldwide Christian movement. Such is the diversity and dynamism of southern Christianity that there may be a significant risk of fragmentation. Discovering new expressions of coherence may be important for Christianity as a global faith. Equally, developing fruitful synergy between old patterns and new may be key to deploying available resources to maximum effect in the interests of Christian mission. These are not small challenges but they are faced in a context where the southward move of the church has ensured that the world Christian movement enters a new century with large numbers, great vitality and fresh imagination.

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[47] Serah Wambua, 'Mission Spirituality and Authentic Discipleship: An African Reflection' Paper presented for Study Commission 9 at Youngnak Presbyterian Church, 23-24 March, 2009, p. 51; cit. Balia & Kim, *Edinburgh 2010*, p. 236.

LUTHER ON UNION WITH CHRIST

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INTRODUCTION

Repeat something often enough and whether true or not, people will begin to believe it. This oft said cliché is certainly true regarding the relationship between the Lutheran and Reformed traditions on the doctrines of justification and union with Christ. There is a growing chorus of those who claim that there is a unique Reformed approach to the doctrine of justification by faith in comparison to the Lutheran tradition. Richard Gaffin has been one of the chief proponents of this thesis. He argues that he has found a tendency in the Reformation tradition to conceive of justification as a stand-alone imputative act without any reference to the doctrine of union with Christ. Gaffin argues that a union-less doctrine of justification is characteristic of the Lutheran tradition where union with Christ follows as a consequence of justification in the *ordo salutis*. By contrast, the Reformed tradition, particularly as it comes in the Westminster Standards, places justification among the realities that manifest union with Christ.[1] This essay will argue that the Gaffin thesis does not correctly describe Lutheran views of the relationship between the doctrines of justification and union with Christ.[2] In fact, the evidence will show that there are significant similarities between Luther and Calvin on the relationship between justification, sanctification, and union with Christ to the point that a line of division cannot be easily drawn between Luther and Calvin on these doctrines. To prove this thesis there are a number of necessary steps to be taken.

First, we will explore the specific claims of Gaffin and others in order to understand the nature of their argument. Second, we will then set forth the parameters of proving the thesis by delimiting the scope of the study to Martin Luther's 1535 Galatians commentary. Delimiting the scope

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[1] Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., *By Faith, Not by Sight: Paul and the Order of Salvation* (Milton Keynes: 2006), p. 50.

[2] This essay represents a retraction, as I mistakenly followed Gaffin's argument; see J. V. Fesko, *Justification: Understanding the Classic Reformed Doctrine* (Phillipsburg: P & R, 2008), pp. 89, 273.

of the study to this one work will make the task of proving the thesis a manageable one. But what some might not know is that Luther's Galatians commentary has a normative confessional status within Lutheranism. Therefore, to establish Luther's view on justification and union also sets forth the normative view of confessional Lutheranism. Third, we will explore Luther's doctrines of union with Christ and justification and sanctification. And fourth, the paper will make some concluding observations about the harmony and compatibility between the Lutheran and Reformed traditions on the relationship between justification and union with Christ.

THE CLAIMED LUTHERAN-REFORMED DIVIDE

In order to understand Gaffin's claims regarding the Lutheran-Reformed divide, it is important first to understand what he argues regarding the Reformed tradition on justification and union with Christ. Gaffin claims that for John Calvin (1509-64), a 'first generation' Reformed theologian and 'fountainhead figure' for the tradition, there is no priority between justification or sanctification because both are simultaneously received through union with Christ.[3] Gaffin expounds the superiority of Calvin's view with respect to the sixteenth-century Roman Catholic view when he writes concerning the common charge of antinomianism:

> Calvin destroys Rome's charge by showing that faith, in its Protestant understanding, entails a disposition to holiness without particular reference to justification, a concern for godliness that is not be understood only as a consequence of justification. Calvin proceeds as he does, and is *free* to do so, because for him the relative 'ordo' or priority of justification and sanctification is indifferent theologically. Rather, what has controlling soteriological importance is the priority to both (spiritual, 'existential', faith-) union with Christ.[4]

Gaffin's argument boils down to this: union with Christ is the ground from which flow two distinct but un-prioritized benefits: justification and sanctification. In comparison with later Reformed expressions with

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[3]   Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., 'Justification and Union with Christ', in *A Theological Guide to Calvin's Institutes: Essays and Analysis*, ed. by David W. Hall and Peter A. Lillback (Phillipsburg: P & R, 2008), p. 248.

[4]   Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., 'Biblical Theology and the Westminster Standards', *WTJ* 65/2 (2003), 176-7.

the *ordo salutis*, Gaffin argues: 'This, in a nutshell, is Calvin's *ordo salutis*: union with Christ by (Spirit-worked) faith.'[5]

Gaffin's overall intent is not only to show the dominant position of union with Christ in Calvin's theology, but also to contrast it with Lutheran expressions. Gaffin contends that in contrast to Calvin's view, and more broadly the Reformed view of justification and union with Christ, Lutherans believe that justification causes union with Christ.[6] Gaffin makes this point more explicitly elsewhere when he writes:

> Here is a consideration that has sometimes been eclipsed in the Reformation tradition, where a tendency is observable to conceive of justification as a stand-alone imputative act, without particular reference to union with Christ. Unless I need to be corrected, this is more the case in the Lutheran tradition, where, in the *ordo salutis*, union is regularly sequenced following justification, as a fruit of consequence of justification. The Reformed tradition has recognized better and more clearly that, as answer 69 of the *Westminster Larger Catechism* puts it, justification is among the realities that 'manifest' that union.[7]

Gaffin's conclusions have not been ignored but have been carried forth by others.

Making similar claims is a former student and now colleague of Gaffin's, Lane G. Tipton. Tipton argues that the Reformed view conceives of union with Christ and imputation as distinct but nonetheless simultaneous realities, whereas Lutherans hold that they are distinct and separable. Calvin, argues Tipton, offers 'a classic formulation'.[8] Like Gaffin, Tipton cites J. T. Mueller and Francis Pieper as examples with which to contrast the Reformed view and argues that the Lutheran view contends that justification causes union with Christ and sanctification.[9] However, in addi-

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5 Gaffin, 'Biblical Theology', p. 172.
6 Gaffin, 'Biblical Theology', p. 173. Gaffin appeals to three Lutheran works to support his contention: J. T. Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1934), 320, 381; F. A. O. Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, 4 vols. (St. Louis: Concordia, 1951-53), vol. 2, pp. 410, 434 n. 65; vol. 3, pp. 8 n. 9, 398; and Heinrich Schmid, *The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, 3rd edn (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1961), pp. 481-2.
7 Gaffin, *By Faith*, p. 50. One should note that Gaffin reproduces the exact same footnote as found in 'Biblical Theology', p. 173 n. 19 to support his claim here in the work cited in this footnote.
8 Lane G. Tipton, 'Union with Christ and Justification', in *Justified in Christ: God's Plan for Us In Justification*, ed. by K. Scott Oliphint (Fearn: Mentor, 2007), p. 39.
9 Tipton, 'Union with Christ', pp. 42-3.

tion to the same Lutheran references to which Gaffin appeals, Tipton also draws upon the analysis of Geerhardus Vos (1862-1949). Tipton quotes a passage from Vos, who analyzes the differences between Reformed and Lutheran soteriologies.[10] Vos explains that, by faith, Christians become members of the covenant of grace and receive all of the benefits that are in Christ; in other words, believers are in union with him. Vos claims that with the Lutheran view, 'The Holy Spirit first generates faith in the sinner who temporarily still remains outside of union with Christ; then justification follows faith and only then, in turn, does the mystical union with the Mediator take place.' By contrast, Vos argues the Reformed view is the opposite: 'One is first united to Christ, the Mediator of the covenant, by a mystical union, which finds its conscious recognition by faith. By this union with Christ all that is in Christ is simultaneously given.'[11] Vos draws these conclusions from the work of Lutheran theologian Matthias Scheckenburger (1804-48) to substantiate his claim.[12]

DELIMITING THE INVESTIGATION

There are several problems with the claims of Vos, Gaffin, and Tipton as it pertains to their arguments regarding the dissonance between the Reformed and Lutheran traditions on justification and union with Christ. We can begin with the idea that Calvin was a first generation Reformer and fountainhead figure for the Reformed tradition; this claim does not accord with the historical record. Calvin was a second-generation Reformer who began his work well after Martin Luther (1483-1546), Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560), Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531), Martin Bucer (1491-1551), Johannes Oecolampadius (1482-1531), or Guillaume Farel (1489-1565), to name but a few.[13] On the other hand, Luther truly has fountainhead status for

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10 Tipton, 'Union with Christ', p. 44.
11 Geerhardus Vos, 'The Doctrine of the Covenant in Reformed Theology', in *Redemptive History and Biblical Interpretation: The Shorter Writings of Geerhardus Vos*, ed. by Richard B. Gaffin, Jr. (Phillipsburg: P & R, 1980), p. 256.
12 Of interest and relevance are B. B. Warfield's comments regarding Schneckenburger's methodology and what characterizes the Reformed and Lutheran traditions. He comes to different conclusions than Vos; see B. B. Warfield, 'Calvinism', in *The Works of Benjamin B. Warfield*, 10 vols., ed. by E D. Warfield, William Park Armstrong, and C. W. Hodge (1931; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981), vol. 5, pp. 535-60.
13 Richard A. Muller, 'Was Calvin a Calvinist? Or, Did Calvin (or Anyone Else in the Early Modern Era) Plant the "TULIP,"' Lecture delivered on 15 Oct 2009 at the H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies, Grand Rapids, MI. Available at http://www.calvin.edu/meeter/lectures/

the Lutheran tradition. Unlike Calvin, Luther's writings are a part of the Lutheran confessional corpus. Confessions such as the Formula of Concord (1577) were written to establish who in the Lutheran tradition was true to Luther's theology, the Osiandrians, the Phillipists, or the Gnesio-Lutherans. By contrast, the Reformed tradition has not been historically defined by appeal to any one individual theologian but to confessional documents such as the Helvetic Confessions, the Consensus Tigurinus, the Three Forms of Unity, and the Westminster Standards.[14] As Carl Trueman argues: 'Scholarship cannot treat Reformed theology as a discrete entity that flows from the writings of one individual, John Calvin. It represents a movement which is pluriform in origin and eclectic with regard to its sources.'[15] Recognizing the differences between the Lutheran and Reformed traditions on this point is key for the present debate. To establish Calvin's doctrine on any one particular point likely only establishes the view of one man, not an entire tradition. The opposite holds true for the Lutheran tradition. To establish Luther's view on a doctrine much more likely does establish the view of a confessional tradition.

Recognizing the different places of Luther and Calvin within their respective traditions produces three important corollaries for this study. First, given that Luther is the fountainhead for the Lutheran tradition, we can delimit the focus of the investigation to Luther's 1535 Galatians commentary. At the end of the Formula's article on justification the following appears: 'For any further, necessary explanation of this lofty and sublime article on justification before God, upon which the salvation of our souls depends, we wish to recommend to everyone the wonderful, magnificent exposition by Dr. Luther of St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, and for the sake of brevity we refer to it as this point.'[16] Given this endorsement, exploring and determining Luther's view on the relationship between justification and union with Christ in his Galatians commentary will demonstrate what confessional Lutheranism saw and believed to be orthodox. Uncovering Luther's view does not mean that every rank and file Lutheran adhered to his exposition. Subscription to the Formula of Concord is not in view.[17] Rather, ascertaining what was accepted as con-

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14   Carl R. Trueman, 'Calvin and Calvinism', in *The Cambridge Companion to John Calvin*, ed. by Donald K. McKim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 225.

15   Trueman, 'Calvin and Calvinism', p. 239.

16   Formula of Concord Solid Declaration, art. 3, in *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, ed. by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), p. 573.

17   For the reception of the Formula of Concord by Lutheran Orthodoxy, see Robert D. Preus, 'The Influence of the Formula of Concord on the Later

fessional Lutheran orthodoxy is the immediate goal. Luther's Galatians commentary therefore defines and explains the doctrines of union with Christ and justification for the Formula of Concord.[18]

Second, there is the distinct possibility that Luther influenced Calvin particularly on the relationship between justification and union with Christ. Far from dissonance between Luther and Calvin and their respective traditions, it is quite possible that Calvin gleaned key insights from Luther's exposition. Calvin was a green theologian when his 1536 *Institutes of the Christian Religion* was first published in contrast to the mature Luther of the 1535 Galatians commentary. In fact, Franks James claims that Calvin appropriated Luther's doctrine of union with Christ.[19] If this line of influence can be substantiated, then it creates significant problems for the dissonance thesis of Vos, Gaffin, and Tipton, as Calvin's doctrine of justification and union would have a Lutheran contaminant at its root. In the exposition that follows, possible lines of influence will be exposed.

Third, recognizing Luther's fountainhead status shows that it is Luther who defines the tradition, not nineteenth- or twentieth-century Lutherans such as Scheckenburger, Mueller, or Pieper. To draw upon these theologians and then make conclusions about the Lutheran tradition apart from reference to the confessional record is methodologically wanting. True, Gaffin appeals to Heinrich Schmid's compendium of Lutheran dogmatics assembled from quotations by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Lutheran scholastics, but even then, appeal to such statements apart from the broader context from which they were taken can be misleading. Recent research has shown, for example, how a parallel volume, edited by Heinrich Heppe (1820-79) and culled from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Reformed scholastics, has skewed the understanding of Reformed orthodoxy for the better part of a generation.[20] Hence, direct appeal to Luther's 1535 Galatians commentary is the preferable methodological approach

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Lutheran Orthodoxy', in *Discord, Dialogue, and Concord: Studies in the Lutheran Reformation's Formula of Concord*, ed. by Lewis W. Spitz and Wensel Lohff (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), pp. 86-101.

[18] Olli-Pekka Vainio, *Justification and Participation in Christ: The Development of the Lutheran Doctrine of Justification from Luther to the Formula of Concord (1580)* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), p. 20.

[19] Frank A. James, III, '*De Justificatione*: The Evolution of Peter Martyr Vermigli's Doctrine of Justification' (unpublished doctoral dissertation; Westminster Theological Seminary, 2000), p. 27.

[20] See Ryan Glomsrud, 'Karl Barth as Historical Theologian: The Recovery of Reformed Theology in Barth's Early Dogmatics', in *Engaging with Barth: Contemporary Evangelical Critiques*, ed. by David Gibson and Daniel Strange (Nottingham: IVP, 2008), pp. 86-7.

because it explores a key primary source of the Lutheran tradition that is at the same time Luther's own view but also that of confessional Lutheranism.

UNION WITH CHRIST

At first glance union with Christ might not be a subject that some would associate with Luther, but it is one that Luther employs throughout his Galatians commentary.[21] There are some statements in his commentary that illustrate the importance of the doctrine for Luther. In his explanation of Galatians 3:28, 'For you are all one in Christ Jesus', Luther writes: 'Paul always makes it a practice to add the words "in Christ Jesus"; if Christ is lost sight of, everything is over'. Luther elaborates upon this point by explaining the nature of faith:

> This is the true faith of Christ and in Christ, through which we become members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones (Eph. 5:30). Therefore in Him we live and move and have our being (Acts 17:28). . . . Christ and faith must be completely joined. We must simply take our place in heaven; and Christ must be, live, and work in us. But He lives and works in us, not speculatively but really, with presence and with power.[22]

Luther's conception of union with Christ is inseparably connected to his doctrine of faith.

Luther believed that faith was more than a *fides historica* (historical faith), a mere intellectual assent to the data of Christ's existence and work.[23] Rather, 'Faith is nothing else but the truth of the heart, that is, the right knowledge of the heart about God'.[24] This right knowledge of the heart is received, not through the law or the raw power of reason, but is 'the gift and accomplishment of the Holy Spirit, who comes with

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21 Mark A. Siefrid, 'Paul, Luther, and Justification in Gal 5:15-21', *WTJ* 65 (2003), 215.

22 Martin Luther, *Lectures on Galatians 1535*, in *Luther's Works*, vols. 26-27, ed. by Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963), vol. 26, p. 57 (idem, *In Epistolam S. Pauli ad Galatas Commneatrius*, in *D. Martin Luther's Werke*, vols. 40.1-2 [Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1911], p. 546). Subsequent references to the English edition will be abbreviated as LW and the Latin as Werke.

23 LW 27.28 (*Werke* 40.2: 34-35); cf. Richard A. Muller, *Dictionary of Theological Greek and Latin Terms: Drawn Principally from Protestant Scholastic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), p. 115.

24 LW 26.238 (*Werke* 40.1: 376).

the preached Word'.[25] But this is not the only difference between Luther and the Roman Catholic doctrine of faith. According to historic expressions, such as those by Peter Lombard (ca. 1110-60) or Thomas Aquinas (ca. 1225-74), a necessary characteristic of faith is *fides charitatae formata* ('faith informed by love'). For medieval theologians, faith rested upon a *habitus* (habit or disposition) of love that was supernaturally created in the soul by God's grace.[26] Lombard argues: 'The faith by which one believes, if it is joined to charity, is a virtue, because, as Ambrose says, "charity is the mother of all virtues"; it informs all of them and without it there is no true virtue. And so faith working *through love* is the virtue by which unseen things are believed.'[27] Aquinas similarly states: 'Now *faith worketh through charity*. The love of charity therefore is the form of faith'.[28] What lies at the heart of the Roman medieval conception of faith, then, is love whereas for Luther and the Protestant Reformers it was *fiducia* (trust). Luther saw *fides charitate formata* confounding faith and works in the doctrine of justification and therefore rejected the formulation. In his typically brusque and direct manner Luther believed 'faith "formed by love" is an empty dream'. Instead, he argues, 'Works or love are not the ornament or perfection of faith; but faith itself is a gift of God, a work of God in our hearts which justifies us because it takes hold of Christ as the Savior.'[29] This is a key difference between Luther and Roman views: for Rome faith is formed by love but for Luther faith is formed by Christ. This difference opens a window into Luther's doctrine of union with Christ.

When Luther states that faith justifies because it takes hold of Christ, he does not merely mean that the sinner intellectually takes hold of Christ. Luther means by this phrase that the person enters into mystical union with Christ through faith. The faith-union link is evident in the following statement:

> Where they speak of love, we speak of faith. And while they say that faith is the mere outline but love is its living colors and completion, we say in opposition that faith takes hold of Christ and that He is the form that adorns and informs faith as color does the wall. Therefore Christian faith is not an idle

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[25]   LW 26.375 (*Werke* 40.1: 572).

[26]   Muller, *Dictionary*, p. 116.

[27]   Peter Lombard, *Sentences*, 4 vols., trans. Giulio Silano (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2007 -), 3.23.3 (idem, *Sententiae in IV Libris Distinctae*, 2 vols. [Grottaferrata: Collegii S. Bonavenurae Ad Claras Aquas, 1981], 2.142).

[28]   Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, vol. 31, *Faith*, trans. T. C. O'Brien (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1974), IIa IIae q. 4 art. 3.

[29]   LW 26.88 (*Werke* 40.1:164).

quality or an empty husk in the heart, which may exist in a state of mortal sin until love comes along to make it alive. But if it is true faith, it is a sure trust and firm acceptance in the heart. It takes hold of Christ in such a way that Christ is the object of faith, or rather not the object but, so to speak, the One who is present in the faith itself.[30]

Luther is clear that Christ is not merely the object of faith but that he is present in faith. He also uses other expressions to convey the same idea: 'Christ who is grasped by faith and who lives in the heart is the true Christian righteousness.'[31] At this point in the investigation it is evident that Luther does not fit the Vos, Gaffin, Tipton paradigm of union with Christ following justification as Luther places union with Christ at the moment of faith. In fact, though Luther does not have a highly developed *ordo salutis* in the specialized use of the term that one finds in seventeenth-century Reformed and Lutheran dogmatics, he does prioritize faith before justification. Luther explains that two things make Christian righteousness perfect: 'The first is faith in the heart, which is a divinely granted gift and which formally believes in Christ; the second is that God reckons this imperfect faith as perfect righteousness for the sake of Christ, His Son'.[32]

JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION

Justification. The question now undoubtedly arises, How does Luther relate union with Christ to justification and sanctification? We have begun to see how justification is related to union with Christ, in that Luther identifies imputed righteousness as the second of two things that makes Christian righteousness perfect. Even though Luther places the believer in union with Christ through faith, it would be a hasty conclusion to say that he therefore gives union theological priority over justification. One of the recurring emphases in Luther's commentary is the role of the imputed righteousness of Christ. For Luther, the question of priority in redemption is not one of temporal sequence where applied soteriology is a series of events, faith followed by justification, which in turn is followed by sanctification. Nor is priority a question of sequence where faith (and union with Christ) must logically precede justification because one cannot be justified unless he first believes. Rather, for Luther priority hinges upon the question as to why ultimately does God accept the saved sinner in his presence. Does God accept the sinner because of Christ's work for us or in us? For Luther, this is an easy question to answer.

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30   LW 26.129 (*Werke* 40.1:228-29).
31   LW 26.130; see also Siefrid, 'Paul, Luther, and Justification', p. 223.
32   LW 26.231 (*Werke* 40.1:366).

Luther believes that three things are joined together in redemption: faith, Christ, and acceptance or imputation:

> Faith takes hold of Christ and has Him present, enclosing Him as the ring encloses the gem. And whoever is found having this faith in the Christ who is grasped in the heart, him God accounts as righteous. This is the means and merit by which we obtain the forgiveness of sins and righteousness. "Because you believe in Me," God says, "and your faith takes hold of Christ, whom I have freely given to you as your Justifier and Savior, therefore be righteous." Thus God accepts you or accounts you righteous only on account of Christ, in whom you believe.

Luther goes on to explain that among these three things, faith, Christ, and imputation, 'imputation is extremely necessary, first, because we are not yet righteous, but sin is still clinging to our flesh during this life'. Luther knew that God sanctifies his people, but that they still engage in sin and, like Peter or David, they are still sinful. 'Nevertheless, we always have recourse to this doctrine', states Luther, 'that our sins are covered and that God does not want to hold us accountable for them'.[33] For Luther the forensic aspect of redemption has priority because it is the immovable foundation that secures the sinner's place *coram Deo*. Hence, Luther not only argues for the priority of imputation, and therefore justification, but he also stipulates that the righteousness is an *iustitia aliena* ('alien righteousness'), it is *extra nos* ('outside of us').[34] He does this so as to place the focus exclusively upon the work of Christ to the exclusion of the believer's good works in justification.[35]

These conclusions raise an interesting question of whether Luther was influential upon Calvin and his doctrines of union and justification.

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[33] LW 26.132-33 (*Werke* 40.1: 233).

[34] Cf. Siefrid, 'Paul, Luther, and Justification', pp. 219, 229; idem, 'Luther, Melanchthon, and Paul on the Question of Imputation: Recommendations on a Current Debate', in *Justification: What's At Stake in the Current Debates*, ed. by Mark A. Husbands and Daniel J. Treier (Downers Grove: IVP, 2004), pp. 137-76; R. Scott Clark, '*Iustitia Imputata Christi*: Alien or Proper to Luther's Doctrine of Justification?', *CTQ* 70 (2006), 273, 282; Alister E. McGrath, *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: CUP, 1994), vol. 2, pp. 10-20; Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, trans. Robert C. Schultz (1966; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), pp. 227-8; Heiko A. Oberman, '"Iustitia Christi" and "Iustitia Dei": Luther and the Scholastic Doctrines of Justification', *HTR* 59 (1966), 19; Bernhard Lohse, *Martin Luther's Theology: Its Historical and Systematic Development* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), pp. 260-1.

[35] LW 26.234 (*Werke* 40.1:370).

Gaffin argues in such a way that Calvin appears to develop his doctrinal insights all by himself.[36] But there are two considerations that are worthy of mention. First, there is the relationship of justification to the sanctification that Luther posits. In his comments on Galatians 5.14, Luther explains that Paul brings forth the Ten Commandments in his desire to show what it means to be a servant through love. Luther then appeals to 1 Corinthians 3.11: "'No other foundation can anyone lay" than Jesus Christ or the righteousness of Christ. On this foundation he now builds good works, and truly good ones, all of which he includes in the brief commandment: "You shall love your neighbor."'[37] Here Luther sees the righteousness of Christ, which is received through imputation, as the foundation for good works. This is very similar to Calvin's statement concerning the significance of justification: 'For unless you first of all grasp what your relationship to God is, and the nature of his judgment concerning you, you have neither a foundation on which to establish your salvation nor one on which to build piety toward God.'[38] Calvin elsewhere writes, 'They cannot deny that justification by faith is the beginning, foundation, cause, proof, and substance of works righteousness.'[39] Why does Calvin posit that justification is the foundation for works righteousness? He does so for the same reason as Luther: 'For unless the justification of faith remains whole and unbroken, the uncleanness of works will be uncovered.'[40]

A second parallel exists between Luther and Calvin particularly on the relationship between union and imputation. Luther writes:

> So far as justification is concerned, Christ and I must be so closely attached that He lives in me and I in Him. What a marvelous way of speaking! Because He lives in me, whatever grace, righteousness, life, peace, and salvation there is in me is all Christ's: nevertheless, it is mine as well, by the cementing and attachment that are through faith, by which we become as one body in the Spirit.[41]

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[36] See, e.g., Gaffin, 'Biblical Theology', pp. 169-73.

[37] LW 27.51 (*Werke* 40.2:64).

[38] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, LCC, vols. 20-21, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, ed. John T. McNeill (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), III.11.1 (idem, *Institutio Christianae Religionis 1559*, in *Opera Selecta*, 5 vols., eds., Petrus Barth and Guilelmus Niesel [Münich: Christian Kaiser, 1931], 4.182; hereafter abbreviated as OS).

[39] Calvin, *Institutes*, III.17.9 (OS 4.262).

[40] Calvin, *Institutes*, III.17.9 (OS 4.262).

[41] LW 26.167-68 (*Werke* 40.1:284).

This statement is very similar to one that Calvin makes to the same effect:

> Therefore, that joining together of Head and members, that indwelling of Christ in our hearts—in short, that mystical union—are accorded by us the highest degree of importance, so that Christ, having been made ours, makes us sharers with him in the gifts which he has been endowed. We do not, therefore, contemplate him outside ourselves from afar in order that his righteousness may be imputed to us but because we put on Christ and are engrafted into his body—in short, because he deigns to make us one with him. For this reason, we glory that we have fellowship of righteousness with him.[42]

The nomenclature varies between the two quotations, but substantively it is difficult to find any significant differences between the two. Both Luther and Calvin argue that justification and union with Christ go hand in hand. But what makes these parallels all the more interesting is that Luther's antedates Calvin's by almost twenty-five years. The Calvin passage was an addition to the 1559 *Institutes* written in the wake of the controversy with Andreas Osiander (1498-1552), who argued that believers share in the essential righteousness of Christ—an idea that both Calvin and Luther rejected.[43] Nevertheless, what these parallels show is that Calvin the second-generation Reformer was not the first to articulate the relationship between a forensic justification and union with Christ. Whether there are lines of influence between Luther and Calvin at these points is beyond the scope of this study. But one thing is clear, Luther broke this ground before Calvin had even published the first edition of the *Institutes*.[44]

Sanctification. Luther had a clear doctrine of justification but also discussed the importance of sanctification. Luther explains, 'It is difficult and dangerous to teach that we are justified by faith without works and yet to require works at the same time.' He notes the dangers of not striking the right balance in teaching about justification and good works: 'If

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[42]   Calvin, *Institutes*, III.11.10 (OS 4.191).

[43]   Calvin, *Institutes*, III.11.8-12 (OS 4.189-97); Timothy J. Wengert, 'Review of *Union with Christ: The New Finnish Interpretation of Luther*', *Theology Today* 56/3 (1999), 432-34.

[44]   On Luther as the origin of the Lutheran and Reformed doctrine of justification, see: Clark, '*Iustitia Imputat Christ*', 274; W. Stanford Reid, 'Justification by Faith According to John Calvin', *WTJ* 42 (1980), 290-307; David Steinmetz, *Calvin in Context* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 117-18; Joseph Wawrykow, 'John Calvin and Condign Merit', *ARG* 83 (1992), 74-75; François Wendel, *Calvin: The Origins and Development of His Religious Thought* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997), pp. 255-63.

works alone are taught, as happened under the papacy, faith is lost. If faith alone is taught, unspiritual men will immediately suppose that works are not necessary.' So how does Luther propose that ministers proceed? 'Both topics, faith and works, must be carefully taught and emphasized, but in such a way that they both remain within their limits.'[45] How does Luther discuss sanctification?

Luther is unambiguous throughout his Galatians commentary that works have no place in a person's justification. Luther rejected the medieval *fides charitate formata* and argued that Christ is the form of faith—the believer is united to Christ by faith. But faith is not idle. In contrast to the medieval *fides formata* view that cites Galatians 5:6 in support of the doctrine of justification, Luther argues that in this text the apostle Paul addresses the subject of the Christian life, or more narrowly sanctification. Inwardly faith looks upon God and outwardly it is manifest in love and works towards one's neighbor: 'Thus a man is a Christian in a total sense: inwardly through faith in the sight of God, who does not need our works; outwardly in the sight of men, who do not derive any benefit from faith but do derive benefit from works or from our love'.[46] There are two key images that Luther uses to illustrate the importance and necessity of sanctification beyond his appeal to Galatians 5:6. First, he applies the doctrine of the incarnation to the faith-works relationship. He argues that a person is justified by faith alone, but that such a faith does not remain alone, it is not idle. Rather, faith always justifies alone but does become incarnate as man—it is manifest in love.[47] Related to the idea of the incarnation of faith, Luther argues that faith is the divinity of works.[48] A second illustration that Luther employs is that of a tree and its fruit. He explains that faith is at the root of the tree and it produces fruit on account of faith.[49]

Luther insists upon the necessity of good works, but the question remains as to whether he links sanctification to union with Christ. The short answer is, yes, Luther links sanctification to union. How does he connect them? For Luther the believer is united to Christ by faith. Broadly, for Luther the connection lies between faith and works Specifically, Luther explains the consequences of laying hold of Christ by faith:

> Because you have taken hold of Christ by faith, through whom you are righteous, you should now go and love God and your neighbor. Call upon God,

45   LW 27.62-63 (*Werke* 40.2:78).
46   LW 27.30 (*Werke* 40.2:36).
47   LW 26.272 (*Werke* 40.1:425-27).
48   LW 26.266 (*Werke* 40.1:416-17).
49   LW 26.210 (*Werke* 40.1:338-40).

> give thanks to Him, preach Him, praise Him, confess Him. Do good to your neighbor, and serve him; do your duty. These are truly good works, which flow from this faith and joy conceived in the heart because we have the forgiveness of sins freely through Christ.[50]

Noteworthy in Luther's statement is that the good works flow from faith, and it is by faith that believer's lay hold of Christ. Christ is the source of the sanctity. In another passage he draws out the relationship between union with Christ and sanctification more explicitly: 'By faith we are in Him and He is in us (John 6:56). This Bridegroom, Christ, must be alone with His bride in His private chamber, and all the family and household must be shunted away. But later on, when the Bridegroom opens the door and comes out, then let the servants return to take care of them and serve them food and drink. Then let works and love begin.'[51]

Luther believes sanctification is not a matter of the imitation of Christ but rather new birth and new creation: 'I put on Christ Himself, that is, His innocence, righteousness, wisdom, power, salvation, life, and Spirit.'[52] For Luther justification and sanctification are equally connected to union with Christ. But Luther consistently distinguishes between justification and sanctification so the two are not confused. He does not confuse the forensic and the transformative but nevertheless recognizes that both come wrapped in union with Christ—like the ring that envelops the gem.[53]

CONCLUSION

This essay began with mapping out the claims of Vos, Gaffin, and Tipton concerning the perceived differences between the Lutheran and Reformed traditions regarding the relationship between justification and union with Christ. The uncovered evidence from Luther's Galatians commentary, one that has confessional status within historic Lutheranism, presents a significant challenge to the Vos, Gaffin, and Tipton discontinuity thesis. To claim that significant difference exists on the doctrines of justification and union with Christ does not appear to accord with the historical record.[54] To be sure, the Lutheran and Reformed camps have

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[50]   LW 26.133 (*Werke* 40.1:234).

[51]   LW 26.137-38 (*Werke* 40.1:241).

[52]   LW 26.352 (*Werke* 40.1:540).

[53]   LW 26.131-32 (*Werke* 40.1:232); see also Clark, '*Iustitia Imputa Christi*', p. 295.

[54]   Tipton, e.g., writes of the 'radical differences turned up between the Calvinist and post-Reformation Lutheran positions'. He also argues that the 'reformed

most certainly debated many issues such as predestination, the Lord's Supper and related christological issues, to name but a few.[55] But given what Luther writes in his Galatians commentary, it is difficult to say that

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conception of union with Christ and justification is not (a) the Lutheran option, nor (b) the [New Perspective on Paul] version advocated by N. T. Wright. The reformed position is a *tertium quid*, a third thing, which stands out as a unique and clearly defined option that avoids the problematic aspects of both Lutheranism and N. T. Wright' ("Union with Christ and Justification," 46 fn. 52, 48-49).

[55] There is evidence that shows debate on these doctrines between the Lutheran and Reformed camps vis-à-vis the Formula of Concord (see, e.g., W. Robert Godfrey, 'The Dutch Reformed Response', and Jill Raitt, 'The French Reformed Theological Response', in *Discord, Dialogue, and Concord: Studies in the Lutheran Reformation's Formula of Concord*, eds., Lewis W. Spitz and Wenzel Lohff [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977], pp. 166-77, 178-90). Both authors mention nothing of union with Christ or justification being a point of contention between the two communions. An example from the period comes from the work of Nicolaus Hunnius (1585-1643) who wrote *Diaskepsis Theologica: A Theological Examination of the Fundamental Difference between Evangelical Lutheran Doctrine and Calvinist or Reformed Teaching*, trans. Richard J. Dinda and Elmer Hohle (1626; Malone: Repristination Press, 1999). This is a work devoted to spelling out the differences between the two communions and states that there is agreement on the doctrine of justification but that Reformed views of predestination, the Lord's Supper, and christology (related to the *communicatio idiomatum*) compromised the whole of Reformed theology. Hunnius even recounts the Reformed claims of fundamental agreement between the two camps and the Reformed approval of the Augsburg Confession (Hunnius, *Diskepsis*, §§ 49-50, pp. 22-26; idem, *Diaskepsis theologica de fundamentali dissensu doctrinae Evangelicae-Lutheranae, et Calvinianae, seu Reformatae* [Wittenburg: 1626], 29-35). Hunnius cites statements from the Synod of Dort (1618-19), the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), Calvin, David Pareus (1548-1622), Amandus Polanus (1561-1610), Georgias Sohnius (1531-89), Johannes Piscator (1546-1625), Guillaume Bucanus (d. 1603), William Perkins (1558-1602), and Lucas Trelcatius (1542-1602) to show the agreement on justification between Lutherans and Reformed. Reformed theologians of the period even argued that they were the true heirs of Luther's legacy rather than the Lutherans of the period (see Bodo Nischan, 'Reformation or Deformation? Lutheran and Reformed Views of Martin Luther in Brandenburg's "Second Reformation"', in *Pietas et Societas: New Trends in Reformation Social History. Essays in Memory of Harold J. Grimm*, ed. by Kyle C. Sessions and Phillip N. Bebb [Kirksville: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1985], pp. 203-15). These historical observations further chip away at the thesis that the Reformed tradition developed a unique approach to the doctrines of union with Christ and justification.

his formulations are much different from Calvin in particular, or other Reformed theologians in general. True, Luther lacks the terminological precision that develops later in Lutheran and Reformed dogmatics of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries. And unlike other first- and second-generation Reformers who wrote theological systems like Melanchthon's *Loci Communes* or Calvin's *Institutes*, Luther was an occasional theologian who wrote treatises based upon the exigencies of the day. Perhaps this explains why some in the Reformed community have not explored Luther's theology—it is not as easily accessed in comparison with others such as Melanchthon.

Regardless of the reasons as to why Luther has been unexplored, one thing this essay has demonstrated is that union with Christ is not unique to Calvin or the Reformed tradition but is found quite prominently in Luther and even in Lutheranism with the assumption of Luther's Galatians commentary into the Lutheran confessional corpus. Making a few references to contemporary Lutherans and to a few isolated quotations from Schmid's compendium are insufficient to establish the views of an entire tradition. Perhaps thinly supported claims facilitate the categorization of views as being Lutheran or Reformed, but such labels are ultimately imprecise and lack much-needed nuance. It is one thing to say that some contemporary Lutherans have formulated the relationship between justification and union with Christ in a particular manner, but such claims do not establish a Lutheran norm. To establish what a tradition has historically espoused, appeal must be made to its confessional documents, and in this case to the Formula of Concord and its commendation of Luther's Galatians commentary. For Luther and the Lutheran confessional corpus, the believer is united to Christ by faith, for Christ is present in faith, but union with Christ does not swallow the distinctions between justification and sanctification. The thesis that Lutheranism holds that union with Christ as one step in the order of salvation that follows faith and justification cannot stand in the face of the gathered evidence from Luther's 1535 Galatians commentary.

Sin, Grace, and Virtue in Calvin: A Matrix for Dogmatic Consideration

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For as long as philosophers in the West have been spilling ink and chisel-ling into tablets of rock, virtue has been an important question. In his *Republic*, Plato criticized Homer for poorly depicting virtue in the person of Odysseus. His student Aristotle contended with his philosophical herit-age in more ways than one, not least of which was an attempt to offer what he believed to be a more cogent reflection on virtue in the *Nichomachean Ethics*. Plotinus sought to reconcile some of Aristotle's thoughts to a gener-ally Platonic system. Even prominent Christian theologians offered their insight, especially Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. Yet, by and large, the broader quest for virtue disappeared in Modernity and was replaced with treatises on ethics: what is more realistic—deontology, utilitarianism, or pragmatism? However, since G. E. M. Anscombe's ground-breaking essay in 1958,[1] virtue studies have re-emerged in a powerful way, including in Christian communities.

Among the main Christian players in this realm for the past several decades has been Stanley Hauerwas, who has sought to bridge the gap between virtue ethics and Christian doctrine. He notes that the orthodox Christian Church has long seen an intimate connection between its doc-trines and 'living worthily of the Lord' (Col. 1:10). He insists, 'Once there was no Christian ethics simply because Christians could not distinguish between their beliefs and their behaviour. They assumed that their lives exemplified (or at least should exemplify) their doctrines in a manner that made a division between life and doctrine impossible'.[2] Arguably the same

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[1]   G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', *Philosophy* 33 (1958), 1-19. Later, Alasdair MacIntyre offered another influential work that sought to reinstitute discussion of teleology and tradition into virtue discussions. *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 3rd edn (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007).

[2]   Stanley Hauerwas, 'On Doctrine and Ethics', *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine*, ed. by Colin E. Gunton (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 22. He perhaps oversteps his bounds amid his denunciation of Modernity and its dismissal of formative elements to truth. Hauerwas does not stand alone in this increasingly popular posture. For example, see Ellen T. Charry, *By the Renewing of Your Minds: The Pastoral Function of Christian*

has always remained true,[3] despite contemporary appraisals. Neverthe-
less, contemporary renewal of studies in theology and virtue (or theologi-
cal virtue) requires careful exploration of the relationship of proper action
to content of belief. The present exercise seeks to accomplish just this by
doctrinally locating theological virtue within sanctification. While seem-
ingly a modest claim, I shall specifically articulate an understanding of

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Doctrine (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997). While correct
in their general analysis of the emphasis of Modernity, they prove far too
reductionistic in their assumption that the concurrent theological enter-
prise—which certainly reflected the scientific rigidity of the period—failed
to account for the formative aspects of doctrine. After all, as Colin Gunton
remarks following an appeal to Spinoza as an example, "'Systems", then, are
not necessarily abstract or merely theoretical; they are normally designs for
living'. 'A Rose by Any Other Name? From "Christian Doctrine" to "Sys-
tematic Theology"', *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 1 (1999),
p. 11. The general emphasis toward the cognitive did overshadow protracted
reflections upon the 'renewing of your minds' (cf. Charry), but it would be
careless to ignore the historical situatedness of the times. Just as there is no
coincidence that current theological emphases mirror Postmodern and con-
temporary priorities and critiques, Modern theology betrays its own historic
preoccupations. The present awareness certainly calls for evaluation and cor-
rection, but it should also force us to tread humbly and graciously in light of
the judgment that awaits us.

3   We should not confuse poor choices in action or inadequate doctrinal for-
mulations for sterile doctrine that does not affect life. Doctrine has always
shaped life decisions. Indeed, the manner in which Christians have engaged
the world has often directly reflected their doctrinal commitments. The
growth of the missionary movement—amid the Enlightenment—demon-
strates a deep concern for the lostness of people who had never heard the
gospel of Christ. The rise of liberal theology and focus on the social gospel
reflected distrust in traditional theological conceptions of anthropology and
thus shifted to purely charitable versions of Christianity based upon an opti-
mistic view of reason and a corresponding view to the universal truth that 'all
men are created equal' (or some form thereof). The rise of fundamentalism
was in direct response to this liberal theological anthropology and distrust of
traditional biblical Christianity. The fundamentalists first reacted theologi-
cally and only later isolated themselves socially and culturally due to loss in
public standing. Further, they began to emphasize the doctrinal aspects of the
traditional gospel of Christ in response to its neglect. All of these examples
indicate an intimate connection between doctrine and the Christian life, and
each reveals the conviction that its adherents were living worthily of the Lord.
For an analysis of theology and the Civil War, see Mark Noll, *The Civil War
as a Theological Crisis* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press,
2006). Also, cf. the Gunton reference in fn. 2 above.

virtue as the fruit of the work of the Spirit based upon the believer's union with Christ. Apart from this union, discussion of virtue seems meaningless or, at least, seriously lacking in integration with Christian doctrine and the human condition. In order to make this case, I shall appeal to John Calvin to provide a dogmatic matrix within which to discuss union with Christ and the effects of sanctification.

But why Calvin? Ellen Charry describes Calvin's focus in his *Institutes* as 'an aretegenically oriented teacher of the church who understands the implications of theology for public life'.[4] This is surely significant in light of the derivation of 'aretegenic' from the Greek *aretē* ('virtue' or 'excellence') and *gennaō* ('to beget' or 'to produce'), which together mean 'conducive to virtue', according to Charry.[5] Calvin's comments in the preface directed toward King Francis I of France certainly warrant this description. Here he proclaims that his initial intention in the undertaking of the *Institutes* 'was solely to transmit certain rudiments by which those who are touched with any zeal for religion might be shaped to true godliness'.[6] The shape that the *Institutes* eventually took reflected Calvin's recognition of the widespread doctrinal ignorance of his 'French countrymen'. Thus, he 'adapted' his work 'to a simple and ... elementary form of teaching'.[7]

This makes Calvin an instructive starting place for two reasons. First, in addition to the historic context in which he was principally a pastor (albeit reluctantly), Calvin himself acknowledged that his own theological exercise necessarily served the quest for 'true godliness'. Apart from this end, those who 'toil and labour ... do nothing better than wander about in endless windings, without making any progress'. Indeed, '[f]rom this follow good works, which are the fruits that God requires from us'.[8] Contrary to accusations that some volley in the direction of Reformed thought in general,[9] Calvin's writings directly addressed the need for practical

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4   Charry, *Renewing of Your Minds*, p. 199. She rightly continues, 'If we take doctrine and piety as belonging to two separate fields, one academic and the other pastoral, we will never understand Calvin. For Calvin, the purpose of treating articles of religion is to enhance godliness.'

5   Charry, *Renewing of Your Minds*, p. 19.

6   John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, John T. McNeill, ed., Ford Lewis Battles, trans. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1960), Preface, 1 (p. 9).

7   Calvin, *Institutes*, Preface, 1 (p. 9).

8   John Calvin, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Colossians*, Rev. John Pringle, trans., In Calvin's Commentaries 21 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 1:10.

9   For example, see Otto Hermann Pesch, 'The Theology of Virtue and the Theological Virtues', *Changing Values and Virtues*, ed. by Dietmar Mieth and

outworking from theology.[10] He understood quite well that thought and action are intimately linked.[11]

Second, we should not overlook Calvin's sense of theological precision as if a pastoral aim toward the spurring on of Christians allows for unreflective or loose doctrinal assertions. After all, Calvin spends much time refuting the claims of such troublesome thinkers as Michael Servetus[12] and Andreas Osiander.[13] What is more, the entire occasion of his ministry lay amid the Protestant Reformation, one of the most significant periods of theological remodelling in Church history. Therefore, it should be of little surprise that his heart for the sanctification of the Church provides a matrix for discussing theological virtue in light of specific and deliberate doctrinal reflection. It is precisely Calvin's specificity that I wish to draw upon here, for without the logic of union with Christ, virtuous living in the Christian life proves meaningless. I shall rehearse this logic below.

VIRTUE AND UNION WITH CHRIST

In addition to the reasons already provided above, the most important theological reason for calling upon Calvin for a dogmatic matrix is his emphasis upon union with Christ. Charles Partee14 has persuasively argued that union with Christ is an important cohesive doctrine in Calvin's theology—even if not the organizing principle of his work—while several others have laboured intently to show the centrality of this doctrine to his work in soteriology.[15] This is certainly not the place to

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Jacques Pohier (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, Ltd., 1987), pp. 81-100.

[10] See Randall C. Zachman, '"Deny Yourself and Take up Your Cross": John Calvin on the Christian Life', *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 11 (2009), 466-82.

[11] Indeed, upon reflection on 'right knowledge of self', Calvin finds it necessary to begin with creation. In this setting, he considers the image of God, whereby humans in the 'great nobility of our race' are distinguished from animals in general. God granted humanity with this gift in order that 'he might rouse our minds both *to zeal for virtue* and to meditation upon eternal life'. *Institutes*, II.1.1 (emphasis mine).

[12] See *Institutes* II.xiv.8.

[13] See *Institutes* III.xi.6.

[14] Charles Partee, 'Calvin's Central Dogma Again', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 18 (1987), 191-9.

[15] For just a few, see Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., 'Union with Christ: Some Biblical and Theological Reflections', *Always Reforming: Explorations in Systematic Theology*, ed. by A. T. B. McGowan (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006), esp. pp. 277-79; Marcus Johnson, 'Luther and Calvin on Union with Christ', *Fides et Historia* 39 (2007), 59-77; 'New or Nuanced Perspective on Calvin? A Reply

engage the opposition on this point nor even to establish the intricacies of this doctrine in Calvin's theology or elsewhere. Nevertheless, regardless of its place in his structure at large, few can deny his use of union with Christ especially to ground his soteriology, for he begins Book III of the *Institutes* with a discussion of just this doctrine. He asks, 'How do we receive those benefits which the Father bestowed on his only-begotten Son—not for Christ's own private use, but that he might enrich poor and needy men?' Invariably, the answer is that we must be united to Christ, for 'all that he possesses is nothing to us until we grow into one body with him'. In other words, 'he had to become ours and to dwell within us'.[16]

Significant for the current study is the fact that Calvin then continues in chapters 3-10 of Book III with discussion on sanctification rather than treating justification first. In light of Roman Catholic critiques that Luther's theology would lead to antinomianism, it is not surprising that Calvin would seek to quell potential complaints and concerns directed toward him by first addressing the Christian life. Several scholars have seen Calvin's treatment of sanctification before justification as a declaration of just this aim.[17] It is unlikely that this is a declaration of the logical priority of sanctification in the *ordo salutis* (admittedly an anachronistic use of the term), for the manner of Calvin's argument does not seem to allow for this.[18] On the other hand, the order of discussion is not pivotal precisely because the different aspects of soteriology each relate in like to

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to Thomas Wenger', *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 51 (2008), 543-58; Guenther H. Haas, 'Calvin's Ethic', *The Cambridge Companion to John Calvin*, ed. by Donald K. McKim (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 94-5. For a good summary of contending contemporary reflections on union with Christ in various schools of Reformed theology, see A. T. B. McGowan, 'Justification and the *Ordo Salutis*', in *Justification in Perspective: Historical Developments and Contemporary Challenges*, ed. by Bruce L. McCormack (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), pp. 147-63.

[16] Calvin, *Institutes*, III.1.1.
[17] For example, see Charry, *Renewing of Your Minds*, p. 219 n. 1.
[18] See Calvin, *Institutes*, III.11.1: 'Therefore we must now discuss these matters thoroughly. And we must so discuss them as to bear in mind that this is the main hinge on which religion turns, so that we devote the greater attention and care to it. *For unless you first of all grasp what your relationship to God is, and the nature of his judgment concerning you, you have neither a foundation on which to establish your salvation nor one on which to build piety toward God'* (emphasis mine). The implication is that in light of the reality of sin, apart from justification, holy living is meaningless. I shall touch on this more below. For the present purposes, also notice that the 'hinge' of the present statement concerns 'relationship to God', something that necessarily includes union with Christ in Calvin's thought.

union with Christ. In fact, Calvin sees justification and sanctification as intimately connected. He writes, '[N]evertheless, actual holiness of life, so to speak, is not separated from free imputation of righteousness'.[19] Later, he more strongly contends, '[A]s Christ cannot be torn into parts, so these two which we perceive in him together and conjointly are inseparable— namely, righteousness and sanctification.'[20]

If the priority of location that he gives to sanctification does not testify to its logical priority in soteriology, we must return to his prior and constantly resurfacing aim. His setting of sanctification first allows him to clarify its importance as a benefit that comes from Christ. In turn, this allows for the actual emphasis to lie with the person of Christ himself and the manner by which the different facets of his work become efficacious for the believer. In other words, while the topic of his discussion for much of the early portion of Book III is, in fact, sanctification, prominence actually lies with union with Christ, which the beginning of the title to Book III confirms: 'The Manner in Which We Receive the Grace of Christ'. This key element dictates 'What Benefits Comes to Us from It, and What Effects Follow', as the title continues.

Such is evident as Calvin unfolds his logic. The problem that underlies the entire question of virtue, at least as presently posed, is that of sin. The condition imbued by sin persists apart from rebirth.[21] Unfortunately, this is the lot of all people, a 'sorry spectacle of our foulness', unable to advance in the quest of original created humanity for virtue.[22] Drawing upon his interpretation of the apostle Paul, Calvin insists that it is not simply that all are subject to the corrupting effects of original sin but that all are com-

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Meanwhile, for additional support to my claim, see *Institutes*, III.11.11: 'For God so begins this second point [reformation into newness of life] in his elect, and progresses in it gradually, and sometimes slowly, throughout life, that they are always liable to the judgment of death before his tribunal. But he does not justify in part but liberally, so that they may appear in heaven as if endowed with the purity of Christ. No portion of righteousness sets our conscience at peace until it has been determined that we are pleasing to God, because we are entirely righteous before him.' Calvin refers to sanctification ('reformation into newness of life') as the 'second point' relative to justification. See also John Calvin, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, Henry Beveridge, ed., Christopher Fetherstone, trans., In Calvin's Commentaries 19 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), ch. 12 (opening thoughts to the chapter, p. 449).

[19] Calvin, *Institutes*, III.3.1.
[20] Calvin, *Institutes*, III.11.6.
[21] Calvin, *Institutes*, III.3.3.
[22] Calvin, *Institutes*, II.1.1.

pletely 'overwhelmed' by this inherent corruption such that everything anyone does in this fallen state is sin.[23] By no means does Calvin wish to insinuate that consequently no one ever does any good or even seeks what is good. To the contrary, since humanity discriminates good and evil with the use of reason, and since reason, though corrupted, is not altogether lost in the Fall people often know quite well what they ought to do.[24] Calvin notes that sometimes people become victims of weakness to urges that quite explicitly contradict personal knowledge of goodness while at other times their minds seek loopholes in the fine print (for example, by thinking adulterous thoughts though not engaging in adulterous actions),[25] but in general Calvin has no problem acknowledging that people know what is good and even act in a manner that seeks goodness for themselves.

However, due to the clutches of sin and the resultant bondage and corruption that it produces, Calvin intends to distinguish clearly between a general sense of good and the virtuousness that characterizes appropriate life before God.[26] He will only attribute such excellence to God. Even in a pre-Fall economy, 'participation in God' through creation in the image of God was the only sense in which humanity in original righteousness was truly good, for 'it is no less to our advantage than pertinent to God's glory that we be deprived of all credit for our wisdom and virtue'.[27] The Fall complicates matters by marring the image of God but does not change the rules of the game. That is, one may only attain to true excellence in a theological sense by the grace of God. Whereas this originally consisted of the untainted presence of the image of God, it now requires union with Christ.[28]

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23   Calvin, *Institutes*, II.1.9: 'Here I only want to suggest briefly that the whole man is overwhelmed—as by a deluge—from head to foot, so that no part is immune from sin and all that proceeds from him is to be imputed to sin.'

24   Calvin, *Institutes*, II.2.12.

25   Calvin, *Institutes*, II.2.23.

26   Calvin, *Institutes*, II.2.26: '"[G]ood" refers not to virtue or justice but to condition, as when things go well with man. To sum up, much as man desires to follow what is good, still he does not follow it. There is man to whom eternal blessedness is not pleasing, yet no man aspires to it except by the impulsion of the Holy Spirit.' It is apparent from this passage that Calvin sees a 'good' that follows 'inclination of nature' toward what we might call 'civil good'. This means nothing for theological good (or the only real concept of good in Calvin's summation), which is impossible apart from God.

27   Calvin, *Institutes*, II.2.1.

28   Calvin strongly attests to the extreme condition of humanity apart from Christ: '[W]e teach that all human desires are evil, and charge them with sin—not in that they are natural, but because they are inordinate. Moreover,

Thus, when Calvin finally engages his doctrine of justification, he insists that 'good works' only make sense if they come from 'vessels unto honor', for it is the Lord who 'is pleased to adorn them [the vessels] with true purity'. Nevertheless, lacking in perfection as these justified vessels remain, God counts the works good because of the vessels' connection to Christ rather than on account of their own deeds and condition.[29] Indeed, because the believer is united with Christ, her actions can truly be considered virtuous, for 'He [God] receives these very works with pardon, not imputing the imperfection with which they are all so corrupted that they would otherwise be reckoned as sins rather than virtues'.[30] Calvin apparently has no qualms with adopting the language of virtue but boldly proclaims that in the truest sense of excellence, it must begin with God. In the state of original righteousness, the purity of the image of God in humanity included a mandate towards virtue. However, due to the Fall and the all-encompassing effects of sin, people are unable to seek such excellence in a theological sense.[31] In order for humanity to reengage with life as God meant it to be, he provided the means of forgiveness and reconciliation, namely the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. In uniting the elect to Christ, God reinstitutes a project of holiness and excellent living that necessarily proceeds through him.

Calvin furthers this point in his commentaries, where he clearly recognizes that the realm of vice (as the opposite of virtue) is apart from Christ. Conversely, those who are united to him ought to be free from such enslavement. Indeed, Calvin recognizes the shamefulness that the Colossian believers 'should addict themselves any more to the vices', given that they have died with Christ.[32] After all, the believer's participation in the death and resurrection of Christ—as Paul intimates—translates to an ongoing 'fellowship' with Christ.[33] It is only fair to see these comments in light of Calvin's strong emphasis in the *Institutes* on union with Christ, for according to his own words in his letter to the reader, all of his commentaries assume the theological rigor that he already undertook in

we hold that they are inordinate because nothing pure or sincere can come forth from a corrupt and polluted nature.' *Institutes*, III.3.12.

[29] Calvin, *Institutes*, III.17.5: 'But because the godly, encompassed with mortal flesh, are still sinners, and their good works are as yet incomplete and redolent of the vices of the flesh, he can be propitious neither to the former nor to the latter unless he embrace them in Christ rather than in themselves.'

[30] Calvin, *Institutes*, III.17.3.

[31] It should be noted that for Calvin, it is apparent that there is no meaningful sense apart from the theological sense.

[32] Calvin, *Colossians*, 3:7.

[33] Calvin, *Colossians*, 3:9.

the *Institutes*.[34] Thus, we might conclude that apart from this union, vice is commonplace due to human fallenness. This is not to say that vice is excusable in such a circumstance. Rather, it is on account of fallenness that vice is so familiar, hence the need for Christ as the remedy for both the situation and the actual offences. However, when vice remains present among those buried and resurrected with Christ, this is truly appalling because it is contrary to the gracious fellowship with Christ.

In his *Commentary on Romans*, Calvin further clarifies that the fellowship that comes from being buried and raised with Christ does indeed refer to that 'secret union, by which we are joined to him' and consequently receive 'his own virtue'.[35] This compels believers to live faithfully for and before the Father, who 'requires from us ... those [fruits] of holiness and righteousness', for it would be unfitting to do otherwise.[36] A discussion of virtue and holy living can only begin at this point, after recognition that humanity is void of righteousness in and of itself. Apart from God at work in Christ, people have no basis to consider holiness or excellence of life. Thus, Calvin contends that Paul waits until chapter 12 to convey his own thoughts on the life which God expects of believers precisely to establish its dependency upon God and Christ.[37] There is no sanctification—and

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[34] Calvin, *Institutes*, pp. 4-5. The editor notes (fn. 4) that these comments appear in the second edition of the *Institutes* (1539), which predates all of his commentaries. One might object that the theological fullness of the final edition of the *Institutes* should not reflect upon earlier commentaries. However, such a protest seems unnecessary considering Calvin's claim at the beginning of the same letter (p. 3) that he was 'never satisfied' with prior published versions of the *Institutes*, which implies that he always recognized a need to explore and explain more fully the precision that he eventually unveiled. Furthermore, that the letter in question accompanied the final edition confirms his continued affirmation of this point in 1559.

[35] Calvin, *Romans*, 6:5.

[36] Calvin, *Romans*, 7:4.

[37] Calvin, *Romans*, 12 (introduction to the chapter, prior to v. 1). In this particular setting, Calvin seems to prefer 'holy living' to 'virtue'. However, he does use the term 'virtue' as well and that in a neutral manner. Calvin's concern is for the 'philosophers' and their attempts to locate the 'sources of virtues', which invariably are apart from Christ. The negative emphasis is on 'sources' other than Christ, not the notion of virtue, which Calvin seems to use at least roughly synonymously with 'holy living'.

Meanwhile, returning to Calvin's contention for the reason of the delayed discussion of 'holy living' in Romans, he argues that Paul recognizes that 'we are redeemed by the Lord for this end' and, therefore, that this end is completely relative to the righteousness that comes to the truly redeemed through 'God and Christ'.

185

thus no virtue—apart from Christ and the benefits that proceed from him.

VIRTUE AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

At this point, one more familiar with the ancient and contemporary trends in virtue debates might object, 'Certainly Calvin provides a theological basis to speak of newness of life, but his extreme dependence upon sanctification as strictly a benefit, or gift, that proceeds from Christ automatically negates any attempt to speak of virtue based upon cultivated habit. Instead, it requires passivity that waits on God rather than nurturing of a dynamic wisdom'.[38] After all, as Otto Pesch deliberates, has this not been an enduring problem for Reformed theology in general as it has attempted to relate to virtue? For this reason, has it not sought to minimize discussion of virtue?[39] However, it is not immediately obvious to me that the previous discussion of virtue and union with Christ precludes a dynamic appreciation for theological virtue, indeed that it does not even

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[38] For example, see Jennifer A. Herdt's complaint against Luther in 'Virtue's Semblance: Erasmus and Luther on Pagan Virtue and the Christian Life', *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 25 (2005), 137-62. In end note 62, she succinctly connotes that her problem is with Luther's 'starting point', by which she specifically means the passivity his doctrine of justification (and undeveloped, implied doctrine of sanctification) transmits to an understanding of virtue. It is based entirely upon the work of Christ applied to the believer who accepts the promise of God, thereby disallowing any meaningful role for the person to cultivate habits that result in virtuous living. Her complaint is well-taken, though it seems to misunderstand the larger issue with which Luther sought to contend, namely a synergistic understanding of justification. In other words, his concern was less about what became sanctification in later Protestant reflection and more about the free grace of God in Christ that justifies the sinner. Calvin, as noted above, perhaps aspired to avoid such critiques by speaking of sanctification before justification in his *Institutes*, yet a more thorough response to Herdt's concern still awaits development below.
Further, it is debatable whether Herdt even accurately captures Luther's 'starting point' concerning justification. For an alternate perspective, see Johnson, 'Luther and Calvin on Union with Christ'.

[39] Pesch, 'Theology of Virtue', pp. 92-3. He writes, '[E]thics under the influence of Reformed theology becomes a doctrine of the *manifest consequences of salvation as a gift*, a doctrine of the instructions of God's commandments which the justified man or woman now once again gladly fulfills.' As shall become evident, this understanding is unnecessarily reductionistic.

promote such an emphasis. Instead, one further vital element remains to complete the present matrix for dogmatic consideration.

While the material principle of virtue thus far has been Christ and his benefits, it speaks little to the means by which believers receive his benefits. Calvin readily addresses this concern and contends for the ministry of the Spirit. This was not a mere afterthought for Calvin, who quite consciously maintained a robust triune basis for theology.[40] While the scope of this paper does not allow a full evaluation of theological virtue in light of the Trinity *in toto*, a discussion of virtue relative to union with Christ would be incomplete without considering the manner in which the Spirit accomplishes the virtuous effects of Christ's benefits throughout the body of Christ. Again, Calvin provides initial insights worth appropriating.

In his *Commentary on Colossians*, Calvin insists that it is only by the renewing work of the Spirit that anyone is 'made heavenly'. With reference to Paul's list of shameful acts of the flesh in 3:5, Calvin speaks of vice, which represents 'earthliness', or that which is far from excellent.[41] On the other hand, 'newness of life' requires the 'illumination of the Holy Spirit', which results in a transformation of the entire person.[42] In the present context and following Paul's lead, Calvin can be speaking of nothing other than the external signs, or actions, that follow a life that is joined to Christ. In other words, whereas earlier he spoke of Paul's denouncement of vice which testifies to the flesh, he now speaks of the excellence of being that flows from the work of the Spirit.[43] Calvin recognizes this new life as

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[40]   While it is no secret that Calvin made much of Christ as prophet, priest, and king, even these offices relate to triune economy. For example, Carl Trueman discusses the triune program relative to Christ's mediatory fulfilment as priest in 'From Calvin to Gillespie on Covenant: Mythological Excess or an Exercise in Doctrinal Development?' *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 11 (2009), 382-3.

[41]   Calvin, *Colossians*, 3:5.

[42]   Calvin, *Colossians*, 3:10.

[43]   He is intent to distinguish this from justification, which is by faith alone. The work in question here is clearly sanctification, 'for Paul here is not reasoning as to the manner in which men are made perfect in the sight of God, but as to the manner in which they may live perfectly among themselves'. Contra the 'papists', justification must be by faith alone not because 'observance of the law is not righteousness, but rather on this ground, that as we are all transgressors of the law'. Therefore, 'in consequence of our being destitute of any righteousness of our own, [we are] constrained to borrow righteousness from Christ'. Calvin, *Colossians*, 3:14.

imbuing of virtue,[44] something that he sees as impossible apart from the work of the Holy Spirit.

That the presence and work of the Spirit are absolutely necessary is especially evident in his *Commentary on Romans*, where he notes the inseparability of union with Christ and the ministry of the Spirit. Those who have Christ also have the Holy Spirit. Calvin emphatically proclaims, 'Those in whom the Spirit reigns not, belong not to Christ; then they are not Christians who serve the flesh; for they who separate Christ from his own Spirit make him like a dead image or a carcase [*sic*]. And we must always bear in mind … that gratuitous remission of sins can never be separated from the Spirit of regeneration'.[45] This is to say that though the benefit of sanctification that enables excellence in new life before God is available only through possessing Christ, the actual work of making this benefit effective belongs to the Spirit of Christ, who progressively destroys the ruins of sin left behind and enables fitting life before God.[46]

In the *Institutes*, Calvin constructively considers this reality. Whereas humanity in and of itself spoils even the greatest of its good deeds by the impurity of sinfulness under which the actions take place, God's grace at work in the redeemed allows him to 'recognize in them his own righteousness' at work.[47] This is purely on account of the believer's union with Christ,[48] yet Calvin also affirms that no one can will any good (in a true theological sense) without the ministry of the Holy Spirit.[49] It is significant that Calvin interchangeably attributes this life that amounts to virtue both to Christ and the Spirit. This is not theological confusion on his part but rather demonstration of a precise understanding of sanctification which necessarily links the ongoing work of the Spirit to the finished work of Christ through the unifying of the believer to Christ.[50]

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44 Calvin, *Colossians*, 3:14: 'That he may commend it [love] the more, he calls it the *bond of perfection*, meaning by this, that the troop of all the virtues is comprehended under it.'

45 Calvin, *Romans*, 8:9.

46 Calvin, *Romans*, 8:10: '[T]he power of quickening is in the Spirit of Christ, which will be effectual in swallowing up our mortality. He [Paul] hence concludes that we must patiently wait until the relics of sin be entirely abolished.'

47 Calvin, *Institutes*, III.15.3.

48 Calvin, *Institutes*, III.16.1.

49 Calvin, *Institutes*, II.2.27. For that matter, no one can even be united to Christ apart from the Holy Spirit. Cf. *Institutes*, III.1.1; III.2.34. See also Gaffin, 'Union with Christ', pp. 273-74.

50 The role of faith in this relationship is especially significant, but due to present space restrictions, a single pertinent observation must suffice. Even

But why must these two aspects come together? Is it not possible that the Spirit's work of reconciliation might be equally effective without going through the trouble of establishing union with Christ as the material principle? In short, no, and Kathryn Tanner provides the relevant logic. Her concern is the Modernist division between the historical Jesus and the Christ of faith. She specifically focuses on Schleiermacher and Bultmann and sees the root of her unease in the former, though she acknowledges that he did not explicitly make the present distinction.[51] Schleiermacher follows Kant's 'subjectivist epistemological swerve'[52] and thereby reduces theological discussion of Christ to the 'nature of Christian piety itself'. The historical Jesus becomes a theological means of referring to the 'humiliation of Jesus', while the seemingly ahistorical resurrection speaks to the exaltation of Christ.[53] Ultimately, the historical has no significance in itself but rather is caught up in the larger theological enterprise to generate God-consciousness.[54]

Tanner sees Bultmann as carrying this tradition further by defining the 'Holy Spirit's relation to Jesus Christ simply in terms of human *response to or apprehension of* what has *happened* in Christ'. This is significant because 'what were different aspects of the order of reality by which humans are saved (say, saving acts for us in Christ and their actually becoming ours by way of the Holy Spirit) are now divided up between the objective (the events of Jesus' life and death) and the subjective (the experiential responses to them in human life)'. Tanner contends that this shifts soteriology from the saving 'efficacy of Christ' to the personal 'human experience' based on the 'fact' of Jesus. In turn this changes the crux of Christology to the individual proclamation, which then provides significance to the historical Jesus and his death, rather than *vice versa*.[55]

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with regards to faith, Calvin refuses to separate union with Christ and the ministry of the Spirit: 'Christ, when he illumines us into faith by the power of his Spirit, at the same time so engrafts us into his body that we becomes partakers of every good.' *Institutes*, III.2.35; cf. III.1.4.

[51] Kathryn Tanner, 'Jesus Christ', *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine*, ed. by Colin E. Gunton (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 270, n. 18.

[52] See Tanner, 'Jesus Christ', p. 253.

[53] Tanner, 'Jesus Christ', p. 258.

[54] Tanner, 'Jesus Christ', p. 259.

[55] Tanner, 'Jesus Christ', p. 259. She rightly criticizes that this subjectivist turn devalues a unique Christian gospel: 'But now if Jesus in so far as he is a historical person is not the sort of thing upon which one can feel absolutely dependent, the redemptive activity of Jesus that brings about the development of Christian God-consciousness should have, accordingly, only a rela-

Consequently, each person of the Trinity becomes diminished.[56] It should already be evident how this is so for the person of Christ, for his objective work—or active obedience—depends upon a subjective proclamation. The lack of historical affirmation for the objective work of Christ minimizes—indeed, eliminates—its significance for a factual transference of Christ's benefits to those united to him. This effects justification and sanctification (in addition to the other benefits, such as adoption), for both are effective acts of grace that depend entirely upon God in Christ. As noted above, Calvin will not allow for anything good to come from fallen humanity (even redeemed yet still fallen humanity) apart from the believer's connection to Christ. Thus, union with Christ becomes the necessary[57] means by which people can develop and attain virtue because they are incapable by themselves. Union with Christ as material principle for the attainment of virtue is far from an arbitrary reality or generic foundation. It distinguishes a Christian conception of salvation and holy living precisely by tying excellence to the specific and historic work of God in Christ.

But the logic must come full circle, for the subjective turn also harms an appropriate understanding of the Spirit's relation to the work of Christ. Again, as Tanner highlights, '[T]he Holy Spirit becomes very difficult to distinguish from the spirit of a Christian form of life once the Holy Spirit is closely identified with subjective human appropriation or response.'[58] Conversely, the heart of Christian proclamation echoes—in some form— the words of Augustine: '[Y]ou [God] have made us for your own and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.'[59] The drama begins and ends with God, not with a human subjective response or anthropological concern. And it is the Holy Spirit who ministers the remedy of God and continues the work unto the perfection of those united to Christ.[60]

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tive primacy: those influenced by Jesus should be both free and dependent with respect to him. The dependence of Christianity on Christ would seem to be quite similar, then, to the ordinary dependence of any religion on its founding moment. This, however, is a far weaker sense of dependence than one usually finds in the claim of dependence for salvation on divine initiative in Christ' (p. 263).

[56] Tanner, 'Jesus Christ', p. 260.

[57] By 'necessary', I refer to that nuance by which Aquinas appeals to the most 'fitting' option given the course God has chosen for reality.

[58] Tanner, 'Jesus Christ', p. 261.

[59] Augustine, *The Confessions*, Carolinne White, trans. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001), 1:1,1.

[60] Tanner sees the opposite trend in Schleiermacher and Bultmann: 'Christian experience therefore seems to revolve around itself without any opening to

The Spirit's work is both dependent upon and distinct from the work of Christ, for the Spirit is the agent of transformation in conjunction with his administration of the benefits of Christ. The Spirit moves believers to the formation of good fruit and life more abundantly based on and in line with the objective reality of Christ.

But does this preclude any active participation by the individual towards cultivation of virtue? Is Otto Pesch's concern that Reformed theology only allows for the passive acceptance of grace to be fulfilled through obedience to the law rather than cultivation of virtue justified? Most certainly not, for the reconciliatory ministry of the Spirit based on union with Christ allows for a more robust idea of living in wisdom by not just 'living in the Spirit' but also 'walking in the Spirit' (Gal. 5:25), or as David Ford eloquently relates, the 'eschatological transcendence of God's future anticipated now in the Spirit'.[61] So, with the present matrix in place, we now have opportunity to sketch the appropriateness of a distinctly Reformation brand of theological virtue. Calvin provides the road sign by calling for 'reason [to] give way to, submit and subject itself to, the Holy Spirit so that the man himself may no longer live but hear Christ living and reigning within him'.[62] This appeal is dynamic by nature and requires life lived in the wisdom that flows from above (cf. Colossians).

But it is John Webster who must blaze the trail to which Calvin points. In his article 'God and Conscience', Webster provides an avenue by which we may affirm an active development of theological virtue, namely the conscience. He reminds, 'It is crucial … that a theological depiction of conscience and its moral field be governed by the conviction that the Christian life is hidden with God in Christ'.[63] This echoes well Paul's concern in Colossians, where he begins his letter with his desire to see the believers grow in their knowledge of how God would have them live (1:9-10). The rest of the epistle testifies to their need for true wisdom (1:9; 3:16).

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the very divine initiative which these theologians nevertheless continue to affirm as the only remedy for human incapacity' ('Jesus Christ', p. 261).

[61] David F. Ford, *Christian Wisdom: Desiring God and Learning in Love* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 212.

[62] Calvin, *Institutes*, III.7.1.

[63] John Webster, 'God and Conscience', *Word and Church: Essays in Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh & New York: T. & T. Clark Ltd., 2001), p. 246. After all, the very existence of the Christian Church depends upon God and the working of his drama: 'But, for Christian faith, and thus for Christian dogmatics, the life of the church is not only "a new social reality" (though it is that) but a reality which is ingredient within the history of God's dealings with humanity and therefore something for whose description talk of God is primary' (p. 245).

But where is this wisdom? It is entirely in Christ (2:2-3). Furthermore, the problem with the false teachers that they had encountered—and, thus, their problem—was a lack of nourishment from the head, that is, Christ (2:16-19). Therefore, their wisdom was worthless (2:23). Conversely, Paul had high expectations of the believers precisely because they were united with Christ (1:21-23; 2:8-13; 3:1-3), and it was on this basis that they were to live worthily of the Lord (1:10).

In line with the present study, it is the Spirit who unites believers to Christ and the Spirit in whom Paul then urges believers to walk (Gal. 2:25). This admonition is to turn away from all other sources of living and to turn toward the one in whom is life. Again, the ministry of the Spirit is necessarily connected to the objective work of Christ, whose benefits flow to those united to him. Consciously walking in this Spirit is akin to drinking from the abundant steady flow of a faucet attached to a fire hydrant, for the Holy Spirit is the one massaging the benefits (the water itself in my metaphor) of Christ to shape the believer. He is the means by which those united to Christ grow in the knowledge of God and learn to live dynamically according to the 'storehouses of wisdom', Christ (Col. 2:2-3). As Kevin Vanhoozer rightly quips, 'God is the "doable knowable" and to know God is to know what to say and do to glorify him in any given situation or context'.[64]

Webster provides the final note by reminding that in the Christian life, all appropriate action and speech are reactive to God's speech,[65] or in this case to God's work in Christ. Sin renders humanity incapable of reliable self-judgment.[66] Consequently, Christianly considered, theological virtue must be about God grasping people and thrusting them toward excellence, shaping them by his Spirit to conformity at all times to Christ.[67] Christianly considered, theological virtue is about dying to self and allowing Christ to live in you through walking in the Spirit.

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[64] Kevin Vanhoozer, 'On the Very Idea of a Theological System: An Essay in Aid of Triangulating Scripture, Church and World', *Always Reforming: Explorations in Systematic Theology*, ed. by A. T. B. McGowan (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006), p. 177.

[65] Webster, 'God and Conscience', p. 251: 'God is not anonymous or indefinite, but named and purposive; our speech proceeds from our being addressed. And so, in conscience we do not relate to some Other, but to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the Spirit of the living God.'

[66] Webster, 'God and Conscience', p. 257.

[67] Cf. Webster, 'God and Conscience', pp. 259-60: 'Freedom of conscience is not freedom to 'choose' the good (a 'chosen' good no longer has the absoluteness of truth; it is a mere contingent reality, which I have annexed to my projection

CONCLUSION

Ellen Charry offers keen insight from her study of Calvin: 'It is not so much that a teaching is profitable because it is orthodox but that it is orthodox because it is profitable, since God only does for us that which is profitable for us.'[68] This rings true generally, though we might more appropriately alter it to view two facets of a single reality: 'Teaching is profitable *because* it is orthodox just as teaching is orthodox *because* it is profitable.' There is a dialectical relationship between these two elements due to the dependence of each upon the reality of God as revealed in Christ and the benefits that flow to believers through union with him.[69] Both virtue and theological truth consist therein, for the objective reality of Christ's work becomes the basis of the Christian life as is fitting of reconciliation and re-creation. The nature of the Spirit's work to bring about this actuality relies first and foremost upon the triune work that is accomplished in the historic work of Christ. On this basis, the Holy Spirit works the redemptive effects in those caught up in the *theodrama*. These redemptive results are not limited simply to applying a past action but also to making the past work of Christ effective for the ongoing perfection of those united to Christ. That is to say, sanctification is a key benefit that comes from union with Christ, and it is the Holy Spirit who works this in situations anew daily. As John Webster points out, it is only because the Christian is hidden with God in Christ that she may live worthily of the Lord, for it is God who is at work imbuing the wisdom of Christ in believers as they walk in the Spirit. This heavenly wisdom allows for a dynamic life of excellence, or virtuousness, provided persistency in walking in the Spirit.

In addition to answering the dogmatic call for a Reformation-based pattern to speak of virtue, the present sketch also opens new doors for speaking of virtue relative to other doctrines: the relationship of faith to virtue; the role of the Father in the mandate to be virtuous and in the fulfilment of this charge; the eschatological dimension of virtue relative to that of original righteousness—is their a difference? Additionally, much remains in the realm of pneumatology with regards to the manner in which the Spirit leads the believer in wisdom in particular instances and the ongoing battle between flesh and spirit to shape the believer. The

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of myself in the world). The good chooses me; it annexes my projects to itself; it binds me, and thereby sets me free.'

68 Charry, *Renewing of Your Minds*, p. 204.

69 This altered formulation seems more accurately to capture Calvin's heart on the relationship between orthodoxy and profitability as well. For evidence to support my assertion, see my introduction above and the comments related to Calvin's response to Servetus, Osiander, and the Roman Church.

intention of the present study has been to locate dogmatically theological virtue relative to union with Christ and thus Reformation understandings of sin and grace. It is my hope that future studies further the current work to build bridges with Reformation thought.

Meaning, Reference, and Textuality: An Evangelical Appropriation of Hans Frei

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INTRODUCTION

Hans Frei, former professor of religious studies at Yale University, is one of the most influential theologians of this past century. David Ford calls him the most significant figure in North American theology in the last quarter of the twentieth century,[1] while William Placher writes that he is possibly the most important American theologian of his generation.[2] Frei and George Lindbeck are known as the patriarchs of postliberal theology.[3] With the publication of *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative* in 1974,[4] Frei established himself as a significant observer of the theological scene. In subsequent publications, such as *The Identity of Jesus Christ*[5] and 'The 'literal reading' of Biblical Narrative in the Christian Tradition: Does it

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[1]   David F. Ford, 'On Being Hospitable to Jesus Christ: Hans Frei's Achievement', *Journal of Theological Studies* 46 (1995): 532.

[2]   William C. Placher, 'Hans Frei and the Meaning of Biblical Narrative', *The Christian Century* 106 (1989), 556.

[3]   In 1985, Brevard Childs included Frei, Lindbeck, David Kelsey, and Gene Outka as proponents of a 'New Yale Theology'. Brevard Childs, *The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction* (New Haven: n.p., 1985), 541. The more common label for such thinkers, however, is 'postliberal', a term derived from George Lindbeck's monograph, *The Nature of Doctrine*. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984).

[4]   Hans Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974).

[5]   *The Identity of Jesus Christ: The Hermeneutical Bases of Dogmatic Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975).

Stretch or Will it Break?',[6] Frei also emerged as a constructive theologian with whom to be reckoned.

The purpose of this paper is: (1) generally, to understand Frei's two major publications in order to provide context; (2) specifically, to understand his discussion of meaning and reference in *The Eclipse*; and (3) to argue that Frei's distinction between meaning and reference can be of significant, though qualified, help to evangelicals in the task of faithfully interpreting and preaching the Scriptures.[7]

THE ECLIPSE AND *THE IDENTITY*

In *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative*, Frei argues that the nature of the Bible as realistic narrative was once recognized by interpreters, but has been abandoned. Beginning with Johannes Cocceius and continuing through nineteenth century interpreters, Frei demonstrates that a confusion of meaning and reference has led to this eclipse of biblical narrative. Modern hermeneutical theory has failed to find biblical meaning in the text. Instead, it has searched for meaning in some extra-textual referent. Frei proposes a return to an interpretation of the Bible as realistic narrative, finding the meaning in the narrative itself rather than in the events depicted in the text.[8]

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[6] 'The 'literal reading' of Biblical Narrative in the Christian Tradition: Does it Stretch or Will it Break?', in *The Bible and the Narrative Tradition*, [[, ed. by GET ED]] (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), [[GET PP]].

[7] For the overview of Frei's thought and the explication of his distinction between meaning and reference, we draw heavily upon Bruce Riley Ashford, 'Wittgenstein's Impact on Anglo-American Theology: Representative Models of Response to Ludwig Wittgenstein's Later Writings'S, (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2003), pp. 96-121.

[8] Although Frei always retained a textual framework for interpretation, his conception of it changed over the years. Whereas the early Frei believed that the Bible 'means what it says', the later Frei found meaning in community consensus. In *Types of Christian Theology*, he writes, '[T]he literal meaning of the text is precisely that meaning which finds the greatest degree of agreement in the use of the text in the religious community. If there is agreement in that use, then take that to be the literal sense' (Hans Frei, *Types of Christian Theology* (New Haven: Yale University, 1992), p. 15). Our view is more similar to that of the early Frei, although we do not overlook the significance of the community of believers who work together for consensus on the meaning of the canon.

This return to the biblical narratives is exemplified, says Frei, in Karl Barth[9] and, most especially, in Erich Auerbach.[10] For Frei, this return entails at least four things. First, Frei recognized that the narratives are history-like. Second, it follows that these history-like stories (though they are not necessarily historical)[11] use ordinary characteristics and actions of people to render the extraordinary. Third, the biblical narratives are intransitive.[12] In Nicholas Wolterstorff's understanding of this aspect of Frei's theory, sometimes the biblical writer's 'intention in telling a story is such that achieving the intention logically requires telling this story and logically requires that one's readers or auditors grasp this story'.[13] The intransitive nature of the narratives set them apart from stories that merely illustrate or bring an insight to the forefront. Frei writes: 'Many biblical narratives, especially the synoptic gospels . . . [are] indisposable.'[14] Fourth, the narratives are character-rendering. Here, Frei follows Auerbach's argument in *Mimesis* but also supplements it substantially. That a narrative is character-rendering means that the identity of a person is set forth in the narrative in his 'singular unsubstitutable identity', including their inner subjectivity and their 'capacity as doers and sufferers of actions or events'. The *person*, therefore, is rendered *by the story*.[15] This is what Frei means by 'realistic' narrative. He writes:

> The term realistic I take also to imply that the narrative depiction is of that peculiar sort in which characters or individual persons, in their internal depth or subjectivity as well as in their capacity as doers and sufferers of actions or events, are firmly and significantly set in the context of the external environment, natural but more particularly social. Realistic narrative is that kind in

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9   An excellent concise discussion of the influence of Barth on Frei may be found in John F. Woolverton, 'Hans W. Frei in Context: A Theological and Historical Memoir', *Anglican Theological Review* 79 (1997), 382ff.

10   Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953 [orig. 1946]).

11   For Frei, history-like is not equated with historicity, although he points out that for pre-critical interpreters the Scriptures were historical truth. Frei, *The Eclipse*, p. 11.

12   Perhaps Nicholas Wolterstorff is the first to use this term to describe Frei's understanding of this aspect of narrative. Wolterstorff's discussion is found in Nicholas Wolterstorff, 'Will Narrativity Work as Linchpin? Reflections on the Hermeneutic of Hans Frei', in *Relativism and Religion* [[, ed. by GET ED]] (London: MacMillan, 1995), p. 78.

13   Ibid.

14   Frei, *The Eclipse*, p. 13.

15   Ibid.

which subject and social setting belong together, and characters and external circumstances fitly render each other.[16]

Along with a restoration of biblical narrative, Frei proposes a return to a literal and figural interpretation. Before the eclipse, interpreters saw the Bible as rendering one cumulative story, which they understood as describing the real historical world.[17] In order to fit the array of stories together, interpreters made use of the figural-typological sense of the texts. Frei makes a point to distinguish between allegorical and figural-typological interpretation. Indeed, not only is figural not the same as allegorical, but it is actually the natural extension of a literal reading.

In a figural interpretation, stories are separated chronologically but are able to fit into a coherent whole. A text may refer to an event, but that event depicted may refer to another event. Stories retain their independence, and yet are naturally wed because of their 'family resemblance' and 'mutual supplementation'.[18] When the interpretation of the text as realistic narrative fell into disuse (with its stress on the significant relations that sequential texts have upon each other), Frei points out, figural-typological interpretation also was abandoned.

Finally, Frei is concerned that interpreters have abandoned the view that the story of Scripture absorbs the world. In the past, interpreters absorbed the extra-biblical world into the world of the text. They did so by wedding figural interpretation of Scripture with their own actions, thoughts, and beliefs. Writes Frei, 'Not only was it possible for him, it was also his duty to fit himself into that world. . . . He was to see his disposition, his actions and passions, the shape of his own life as well as that of his era's events as figures of that storied world."[19] Therefore, Frei seeks to bring back Scripture as realistic narrative, and the corollary literal-figural interpretation, as well as restoring the view that the story of Scripture absorbs the world.

Frei's second monograph, *The Identity of Jesus Christ*, was first published in *Crossroads*, a Presbyterian church education magazine. In *The Identity*, Frei demonstrates a post-critical version of realistic narrative interpretation as he exegetes the gospels and sets forth the identity of Jesus Christ.[20] Frei's contention is that the gospels are stories designed to

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[16]   Ibid.

[17]   Ibid., pp. 2-4.

[18]   Ibid., p. 28.

[19]   Ibid., p. 3.

[20]   Two good discussions of *The Identity* can be found in James O. Duke, 'Reading the Gospels Realistically: A Review of Hans Frei's 'Eclipse of Biblical Narrative' and 'Identity of Jesus Christ'", *Encounter* 38 (1977) '. 298, and Mike

render the identity of Jesus. He sets forth Jesus' ministry in three parts: the pre-public ministry, the public ministry, and the passion-resurrection sequence. It is in the passion-resurrection sequence that Christians see Jesus' identity in a most direct and focused manner. Through these three phases, and culminating in the third, the gospel writers primarily answer the question 'Who is Jesus?', and *not* primarily the question, 'Does our depiction of Jesus correspond to what actually happened?'[21]

As Higton and others have pointed out, Frei's *reason* for insisting on a literal reading of the Bible as realistic narrative changed over the years.[22] In his early writings, Frei grounded his argument in the nature of the narrative genre, claiming that the structures and genre of the text provided the necessary reason to find the identity of Jesus Christ in the biblical narratives, and most centrally in the passion-resurrection sequence. In his later writings, however, Frei admitted that the church has played a role in making narrative reading central. Other types of readings of the gospels are possible. Higton writes of Frei's initial 'grandiose' claims about narrative:

> Frei realized that this was perhaps the most vulnerable part of his argument, and that therefore he might be subject to a similar criticism to that which we have discussed with respect to Lindbeck – that his theology is only as useful as a rather dubious literary theory. Colourfully, Frei later spoke of this as putting the cart before the horse, then cutting the lines and claiming that the vehicle is self-propelled.[23]

So Frei retained narrative, but his reasons for doing so changed somewhat.

Such are the broad contours of Frei's work. What is lacking still is a more detailed account of Frei's discussion of the relation of meaning and reference.

Higton, 'Frei's Christology and Lindbeck's Cultural-Linguistic Theory', *Scottish Journal of Theology* 50 (1997), 86.

[21] Frei, however, does show some interest in matters of reference. In *The Identity*, he argues that the passion-resurrection sequence is the most natural point where Christians move from literary explication to ontological assertion. In personal correspondence with John Woolverton, he several times speaks of the possibilities of factual depiction by the text. Woolverton, 'Hans W. Frei', pp. 369-93.

[22] Higton, 'Frei's Christology', p. 91.

[23] Ibid.

MEANING AND REFERENCE

The central question answered in Frei's *Eclipse* is, Why did realistic narrative, the figural-typological interpretation, and absorption of the world into story fall into disuse? Frei's answer is that interpreters failed to find the locus of meaning in the narrative itself, and began to locate meaning in the events behind the text.

Frei begins his history of interpretation with the Reformers,[24] especially with Calvin. For the Reformers, says Frei, the explicative meaning and the historical reference of the text were identical. What the Bible meant corresponded with reality. Calvin's interpretation, for example, was realistic and figural-typological, which is to be distinguished from allegorical. In contrast to an allegorist, who would try to find a 'deeper' meaning in the text, Calvin relied upon the Holy Spirit to bear witness to the reader of the reality of the narrative world.

The Pietists, who were post-Reformation, were not nearly as literal as the Reformers. Their aim was to transcend the literal meaning of the text. Rambach, for example, believed that an interpreter needs to 'be able to discern a spiritual sense above the grammatical and logical senses in at least some of the sacred words'.[25] It is ironic, says Frei, that the Pietists (in 'transcending' the literal interpretation) were some of the first to contribute to the rise of biblical criticism.[26]

As the seventeenth century progressed, the split between the explicative sense of a text and its ostensive reference can be seen in such differing interpreters as Spinoza and Cocceius. Spinoza drove a wedge between literal meaning and historical reference.[27] The religious lessons of those two entities were not the same, he said. While the textual lesson is one thing, the real religious meaning could be found in the historical environment, among other things.

Johannes Cocceius, on the other hand, is an especially intriguing case for Frei. Though he was an orthodox theologian, he was quite similar to Spinoza in his divorce of narrative reading and historical reference. Cocceius' contribution to this divorce lay in his 'unsteadiness of focus' on the relationship between history and the biblical depiction. Whereas Calvin saw the unity of the OT and NT in the depiction by the text, Cocceius saw the unity in a process of successive promises and fulfillments. As such, the focus of the interpreter shifted from the text to an extra-textual schema

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[24] Frei, *The Eclipse*, p. 18.
[25] Ibid., p. 38.
[26] Ibid., p. 39.
[27] Ibid., p. 42.

of chronological historical events. After being referred to by the text, the events spoke for themselves. Frei writes:

> The story itself no longer rendered the reality of the history it depicted. Cocceius' case is interesting because it shows what could happen to a conservative whose theology was strongly biblical and who was a forerunner of a new endeavor to set forth the unity of the Bible.[28]

Next, Frei moves to a discussion of the eighteenth century. With the rise of the Enlightenment came a sustained attack upon the factual truth of the biblical texts, most specifically the prophecies. The most interesting thing about this attack, says Frei, was that both the attackers and defenders of Scripture's factuality found the locus of meaning in the ostensive referents rather than in the text itself. For the Deists, historical revelation had not occurred and was not credible. With this emphasis on the impossibility of revelation, the groundwork was laid for a continuation of the hermeneutical shift from 'What is the meaning of the Bible?' to 'Is the Bible true?'[29]

This debate over the 'general credibility' of miracles led both proponents and opponents of divine revelation to answer in *general* terms that 'God can intervene supernaturally' or 'God cannot'. The question of whether God performed the *specific* miracles described in the text was left in the background. As a result, textual depictions of miracles were often relegated to a minimal 'something supernatural'. The textual depiction was in the background while the philosophical concept of positivity took forefront.

Next, Frei discusses the Latitudinarians and Neologians,[30] before coming to John Locke, Anthony Collins, and William Whiston.[31] The raging eighteenth century debate was over fulfillment of OT prophecy in the NT. The specific problem was concerning the use of the OT by NT writers, in a manner that the OT author did not seem to intend. In the

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28 Ibid., p. 48.

29 Note that Frei is not saying that there was simply a movement from interpretation to appropriation and apologetics. He is saying, rather, that there was movement from the question of 'What is the meaning of the Bible?' to the question of 'Is the Bible true?' within the field of hermeneutics. An interpreter's opinion of the truth or falsity of a text changed his interpretation of it.

30 Frei's discussion is found in *The Eclipse*, pp. 60-5. The brevity of this paper does not allow for a summary of this element of Frei's argument. Frei himself treats the Latitudinarians and Neologians in brief fashion.

31 Frei's discussion of these three men is in *The Eclipse*, pp. 66-85.

midst of this, William Whiston sets forth the case that the OT text as it now stands does not lend itself to the type of interpretation given by Jesus and the disciples. Whiston's attempt at solving the problem was to agree that the Jews had blemished the text to remove any evidence that would favor a Christian interpretation. Anthony Collins, a friend of Locke's, responded with an attack on Whiston and orthodox interpreters. The reason the OT quotes do not fit with NT usage for fulfilled prophecy, argues Collins, was that the NT writers were influenced by the hermeneutical techniques of the early rabbinical writings.

The orthodox interpreters (vs. Lockeans such as Collins), says Frei, had a way of reconciling text and historical event.[32] Standing on the shoulders of interpretive tradition, they believed that meaning and fact find their unity in God himself. Indeed, for them:

> The identity of literal and historical sense of Scripture involves a cognate unity on the part of God: the divine author of the book is the same as the governor of the history narrated in it. Being both author of the text's meaning and governor of actuality he unites meaning and fact, so that it does not occur to the orthodox interpreter that there is a distance between words and their reference. . . .[33]

While the orthodox were influenced by interpretive tradition, which finds unity in meaning and facts, Collins was influenced by a Lockean thesis that factuality is to be weighed in the empirical court of (extra-biblical) historical evidence. Further, Collins was influenced by Locke in his ideas about language. For Collins, as for Locke, 'The rational use of language is not only a matter of logical coherence but of externally received impressions or ideas to which words correspond'.[34] An idea is what it is, and it cannot be identical both with 'what it is' and with 'something else' at the same time.

The result of this, in Collins' thinking, was the impossibility of a figural-typological interpretation. Whereas traditional interpreters found the meaning of a word in the literal (and as an extension, the figural) sense, Collins found meaning in the historical referent of the literal sense. Thus, for Collins, 'wood/tree' in Exod 15:25 only refers to the historical event of Exod 15:25 and could not also be a reference to Christ's death on the cross. Meaning, then, is not found in the biblical narrative but in the ostensive historical referent.

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[32]   Ibid., p. 74.
[33]   Ibid.
[34]   Ibid., p. 81.

Collins' assumptions found their way into the interpretation of an orthodox conservative, Sigmund Jakob Baumgarten. Frei states, 'Baumgarten tended to distinguish sharply between the words and the subject matter of the Bible and to equate the latter much more than the former with revelation.'[35] Though Baumgarten believed in an inspired text, he nonetheless let historical procedure dominate interpretation.[36]

Next, Frei turns to a discussion of philosopher Christian Wolff, whom he believes was as influential as Locke in the field of hermeneutics.[37] For Wolff, words signify concepts rather than things. As such, biblical words do not refer to real events in the historical world, but rather to an ideal referent. This ideal reference is in contrast to Locke's ostensive reference. Many who came after Wolff, then, focused on the ideal referents of biblical narrative. Kant, for example, found morality to be the ideal referent of the Scriptures. Schleiermacher located meaning in the mind and context of the authors, while Hegel found the locus of meaning in the historical dialectic.

Frei continues his interpretive history with a description of the rise of the British novel. This development lent credence to an emotional and artistic (therefore, non-cognitive) understanding of stories. Germans, on the other hand, were deprived of a legacy of good novel and as such saw *only* cognitive meaning. Both the British and the Germans, writes Frei, were in need of correction from each other, and both were partners in the eclipse of realistic narrative.

Some of these interpreters, like Wolff and Kant, denied that the biblical text's meaning was found in its reference to the historical world, but they still found the text to be *meaningful*. Hermann Samuel Reimarus, however, denied not only factual reference, but also meaningfulness.[38] Whereas biblical critics before him had found the Bible's meaning in non-literal senses (because they found the literal sense to be non-factual), Reimarus located meaning in the literal sense and rejected the Bible as being non-valuable (because the literal sense was not factually true). Reimarus' unique contribution, therefore, is that he dismissed the explicative sense on the grounds of his belief that the literal meaning was not factually true. Along with Reimarus, and following him, came a host of historical reconstructions, as well as the 'History of religions' and 'Biblical Theology' movements. But none of these helped locate the meaning of the text in the literal-figural sense of the narrative.

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[35] Frei, *The Eclipse*, p. 89.
[36] Ibid., p. 93.
[37] Ibid., p. 96.
[38] Ibid., p. 114.

THE EVANGELICAL CONNECTION: INSPIRATION & TEXTUALITY

The Doctrine of Inspiration. The first part of this article has been an attempt to explain Frei's two major publications in order to provide context and more specifically, to understand his distinction between meaning and reference in *The Eclipse.* We now seek to understand how his discussion of meaning and reference holds promise for evangelical appropriation. Frei's point is that the Christian community of scholars traditionally has found the meaning of the text in the text, rather than seeking it outside of the text through referential frameworks of interpretation. In other words, biblical interpretation has been done within a textual frame of reference rather than within a historical frame of reference. This text-driven hermeneutic was increasingly forsaken, however, beginning with Cocceius and others in the seventeenth century.

Evangelicals likewise share a concern about the eclipse of the text in biblical interpretation; and in addition to Frei's considerations, we are further motivated, even centrally motivated, by our doctrine of Scripture. We understand the doctrines of inspiration, sufficiency, and clarity to be of particular importance in this regard. This doctrine of inspiration is grounded in 2 Timothy 3:16 which states that 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God'. In a very real way, the words of Scripture are the words of God. Carl Henry's definition is exemplary: Inspiration is that 'supernatural influence upon divinely chosen prophets and apostles whereby the Spirit of God assures the truth and trustworthiness of their oral and written proclamation'.[39] We affirm that the Holy Spirit inspired biblical writers (2 Pet 2:21) to pen inspired texts (2 Tim 3:16).[40] Inspiration has to do with message that God gave to the biblical writers, a message which was set forth in human language. While God has revealed himself in the past in both text and event, in the present *the text* is the only inspired locus of God's revelation.[41] Scripture refers to the text of Scripture, and not the events *qua* events behind the text, as *theopneustos* and profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness.

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[39] Carl Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority* (6 vols; Waco: Word, 1976-83), vol. 4, p. 129. Also see, for example Clark Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation* (Chicago: Moody, 1971), pp. 53-106, and Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), p. 74.

[40] For further explication of the doctrine of inspiration see David Dockery and David P. Nelson, 'Special Revelation', in *A Theology for the Church*, ed. by Daniel L. Akin (Broadman & Holman, 2007), pp. 128-34.

[41] Jeffrey P. Keegan, 'The Locus of Revelation in Relation to Text and Event in Light of the Doctrine of Inspiration' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 1995).

Corollary to the orthodox doctrine of inspiration are the doctrines of the sufficiency of Scripture and the clarity of Scripture. The doctrine of sufficiency entails the affirmation that Scripture is itself sufficient for doctrine and life. That is, the believer is not lacking adequate revelation since the inspired Bible itself provides all the revelation necessary sufficient for knowing God and living as God intends. The doctrine of sufficiency does not indicate that revelation is exhaustive or that it contains all knowledge about the subjects taught therein, but that it is sufficient such that further divine revelation is not necessary beyond the scope of Scripture for faithfully living the Christian life. The doctrine of clarity of Scripture entails the affirmation that Scripture is written in such a way that it may be understood by those who, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, read or hear the biblical text. The doctrine of clarity does not indicate that the Scriptures are without passages difficult to understand, that the Bible is easily accessible, or that it is equally accessible to all readers. The doctrine does indicate that the Scriptures may be understood by the average reader and that knowledge of the Scriptures is not limited only to those who have, for example, specialized training.

The Implication of Inspiration: A Text-Based Hermeneutic. The implication of such a doctrine of inspiration is a text-based hermeneutic. David Clark writes, 'If Scripture is God's speech, analogous to human expert testimony, this should influence how theologians interpret the Bible.' For this reason, 'Evangelicals traditionally think of hermeneutics as the study of guidelines that help readers of Scripture remain focused on the biblical text itself.'[42] Scripture is the inspired word of God; all interpretation should consciously, carefully, and consistently proceed from this premise. The significance of this point should not be lost on the reader—though evangelicals often hold to a textual frame of reference in *theory*, they are not always consistent with this theory in *practice*.[43]

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[42]   David K. Clark, *To Know and Love God* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2003), pp. 68-9. Further, it should be noted that our paper assumes the validity of the task of interpretation, and in particular, the validity of seeking authorial intent. Kevin Vanhoozer's defense of the possibility of literary knowledge is commendable. See *Is There a Meaning in the Text? The Bible, The Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), pp. 197-452. Vanhoozer proposes the Trinity's self-communication as the paradigm for all true communication, and draws upon Wittgenstein, Searle, Austin, and others to view meaning in terms of communicative action. For him, there is a meaning in the text, and for the interpretively virtuous reader, that meaning can be found.

[43]   The opposite problem is also evident in biblical scholarship. For example, there are those who adopt a hermeneutic similar to the one espoused in this

So how might evangelicals better stick to their theory when practicing biblical interpretation? This article will make two suggestions, one negative and the other positive. The first suggestion is that the interpreter's impulse will not be to seek the meaning of the text in extra-textual historical and archaeological reconstructions, but rather in the text itself.[44] The biblical depiction of an event is an historical rendering of that event. Furthermore, it is God's rendering of the event. Like other statements, it includes condensation of the whole, selection, and arrangement. It is not the only way to render an event, and it may not even be the only true way to render the particular event. Take for example the crucifixion. A historian at the scene of the event could chronicle the cross and the people and happenings around it with painstaking detail, while still completely unaware of its meaning. His portrayal could be a true portrayal, but not the depiction that Scripture gives. To the extent that his portrayal was true, it would be a resource for the task of apologetics, but not for interpretation.

John Sailhamer addresses the notion of inspiration in relation to meaning and reference:

> According to the evangelical view of Scripture, the biblical message has been encoded in a text. Insofar as we say that this text is inspired and thus is the locus of God's revelation, then the meaning or content of that revelation is of the nature of the meaning of a text. . . . and thus no amount of delving into

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article, yet who would not share our theory of inspiration. Likewise, there are evangelicals who practice a textual hermeneutic similar to what we suggest and who share our doctrine of inspiration, but who would reject our theory of hermeneutics.

[44] Note that the biblical text itself provides contextual information. In John 4 we learn an important fact about Jewish-Samartian relations (John 4:9) that helps the reader to understand the text. In Josh 3:15 we are given an important clue for understanding the text – that the river crossing took place at the time when the waters of the Jordan were high.

With respect to the historical nature of the text, we lament with John Piper the 'significant shift away from the historical particularity of divine revelation among some interpreters'. John Piper, 'The Authority and Meaning of the Christian Canon: A Response to Gerald Sheppard on Canon Criticism', *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 19 (1976), p. 94. While we want to affirm the historical realities related in the text and the authority of Scripture that cannot be disconnected from such historical realities, we nevertheless hope to clarify the *significance* of those historical realities for the task of biblical interpretation.

the history of Israel as an event apart from the text can take the place of the meaning of the text of Scripture.[45]

Jeffrey Keegan makes the same point when he writes, 'All attempts to interpret Scripture by reconstructing the events . . . do not have the divine authorization of being "inspired." The biblical texts already have employed a "principle of interpretation" in their accounts of past events.'[46]

The second implication is the flipside, and the positive complement, of the first. Now that the interpreter has taken his eyes off of extra-textual information, he will focus his exegesis on the text[47]. He will 'follow the linguistic and genre conventions of the text, the communication and textual strategy of the text, which guide the reader to the meaning which has been embodied in the text'.[48] Indeed, the events are already interpreted by Scripture. Geerhardus Vos, in *Biblical Theology*, writes, 'Act-revelations are never entirely left to speak for themselves; they are preceded and followed by word-revelation.'[49] The writers of Scripture have already interpreted the events, condensing, selecting, and arranging their accounts to convey the meaning intended by the divine Author.

In sum, we hope to (re)condition a particular reflex among evangelical interpreters. That is, we urge an impulse among evangelical exegetes to focus on inter-textual and intra-textual matters in a canonical framework as constitutive of a more consistently evangelical hermeneutic. In this way the interpreter's reflex will be to look within the canonical Scriptures to answer questions about the text and to find meaning.[50] We are not prepared to suggest that there is no value to extra-textual matters, though we believe the value of extra-textual sources often to be apologetic rather than interpretive. We submit that such an inter/intra-textual reflex is most consistent with the evangelical doctrine of inspiration, and its corollaries, the doctrines of sufficiency and clarity.

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[45] John Sailhamer, *Introduction to Old Testament Theology: A Canonical Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), p. 57.

[46] Jeffrey P. Keegan, 'The Locus of Revelation', p. 310.

[47] We assume here a view of confluence that properly situates the divine Author in relation to the human author.

[48] Keegan, 'The Locus of Revelation', p. 311.

[49] Geerhardus Vos, *Biblical Theology* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1975), p. 7.

[50] In some ways, we might characterize the problem about which we urge consideration as a move toward preferring the 'analogy of history' over the analogy of Scripture. We of course, prefer the priority of the analogy of Scripture.

EVANGELICAL CONFLATION OF MEANING AND REFERENCE

Theologians may (unconsciously or consciously) perpetuate the error of confusing meaning and reference. Johannes Cocceius is case-in-point. At the turn of the eighteenth century, Cocceius departed from mainstream orthodox interpretation by understanding biblical history as a temporal sequence rather than as a finished portrait provided by Scripture.[51] About Cocceius' interpretation, Sailhamer writes: 'Coccejus understood the history portrayed in the Bible as itself an actual flow of events, changing with time, and leading to a definite conclusion. Biblical history as such was no longer like a Rembrandt painting that could be contemplated in its totality.'[52]

J. Chr. K. von Hofmann is a nineteenth-century example of an evangelical who conflates meaning and reference. Sailhamer provides a discussion of Hofmann's salvation-history approach,[53] which included the thoroughly evangelical idea of Scriptural inspiration. Hoffman, however, expanded the bounds of inspiration to include events. Hofmann writes, 'Traditionally the notion of inspiration is taken to refer only to that word of the divine Spirit through which the books of the Holy Scripture came into being. Why, however, has a word with such a diverse meaning been so arbitrarily limited?'[54] Thus Hoffman has exceeded biblical bounds in his definition of inspiration.

Evidently, Hoffman's ideas have filtered down to contemporary evangelical theologians. While holding to a textual hermeneutic in theory, they have often strayed from it in practice. Milton Terry is an example.[55] In *Biblical Hermeneutics*, Terry asserts that in order to understand a text (in its authorial intention), an interpreter must be able to discern the author's historical context, surroundings, and even his emotions. He writes, 'We are not only to grasp the grammatical import of words and sentences, but also to feel the force and bearing of the historical circumstances which may in any way have affected the writer . . . . The individu-

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[51] Frei's discussion of Cocceius can be found in numerous pages throughout *The Eclipse*, but primarily between pp. 40-50.

[52] John Sailhamer, 'Johann August Ernesti: The Role of History in Biblical Interpretation', *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44 (2001), 200.

[53] Sailhamer, *Introduction*, pp. 61ff.

[54] J. Chr. K. von Hofmann, *Weissagung und Erfullung im alten und im neuen Testamente* (Nordlinger: C.H. Beck Buchhandlung, 1841), p. 28. The quote here is taken from Sailhamer, *Introduction*, pp. 61-2, and utilizes Sailhamer's translation.

[55] Milton Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Treatise on the Interpretation of the Old and New Testaments* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1999). I owe this example to John Sailhamer, 'Johann August Ernesti', 203-4.

ality of the writer, his local surroundings, his wants and desires, his relation to those for whom he wrote, his nationality and theirs, the character of the times when he wrote—all these matters are of the first importance to a thorough interpretation of the several books of Scripture.'[56] Likewise Meredith Kline, in his *Structure of Biblical Authority*, speaks of the inability to 'recover the meaning of the covenant signs of circumcision and baptism' until a sufficient historical study of the ancient treaty form had been undertaken.[57] For Kline, proper biblical interpretation is dependent on 'sufficient historical study'. The text, for him, is not sufficient.

Yet another example of text-event conflation is J. Barton Payne, editor of *New Perspectives on the Old Testament*.[58] In the preface, he states that the prominent developments in this collection of essays are 'the results, both literary and historical, of current Near Eastern archaeology, with stress falling upon those primary source-documents that illumine the ancient milieu as it actually was'.[59] Interestingly, the essays to which this statement refers are primarily focused on biblical texts and theology. Only one section is devoted to historiography. Clearly, Payne believes that the ancient milieu 'as it actually was' (reconstructed by extra-textual historical evidence) is important for textual interpretation. But how does this mesh with his statement in the same paragraph: 'that "the Bible alone, and the Bible in its entirety, is the Word of God written and therefore inerrant in the autographs" is as old as Christianity itself'? For Payne, both Scripture and reconstructed history are loci for meaning.

The aforementioned examples of evangelical interpreters demonstrate the need to clarify the locus of meaning. For the task of apologetics, the choice of textual interpretation over event reconstruction is a natural extension of a belief in an inspired text. Evangelicals are given no reason to believe that events are inspired and given for doctrine and reproof; Scripture affirms that Scripture is inspired for doctrine and reproof. Undoubtably, events are generative of meaning in various ways. But Scripture provides a divine interpretation of certain events, to the end that the reader may understand about various events what God intends. Access to divine revelation is through the text, and through the text alone.

Certainly, we acknowledge that God revealed himself in events in the past. Therefore, history does have a place in the Christian scholar's task.

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[56]   Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, p. 231.
[57]   Meredith Kline, *The Structure of Biblical Authority* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), p. 7.
[58]   J. Barton Payne, ed., *New Perspectives on the Old Testament* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1970).
[59]   Ibid., p. vii.

It helps us to understand *about* the text. History is capable of telling us about the author and his purpose for writing, the date of writing, and the lexical meaning of words. It is of great use as an apologetic demonstrating the truthfulness and factuality of the events depicted in Scripture.[60] But a reconstructed history of 'things that happened' should not interfere with the integrity of the biblical text. The locus of meaning for a text is found in the author's intent and choice of words.[61]

POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF CONFLATION

The Blurring of the Biblical Account. The consequence of conflating meaning and reference is, at best, the blurring of the biblical writer's focus and, at worst, the subversion of the author's intent. When an interpreter looks outside of the text in order to find its meaning he risks losing the sharpness of the textual focus. The additional referential data (historical, archaeological, etc.) is a case of *too much information* (TMI). Perhaps a good analogy is that of a painting. Suppose that a historian visits the Rijks Museum in Amsterdam for his long-awaited opportunity to view Rembrandt's *The Anatomy Lesson of Doctor Tulp*. He had written his dissertation on 17th century Dutch history, focused upon the historical context of this painting, which depicts Doctor Tulp dissecting the left hand and arm of a corpse, surrounded by seven onlookers. In particular he had written about doctors and medical procedures such as the one depicted in Rembrandt's painting. Upon standing in front of the masterpiece for the first time, he recalled that Doctor Tulp was known to have taken his pet dog with him nearly everywhere he went. Impulsively he pulls out his Sharpie and sketches into Rembrandt's canvas a fairly good depiction of what a Dutch mutt possibly would have looked like.

Immediately, he also is aware that there is something odd about this depiction. First, he recalls, The Netherlands had a fixed procedure for dissections, which made it imperative that the corpse be that of an executed criminal. Upon further research, he finds out that the only dissection in Amsterdam in 1632 was on January 31, and that the criminal, Adriaen Adriaensz, was known to have a reddish goatee. With this in mind, the historian pulls out his wife's purse, finds a tube of lipstick in a burnt sienna shade of red, and carefully paints a goatee onto the criminal's face. Immediately he also recalls that because the Dutch medical guild required dis-

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60 In 'The Locus of Revelation', Keegan provides a helpful discussion of the usefulness of history.

61 Sailhamer, 'Johann August Ernesti', p. 193. Also, see Sailhamer, *Introduction*, 197.

sections to be public, usually there would be many more onlookers than seven. In light of this, he again pulls out his Sharpie and sketches the rough outlines of twelve more onlookers. With these adjustments to the portrait, he now feels satisfied that onlookers can interpret the painting more readily.

Would the curator of the Rijks thank this man and ask him to stick around the museum in order to fix some of the other paintings? More likely he would send a note to this historian's new jail cell, explaining to him that he had ruined Rembrandt's masterpiece. If such a historian would pay attention to the canvas, he would notice that Rembrandt used lighting techniques and the expressions on the faces of the selected onlookers to draw attention to the arm and hand that were being dissected. He was depicting the wonder and awe that the 17th century medical establishment had towards the human hand. Rembrandt's selection, arrangement, and condensation of the whole event focus attention on the hand that is located at the center of the painting. All of the elements of the painting contribute to this end. The addition of a Dutch mutt, a burnt sienna goatee, and a handful of additional onlookers is a case of TMI. It did nothing to improve the painting, or render more clear the author's intent; rather such additions would blur the meaning of Rembrandt's work.

The Subversion of the Biblical Account. In order to demonstrate further the problem of confusion about meaning and referent, we would like to suggest a few examples where we believe an 'intratextual reflex' should be evident, but is not always, in evangelical preaching and commentary. In each of these examples the lack of intratextual reflex leads to misinterpretation of the biblical text. We note that these examples fall into two categories, those where the text provides 'transcultural points of reference' and those where intra-textual referents are minimized or ignored because of undue attention to extra-textual referents.

Texts That Provide Trans-cultural Points of Reference. Psalm 19:5 employs a simile for the breadth of God's general revelation, likening it to a bridegroom leaving his chamber and a strong man running a race. We wonder if the reader must know about the history of Jewish weddings and Jewish athletics at the time of the composition of the Psalm in order to understand the point of the text. Perhaps not. Instead, it appears that the author has employed an analogy to the sun (vv. 4, 6) and similes to a bridegroom and a runner that provide trans-cultural points of reference. The sun is a universal point of reference, and just as it may be seen by all and its heat reaches to all, so does the revelation of God in creation. Similarly, the author employs two common cultural practices, a wedding and a race, to

make a point. At weddings the bridegroom is featured prominently, he is not hidden from the view of those in attendance. Likewise, those who attend a track meet will surely see the 'strong man' who runs the race. The author uses the similes to strengthen the analogy: One cannot help but see the bridegroom at the wedding, and the strong runner at the race, and the sun is just like this, but even more evident to all. The speech and knowledge of God revealed in creation is thus explained to the reader of the psalm. In this case it is general cultural knowledge that is assumed by the author, not specific knowledge about Jewish weddings or races.

Revelation 3:15-16 provides another example of a trans-cultural point of reference, though often it is assumed that one must have specific information about Laodicea and the surrounding environs of the Lycus valley, including the nearby towns of Heiropolis and Colossae, in order to understand this text.[62] If many modern commentators are correct, it is impossible to understand this warning to the church at Laodicea without sufficient background information about the hot springs of Heiropolois, the cool waters of Colossae, and the lukewarm, undrinkable waters of Laodicea. We wonder how such a conclusion about extra-textual background information comports with an evangelical doctrine of inspiration. Further, could it be that the interpretation of the passage is possible apart from such background information due to the trans-cultural point of reference employed by reference to that which is hot, cold, or lukewarm? It is common in various cultures for people to enjoy a cool, refreshing drink, and it is equally common for people to enjoy a hot drink. Less common, though, is an affinity for a tepid tea or a lukewarm latte. Most people in most cultures prefer drinks that are hot or cold. (That there might be an exception to such a cultural preference may demonstrate the point.) In general, readers across cultures will have the means to understand the point of Revelation 3:15-16 apart from travel to modern Turkey or a report from someone who has journeyed there.

Texts That Provide Intra-Textual Points of Reference. Equally problematic are interpretations that minimize intra-textual reference points because of undue attention to extra-textual sources. Take, for example, Philippians 2:5-11, which speaks of Christ Jesus who 'made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant', This bondservant 'humbled himself' and 'therefore, God has highly exalted him and given him the name

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[62] So the comment on Christ spewing the lukewarm church out of his mouth, 'This rather vivid portrayal has long been interpreted against the local background'. Robert Mounce, *The Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 125.

which is above every name'. This text relates the humility of Christ who came in flesh as a man. One may find at this point commentators and preachers who embark on a historical reconstruction of the Greek system of slavery in order to explain the meaning of Paul's words. However, this is not necessary; in fact it may even obscure the author's intent.

When Paul refers to the bondservant, he assumes some general conception of servanthood on the part of the reader. It is not this general conception that is in question; rather, the question is: Does Paul have some a-textual historical referent in mind, which he doesn't explain in the text? It would seem not, because Scripture is the kind of text that is available to the ordinary literate human being. If Paul has extra-textual historical referents in mind, then the average Bible reader, untrained in history and archaeology, will be unable to discern properly the point of one of the most important Christological passages in the Bible. More to the point, in a number of such instances, Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin also may have been handicapped in that they possessed few of the historical resources we have today.

Perhaps the better way to discern Paul's intent is to look for his meaning within the context of the immediate passage as well as within the broader context of the canon as a whole. When one reads 'taking the form of a servant', one could resource various extra-textual conceptions of servanthood; in every language there is some word that speaks of a servant or a slave. A Greek would think of one thing, an American of another, and a Sri Lankan likely yet another. Maybe, though, Paul wants the reader to understand his comments with a specific canonical point of reference. If one's frame of reference is textual, it would be natural to read Paul's 'servant' in the light of a particular servant, Isaiah's Suffering Servant.

In Isaiah 52:13, we see that God's servant shall be 'high and exalted'. But who is this who is high and exalted? We find the answer in Isaiah 6:1: It is the Lord God, in all of His holiness, who is 'high and exalted'. So the identity of God and of the Suffering Servant are one. He is the one who is exalted and the one who will be exalted.[63] In 52:15, this servant will startle the nations. Kings will shut their mouths because of Him. In 49:7, again it is this Servant redeemer before whom kings and princes will bow down. In 53:12 we find that this Servant emptied Himself as He 'poured out His soul unto death'. For Isaiah, therefore, the Servant is the one who

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[63] Lending further support to this connection is John 12:38-41. In this passage, John quotes Isaiah 6 and then says of Jesus, 'These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him'.

is exalted and shall be exalted, and who poured out his soul to death, and before whom kings and princes will bow.[64]

Here, then, is the interpretive context for Paul's Christological hymn. Paul is speaking of the Servant who humbles Himself, pours Himself out, is high and exalted, and will be high and exalted. This clearly is a different type of servanthood than that of the archetypal Greek bondservant whose servanthood was not mixed even with a small measure of exaltedness. The irony, however, is that instead of using a textual framework for interpreting this passage, we too often occupy ourselves with reconstructed histories of Greek slavery and arguments about kenotic Christology.

Another common example of this problem is found in preaching and commentary on Ephesians 6:10ff., specifically with reference to the armor of God. Such is the practice of extra-textual reference to the armor of Roman soldiers that evangelicals now sell 'armor' for use by our children so they can understand this passage better. An examination of Paul's text, however, indicates that he is drawing directly from various chapters of Isaiah (e.g., 11, 52, 59) to remind the believers to 'put on the new self, created after the likeness of God' (Eph. 4:24). Paul is not instructing the believers at Ephesus to metaphorically put on the armor of the Roman soldier, he is instructing them to put on Christ, who is the righteous warrior God who brings the gospel of peace.[65]

CONCLUSION

Herman Gunkel was incisive when he stated, in 1927, that 'The recently experienced phenomenon of Biblical Theology's having been replaced by the history of Israelite religion is to be explained from the fact that the spirit of historical investigation has now taken the place of a traditional doctrine of inspiration.'[66] This essay is a plea for a reversal of that continu-

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[64] We note that Jeremias makes the connection of Philippians 2:5-11 with Isaiah 53. W. Zimmerli and J. Jeremias, *The Servant of God* (rev. ed.; Studies in Biblical Theology, 20; London: SCM Press, 1952), pp. 97-9.

[65] In our view, a properly intra-textual impulse is demonstrated in Peter O'Brien's commentary on this passage. Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians* (The Pillar New Testament Commentary Series; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), pp. 456ff. O'Brien shows the superiority of interpreting the text in light of Isaiah rather than in light of the Roman soldier reference. For further reading, also see Tom Yoder Neufeld, *Put on the Armour of God: The Divine Warrior from Isaiah to Ephesians* (JSNTSS, 140; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997).

[66] Hermann Gunkel, 'Biblishche Theologie und biblische Religiongeschicte: I. des AT', in *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 2d. ed., 1090-91. Quoted

ing trend, with Frei's work offered as a catalyst. His distinction between meaning and reference is helpful, as is his corollary call to reject historical reconstructions of events as sources for interpretation. The locus of meaning is in the text of Scripture, rather than in the events depicted by the text.

By reversing this trend, our practice of biblical interpretation will align with our doctrinal convictions regarding inspiration. 2 Peter 1:19-21 is salient in this respect: 'And we have *something more sure, the prophetic word*, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.'[67] In this passage, Peter speaks with confidence about Scripture, describing it as a word 'more sure' than any private interpretation. Dockery and Nelson write, 'In this context Peter makes a striking statement since he compares his own experience at the transfiguration of Jesus with the Scriptures. Peter saw with his own eyes the revelation of God in Christ, yet he knows that other believers will not have such an immediate experience with Christ, so he points them to the Scriptures, which are God's interpretation (not a private interpretation of man as in vv. 20-21) of the matters recorded. Why are these words 'more sure"? This is because, while they are in fact words 'spoken' by men, they are truly words 'from God'.[68] The biblical portrayal of the transformation is a more sure word than Peter's own experience of it. Therefore, although the thesis of this article has been argued on the basis of its *inference* from the doctrine of inspiration, it appears that 2 Peter 1:19-21 is a biblical *injunction* along the same lines.

Furthermore a textual frame of reference for interpretation is consistent with the best of the Great Tradition. Orthodox historian John Behr, in the first volume of his three volume commentary on the formation of Christian theology, argues that the early church developed her theology through an interpretive relationship to the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets. 'If God acts through His Word', Behr writes, 'then that Word needs to be heard, to be read, to be understood—the relationship with God

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in Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology: A Proposal* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002), p. 7.
[67]   ESV, emphasis ours.
[68]   Dockery and Nelson, pp. 133-4.

is, in a broad sense, literary'.[69] Behr relies in part upon Frances Young's work on the patristic treatment of text and event, and summarizes her thoughts:

> She further points out...that it would be anachronistic to suppose that in antiquity God's revelation was thought of as located in historical events behind the text, events to which, it is claimed, we have access by reconstructing them from the text, treating the text as mere historical documents which provide raw historical data, subject to our own analysis, rather than in the interpreted events as presented in Scripture, where the interpretation is already given through the medium of Scripture.[70]

The thesis of this article, we hope, is neither novel nor niche. It is not a literary theory, or a capitulation to 'postmodern historicism'. Rather, it is an attempt toward *ressourcement*, an encouragement for evangelicals to practice more faithfully what they already know, to recover what was lost in a post-Enlightenment historical-critical context. And for this recovery, Frei's work has proven invaluable. It is not that evangelicals needed Frei's work *per se* to maintain a hermeneutic consistent with the doctrine of inspiration, but that it has been the case that, at least for a few evangelicals he has been the gadfly necessary to help recognize what has been the textual frame of reference for biblical interpretation, invoked by Scripture itself and supported by the Great Tradition.

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[69] John Behr, *The Way to Nicea* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary, 2001), p. 15.

[70] Behr is summarizing Frances Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 57.

REVIEWS

Calvin. By Bruce Gordon. London: Yale University Press, 2009. ISBN 976-6-30-12076-9. xvi + 398 pp. £25.00.

Among the deluge of Calviniana that appeared for his 500th anniversary year there are a number of biographical studies, of which this one by Bruce Gordon (late of St Andrews and now of Yale) is the most thorough and scholarly. Gordon portrays Calvin in short thematic scenes. This style makes the book easy to pick up and put down, and it gives Gordon freedom to roam from topic to topic as he unfolds Calvin's life.

The present day biographer of Calvin is faced with a dilemma. There is a good deal of drama to Calvin's life. His life even as a theologian, controversialist, and Bible commentator was lived at such a breakneck speed that by his early fifties he was worn out. (When he wrote about divine providence, he advised the Christian to live prudently, to take note of the divinely-appointed connectedness of means and ends. But he resolutely failed to heed that advice himself, at least as regards his own health.) But what explains the drama—his flight from France, and then from Geneva, the frequent political turmoil in that city, the quarrels, the swings of temper, his deliberate offensiveness to his opponents?

What made Calvin tick were ideas, ideas about divine grace and sin, about who has the right to excommunicate a person from church, or about what exactly goes on in the Lord's Supper. And for Calvin, ideas had consequences, deeply personal consequences. Thus the biographer's dilemma: to explain the connection between Calvin's ideas and his life.

Gordon does well in producing a narrative of Calvin's life that is intelligible in terms of the impact of his ideas upon his own unique personality. That is, he nearly always provides the reader with sufficient theological and religious background to make what Calvin did and suffered understandable. He sets Calvin's activities in the context of his own conversion, even though the circumstances of that momentous change still remain shadowy, and this fact certainly does not help the biographer. To present such a man in such a way is a considerable and praiseworthy achievement. This is not a theological biography, but it is pretty clearly the biography of a theologian. So Gordon does not simply chronicle events, he tells us the significance of Calvin's commentary on Romans, and goes into Calvin's relations with the various Swiss city churches with great thoroughness. He analyzes the reasons for the unevenness of Calvin's international impact, and into the printing and publishing of those works of Calvin's which were rapidly translated and exported, and on which his reputation came to rest.

A couple of things puzzled me. One is Gordon's claim, which he makes twice, that Calvin's early book, *Psychopannychia*, written in 1534 but finally published in an altered form in 1542, was aimed at Michael Serve-tus (pp. 43; 216). *Psychopannychia* contests the Anabaptist doctrines of soul sleep and 'mortalism'. The reason for Calvin giving these doctrines priority is somewhat mysterious, but it is hard to believe he already had Servetus in his sights. Servetus did make an appointment to meet up with Calvin in Paris in 1534, an appointment which Calvin kept but Servetus did not, to Calvin's annoyance. The author provides no evidence for his claim that it was 'partly directed to Servetus and his circle in Paris', or even for the view that Servetus had such a circle. Bernard Cottret, whose biography of Calvin has been the standard, does not offer a hint of such a connection.

One place where the author is weak is Calvin's controversies with the Lutheran theologian Westphal over the Supper. Gordon recounts every movement of the debate in considerable detail. But he never tells us what the theological issues were between Calvin and Westphal. This omission makes it hard for readers to judge his opinion that Calvin's debate with Westphal was a personal defeat for him.

Nevertheless, this is an excellent general biography of the Reformer, sympathetic, engaging, and informative.

Paul Helm, Regent College, Vancouver, BC Canada

John Calvin: A Pilgrim's Life. By Herman J. Selderhuis. Downers Grove: IVP, 2009. ISBN 978-0-8308-2921-7. 304 pp. £9.99.

I approached Herman Selderhuis's biography of John Calvin with some scepticism, wondering whether the quincentenary of Calvin's birth really warranted one more account of a life that has been so repeatedly docu-mented, and whether there was really anything new to say. My doubts, however, were thoroughly assuaged upon reading it. The genius of this book lies not, admittedly, in its revelation of novel biographical facts about Calvin—though all the relevant details are there—but in the *humanity* it manages to impart to a subject who, despite frequent scrutiny, has some-how remained so ethereal for several centuries.

Selderhuis achieves his stated goal of discovering 'what [Calvin] was like as a person' (p. 8) through careful and extensive attention to Calvin's correspondence. The character consequently emerging is far removed from the 'emotionless stoic' (p. 187) one might anticipate meeting on the basis of 'surviving portraits'—not to mention deliberate caricatures—that seem to depict 'a rather unsociable person who can barely find anything to enjoy in life' (p. 28). This Calvin is rather a man of frequent tears and

(even) occasional laughter. So in a letter to the Lord of Richebourg, Calvin speaks of crying for several days—'so shocked and so despondent' was he—upon hearing of the death of Richebourg's son as well as the boy's teacher, Calvin's close friend Claude Féray (p. 253). And in a letter to his friends the de Fallais family on the occasion of their child's birth, Calvin expresses his desire to spend time with the couple and to laugh with them, and so to teach their new child the art of laughter, nevertheless noting that 'we can only really laugh once we have left this life' (p. 212).

While emphasizing these more intimate aspects of Calvin's person within the framework of a broadly chronological narrative, Selderhuis still manages to highlight the main features of Calvin's thought. But the Reformer's core theological convictions are largely developed, again, from his correspondence, a tactic which renders those doctrines for which Calvin is most famous (or perhaps infamous) somewhat more personal. So the doctrine of God's providence, for example, becomes a tool in Calvin's hand for comforting the bereaved father noted above: 'God [...] has reclaimed your son' (p. 254). It is a tool Calvin wields with sensitivity to the pain of loss; recollection of God's sovereignty is not meant to prevent the full range of human emotions provoked by hardship: 'I am not asking you to suffer no more pain. For this is not the view of life that we are taught in the school of Christ, that we lay aside the God-given human emotions and that we turn from people into stones' (p. 254).

My single complaint about this book relates to the system of notes (or lack thereof). A brief section at the close of the work provides bibliographical data for *some* of Calvin's words and ideas encountered in the main body. Unfortunately this leaves many ideas attributed to Calvin entirely unreferenced; moreover, the reader lacks any indication of useful secondary literature should he/she want to pursue a specific topic related to Calvin. Selderhuis acknowledges the scarcity of 'references to secondary literature', suggesting that this characteristic of the work 'will get us closer to Calvin himself' (p. 8). In my opinion, thorough citation would have detracted nothing from the book or presented any real obstacle to its focus on 'Calvin himself'; it would merely have made the book more useful.

Nevertheless, the work deserves hearty commendation. Friends and foes of Calvin alike will benefit from it; both will discover something more human in and about Calvin, a reality which should produce greater empathy for the Reformer, no matter one's level of agreement with his theology and/or relation to those ecclesiastical traditions which trace their lineage to him.

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Calvin: A Brief Guide to His Life and Thought. By Willem van 't Spijker. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press (UK: Alban Books), 2009. ISBN 0-664-23225-6. x + 197 pp. £16.99.

At first glance, van 't Spijker's *Calvin* seems a great choice for those interested in gaining access to Calvin's biography, theology, and contemporary influence in one volume (and a slim one at that). Upon further investigation, this work confirms this first impression to some extent—with two important caveats that merit some attention.

For a general audience and ministerial students, *Calvin* covers much historical and theological ground while being both brief and solid. Van 't Spijker's discussion is necessarily selective, but what he does treat, he handles masterfully. For scholars, the many Dutch, German, and French works van 't Spijker appeals to will be a welcome entry into the literature of Continental Calvin studies. The index is unusually thorough and helpful.

Now the caveats: first, this work feels a bit like the translation from an unpublished manuscript that it is. Though spanning from the history of sixteenth–century France (ch. 1) to Calvin's international influence (ch. 10), there is no overall introduction or conclusion to the work, nor is there any transitional material between the historical and theological sections of the book. Despite this, the work flows reasonably well, aided by van 't Spijker's clear and confident prose.

Second, and more importantly, the body of the text was completed a decade ago, though the bibliographies would suggest otherwise. A German translation of van 't Spijker's Dutch manuscript was published in 2001. The most recent date in the footnotes is 1999 (though only 3 works from that year are noted). The chapter bibliographies, however, are peppered with later works. Some of the post–manuscript works cited are simply reprints or re–editions. Two are translations. Three works are wholly new (that is, were first published after the present work was written).

Likewise, several works in the Select General Bibliography are more recent than 1999, even more recent than the most recent works in the chapter bibliographies. Again, while many are merely reprints or 2nd eds., some, like Cottret's biography (2000) or Partee's *Theology of Calvin* (2008), are unknown to van 't Spijker's text or indeed the chapter bibliographies. While the much revised and expanded 2nd ed. of de Greef, *The Writings of John Calvin* (2008), which Bierma also translated, isn't noted at the end of ch. 8, it is in the General Bibliography. Both works from 2008 along with one by Randall Zachman, it should be noted, are published by Westminster John Knox.

What is the relationship between the bibliographies and the body of the chapters? Bibliographical 'padding' is not always confined to adding later works; there is a huge discrepancy, for instance, between the relatively few references *within* ch. 10 and the relatively large bibliography for this chapter. Readers should be aware that the scholarship in this work published in 2009—fine though it is in many ways—is more than a decade old. A lot has transpired in Calvin/ism studies since 1999, as the bibliographical padding in this volume evinces.

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John Calvin as Teacher, Pastor, and Theologian: The Shape of His Writings and Thought. By Randall C. Zachman. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006. ISBN 978-0-8010-3129-8. 277 pp. £16.99

This book consists of a collection of essays by one of the foremost John Calvin scholars writing today. Zachman is Professor of Reformation Studies at the University of Notre Dame, and in this volume he brings his knowledge and insight to bear on a range of topics in Calvin studies. The result is a text which is a worthy addition to the shelves of Calvin scholars and enthusiasts.

Zachman has two principal aims to achieve in this collection, and his work is correspondingly divided into two parts. The first aim is to explore Calvin's work as a teacher and as a pastor: his striving to ensure that every member of the church was able to read and understand Scripture, and his production of godly resources—the *Institutes*, commentaries, catechisms, and sermons—to that end. The chapters in this section of the book thus explore aspects of the content and purpose of Calvin's writings, treating among other themes his understanding of the teaching office, his underlying conception of the *Institutes*, his exegetical method, his early children's catechisms, and his Ephesians sermons. The second aim of the book is to consider Calvin's concept of the 'living images of God' – namely creation and Jesus Christ – in which the invisible God becomes visible to us. These chapters focus on the way in which Calvin construes 'image' and 'Word' in his theology, as well as on the relationship between them, and how they combine to draw the faithful Christian towards God and towards renewal of her thoughts and deeds.

Throughout the volume, Zachman displays a compelling and deeply impressive knowledge of the range of Calvin's writings across different genres. There are extensive quotations from Calvin on every page, allowing Zachman in each chapter to construct his argument carefully on the basis of solid evidence from the Reformer's pen rather than by way of selective citation or sweeping assertion. En route, Zachman demolishes

many of the crude received stereotypes of Calvin. He posits the centrality of imagery in Calvin's theological understanding – albeit in a way distinct from Lutheranism and Catholicism – and also emphasizes the affective dimension of Christian piety and its power for contemplation and transformation. The carefully constructed picture of Calvin's view which results gives a real insight into the definitive pedagogical and pastoral thrust of Calvin's enterprise as a theologian.

Though the book focuses unwaveringly on Calvin, on occasion Zachman refers to the work of other magisterial Reformers, such as Zwingli and Luther, and even to the work of later theologians such as Schleiermacher and Barth. The exception to this narrow focus is an insightful chapter on the relationship between Calvin and Melanchthon. In a similar vein, Zachman is economic with his references to other Calvin commentators, although at certain key points he nevertheless takes care to situate his own work relative to contemporary Calvin studies. The result of this limited dialogical engagement is that while the book boasts an excellent index, there is no bibliography as such, but only a list of primary texts (Calvin, Luther, Melanchthon) consulted. While some may construe this as a weakness, such a methodology at the very least facilitates Zachman's desire to allow Calvin to speak for himself and thus to be represented fairly and accurately.

As a collection of previously published papers, the book inevitably suffers from a certain degree of repetition, while the way in which the theological evidence is diligently assembled and presented is more suggestive of a scholarly than a popular text. Nevertheless, the volume confirms Zachman's reputation as being one of the best Calvin interpreters in current scholarship, and will offer an informative read to anyone with some previous interest in or exposure to Calvin's work. Above all, it offers an illuminating overview of Calvin as pastor and teacher as well as theologian, and of his belief in the centrality and the significance of Christian education at all levels for a healthy Christian church.

Paul T. Nimmo, University of Edinburgh

A Theological Guide to Calvin's Institutes: Essays and Analysis. Edited by David W. Hall and Peter A. Lillback. Phillipsburg: P&R, 2008. ISBN 978-1-59638-091-2. xvii + 506 pp. $35.99.

Preparation for the 500th anniversary of John Calvin's birth saw the publication of this collection of commentaries on Calvin's *magnum opus*. It is comprised of nineteen chapters written by various scholars from reformed theological seminaries in the United States. Most are written by systematic theologians, though there are contributions from professors

of apologetics, church history and historical theology. They are best read alongside Calvin's *Institutes*, for each chapter offers insight to a particular topic and section. A bibliography gives the novice a digestible introduction to primary and secondary works. There are several reasons why this work will prove useful for those desiring an understanding of Calvin's thought.

First, it raises many of the doctrines that Calvin viewed as most significant. There are discussions on his theology of the Trinity (Douglas Kelly), creation (Joseph Pipa Jr.), sin (Michael Horton), justification (Richard Gaffin), and sanctification/regeneration (William Edgar).

Second, each chapter places Calvin's *Institutes* (and his theology as a whole) in its historical context. An effort is made to position Calvin's thought within the history of ideas. This shows that many of Calvin's most significant ideas are not original to him, but rather developed by him.

Third, it traces the historical development of Calvin's theology. There are references throughout to various scholarly debates ranging from age-old arguments on the extent of the atonement to the most recent arguments concerning non-forensic imputation.

It should be emphasized that this work is a *guide* to Calvin's thought. It does not seek to correct deficiencies that there might be in his theology. And although substantial, not every subject is addressed at length. Derek Thomas points out that the doctrine of adoption is of primary significance for Calvin, but no extended treatment of it is offered in the volume.

A Theological Guide is a scholarly, yet accessible resource for one of the most significant theological works in church history.

John C. A. Ferguson, University of Aberdeen

The Writings of John Calvin, Expanded Edition: An Introductory Guide. By Wulfert de Greef; translated by Lyle D. Bierma. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press (UK: Alban Books), 2008. ISBN 978-0-664-23230-6. xxvii + 253 pp. £26.99.

This is an update of an earlier edition published by Apollos in 1993. It is a useful, though brief introduction to Calvin's various writings and the circumstances of their production. It provides fascinating details that illuminate Calvin's churchmanship, from the highly intellectual theological disputes of his day to the practical matters of every day church life.

'Expanded' is a slightly misleading subtitle. The only substantial difference between this new edition and the 1993 Apollos edition is that the footnotes and 'Bibliography of Secondary Literature' have been updated/revised to include recent Calvin scholarship. The main body of the text is unchanged. 'Updated' would have been more accurate.

Those particularly interested in primary sources may find the 1993 Apollos edition more useful which has the 'Chronological Index of Calvin's Writings' indexed to de Greef's text for ease of reference. This useful feature is unfortunately omitted from this edition, which otherwise remains a great scholarly tool.

John C. A. Ferguson, University of Aberdeen

Engaging with Calvin: Aspects of the Reformer's Legacy for Today. Edited by Mark D. Thompson. Nottingham: IVP, 2009. ISBN 978-1-84474-398-8. 319 pp. £19.99.

'All we know about John Calvin was that he was an eighteenth-century Scotsman, a prude and obscurantist with a buckle on his hat, possibly a burner of witches, certainly the very spirit of capitalism' (Marilynne Robinson, *The Death of Adam*, p. 345). Robinson's satire is in tune with Mark Thompson's introduction to this collection of essays linked with the 2009 More College School of Theology. Thompson states that 'Calvin has always been a victim of caricature and misunderstanding', and so this book aims to encourage readers 'to move beyond the caricatures and read Calvin for themselves with a more sympathetic disposition' (p. 12).

How does the volume fare according to its stated aims? There is actually little engagement with any dominant caricatures of the second generation Reformer. Even the oft-criticized monergism of Calvin's soteriology (mentioned in the Introduction) receives sparse attention throughout. The book is rather a collection of different scholars writing on their various interests in Calvin. They write with, and with a view to forming in others, a hermeneutic of trust towards their subject and it is in this way that the book is an overall success. Nearly every contribution has one eye on Calvin and another on contemporary implications, and where particular essays shine there are significant benefits for the reader.

Three chapters stood out for this reviewer. Robert Doyle's discussion of Calvin's trinitarian theology, demanding at points, is careful and detailed. Attention is given to Calvin's account of the immanent relations of the divine persons; Calvin stresses 'thinking recursively from the unity to the Persons, and Person to Person, and Persons to unity' (p. 105). Doyle teases these things out of Calvin's expressions and helps the reader think more deeply by seeking to build from Calvin's content to broader strategies in trinitarian theology. Mark Thompson on Calvin's christology similarly manages to combine careful commentary with a high level of analysis, with the result that Calvin's understanding of Christ as Mediator receives illuminating exposition in its historical setting, its biblical contours and its theological commitments.

The most interesting essay, however, comes from Peter Jensen. Formerly Principal of Moore College, he reflects on the legacy of D. Broughton Knox's attempt to place engagement with Calvin right at the heart of the Moore curriculum. It is a fascinating chapter with rich insights for anyone involved in theological education. Jensen is astute on Calvin's legacy for today and it is arguably this chapter which best succeeds in countering Calvin's detractors. Of most use to the contemporary church is not Calvin himself, so much as the God whom Calvin knew and, in particular, the way in which Calvin knew him and was known by him. Jensen concludes:

This theology [the majesty of God and the depravity of man] is the best explanation of the gospel of Jesus Christ and of the world in which we live. It confronts each of the cultural forces which we see around us: the worship of science, the false anthropology, atheism as a protest movement, the idolatry of superstition. Its summons to us to know God in the way in which God has made himself known is exactly what is needed, if we are to have within a seminary not merely an educational institution but an authentic proving ground for shaping those who would preach the gospel and pastor churches (p. 272).

That one particular college has maintained its theological education along such lines is sufficient evidence of Calvin's staying power. This volume should prove a useful resource for others seeking to understand and disseminate the same theological vision.

David Gibson, High Church, Hilton, Aberdeen

Calvin at the Centre. By Paul Helm. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. ISBN 978-0-1995-3218-6. 368 pp. £65.00

As a follow-up to his earlier book, *Calvin's Ideas* (2004), this new work further showcases Paul Helm's ability to see interconnections between ideas. It is an attempt to make links, sometimes unsettling, between those who came before Calvin and those who came after, finding 'sources but also heirs.' Helm is able to trace some of the fundamental 'instabilities' in Calvin and show how the following generations inherit and perpetuate them. It is a book full of strange bedfellows, 'what ifs', and classic Helm wit.

In 'The Knowledge of God and Ourselves' (ch. 1), Helm stands Calvin right alongside Descartes due to their shared Augustinian heritage that stresses the possibility of an immediate knowledge of God. (Does one get the immediate sense that Helm enjoys being provocative?!) This leads to a comparison and contrast of Augustinian 'reflexivity' in both Calvin and Descartes, for whom it is more of a procedure than Calvin's intuitive way

of knowing. Helm takes this further in chapter 2, 'Descartes and Reformed Orthodoxy', wondering why Cartesianism never took hold after Calvin to the extent that Aristotelianism did and stressing that Calvin is 'sufficiently elastic' to accommodate it (as evidenced in Leiden in the 17th C.). His third and final epistemological chapter brings Thomas into this question of 'how is it that we know' and discovers that Calvin and Thomas agree on internal and external testimonies. Calvin's greater reliance, however, upon the personal presence of the Spirit as the transcendent 'witness' gives rise to, what Helm calls, an 'instability' which is later carried over into the 17th C. debates of Bayle, Tuckney, and Whichcote.

The next seven chapters range over topics such as God's 'visibility,' in which Helm defends Augustine – and Calvin, by consequence – from Gunton's charge of not having a God 'Christian enough'. (In a move with perhaps more shock value than anything else, Helm wonders whether it is God's divinity that is most 'visible' while that which is most hidden could be his three-personedness!) Thomas makes another appearance in a chapter on providence and predestination, while Anselm is considered as a source for atonement theology, with his own 'heirs' in Reformed Orthodoxy who prefer a more scholastic method to Calvin's penchant for starting with the 'concrete blessings of being in Christ.' Augustine re-enters the scene in 'Calvin the Compatibilist', where Helm re-examines Calvin's determinism for Stoic roots (and its reception in Gill and Edwards) and again in 'Duplex Gratia' (along with other of Calvin's 'heirs,' Turretin and John Hare). In this latter chapter, Helm makes the fascinating point that Turretin's 'locus' methodology cannot support Calvin's organic relation between justification and sanctification (as Calvin's more 'biblical' metholodology, centring on 'union with Christ' could), while Calvin's doctrine of *sola fida* could have been strengthened by Turretin's 'locus' methodology. The work closes with a controversial look at pure nature and common grace, arguing (against Bavinck) that the innovation in the 16th C. is not the Reformed doctrine of 'common grace' but Cajetan's unorthodox doctrine of 'pure nature.'

For this reader, the question that persists even from Helm's previous volume is: Can we, should we talk about Calvin's *ideas*? As Helm's first chapter reveals, treating 'ideas' as things in and of themselves can distort the idea, particularly if it comes from a person as committed to being a pastor as was Calvin. For example, Helm calls both Calvin and Descartes 'reflexive,' but history has shown that this Cartesian reflexivity, turned into method, bears little resemblance to anything Calvin espoused. Nevertheless, *Calvin at the Centre* displays Helm's ability to discover Calvin's 'ideas' even when they are expressed in language very different from Calvin's own. While this interpretive interest has its weaknesses, the

strengths of doing so come to the fore in this book – the ability to analyze
and scrutinize ideas (not necessarily set in their context) allows for fun,
surprising discoveries – about Calvin, his sources, and his heirs.

Julie Canlis, Methlick

*Calvin and Commerce: The Transforming Power of Calvinism in Market
Economies.* By David W. Hall and Matthew D. Burton. Philipsburg:
P&R, 2009. ISBN 978-1-5963-8095-0. 256 pp. $17.99.

David Hall has written several books on Calvin over the past couple years
as part of his Calvin 500 series, and to tackle the issue of Calvin and
economics, he partnered with professional economist Matthew Burton.
Hall and Burton seek to analyze how the teachings of Calvin relate to the
assumptions governing modern capitalist economies, and how we should
act today in light of these teachings. In six chapters, they examine the
themes of Creation, Fall, Redemption, Philanthropy, Sanctification and
Service, and Eschatology, first expounding the theological and ethical
loci in Calvin's writings and then applying them to current debates about
economic policy. Such a collaborative undertaking is very promising, as
theology and economics are in great need of creative dialogue. But it does
risk foundering on the rocks that have shipwrecked so many similar ven-
tures, as rival sets of assumptions are tossed together in an uneasy hodge-
podge. This book, unfortunately, does not set a clear enough course for
itself to successfully navigate these treacherous waters.

At the outset, we are left unsure about the main point. Is it a tribute to
Calvin, as the thrust of the Calvin 500 Series would suggest? A tribute to
capitalism, as the summary would suggest? Or is it both? The title sug-
gests the book intends to be a contribution to the never-ending (but often
still fruitful) discussion of Weber's *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capi-
talism*. Yet neither of the authors are historians, and neither show much
interest in the period 1600-1900, the crucial one for testing any claims
about the historical relationship between Calvinism and capitalism, nor
do they seriously engage with Weber or his interlocutors. More important
to them than the concrete social history is the relationship between ideas,
Calvin's theology and capitalism in the abstract.

A critical step in establishing this relationship is the provision of clear
definitions of these two complex and hotly-debated subjects. But such are
absent. Moreover, most of the key connections are drawn without clear
support from Calvin's writings, which when quoted seem to be far less
sanguine about the beneficial possibilities of wealth and far more sober
about its dangers than do these authors. It is admittedly a difficult task to
build a conceptual bridge from large theological dogmas like creation to

specific economic policies from a later period. But the solution is not to skip the bridge entirely and ask the readers to join in a leap of faith across the murky chasm, as Hall and Burton seem to repeatedly do.

The ethical dimension of the task—endorsing certain economic attitudes—demands even more care and responsibility. Again, definitional clarity is crucial. But here also we lack sensitivity to the differences between, for example, today's consumer capitalism and the thrifty capitalism that Weber describes and Smith advocates. More importantly, ethical recommendations demand a clear standard: on what basis are either capitalism or Calvinism to be judged good? Hall and Burton seem to assume the merits of both, and thus seek only to bring both into conjunction that each may gain further lustre by sharing in the radiance of the other. However, such an uncritical approach will only satisfy readers who share these assumptions.

Hall and Burton may respond that both Calvinism and capitalism are measured against the standard of Scripture, which they believe clearly endorses both. But their appeals to Scripture are selective. Aside from certain passages in Proverbs, many passages that speak quite directly of economic matters (e.g., Leviticus 25, Deuteronomy 15, many passages of the Major and Minor Prophets, and James 5) are overlooked in favour of texts that seem to bear a more tenuous relationship to economic questions. They interact with only a few of Jesus' many engagements with the problems of wealth and poverty and instead are content with the simple assertions that 'contrary to the predominant modern liberal perception of Jesus—which views him as a glorified social worker or as a political activist and advocate for the oppressed, who constantly prattled about the poor and economic empowerment—relatively few teachings of Jesus normatively address the treatment of the economically poor' (pp. 181-2) and that 'he seemed to be convinced that poverty would continue as part of the human condition, and he did not institute definite vehicles to alleviate it' (p. 141). Such a judgement about the Gospels will likely fail to satisfy those who take Jesus' words with more political seriousness.

Perhaps the greatest obstacle this book sets for itself is its misidentification of its opponent. From the beginning, the authors are concerned to defend wealth and business against those who believe that wealth is morally evil, and in response they seek to justify the goodness of wealth in the abstract as something created by God. Few moderns, however, believe that wealth in the abstract is evil. What they oppose is unjust distributions or uses of wealth, with large accumulations of purely private wealth being atop the list. In response, it does little good to claim that 'wealth is created by God', because while the general bounty of creation and its productive capacity are created by God, the distribution of wealth and its

REVIEWS

specification into private property is a human, not a divine action, and one that like any other human action is subject to evaluation according to norms of justice. The authors' attempt to point to providence as that which distributes wealth, and thus legitimates wealth inequalities, is no more to the point than an attempt to defend all wars as providential.

Hall and Burton have opened up many important points of conversation in this crucial field, and, hopefully, others will take them up and carry this conversation forward in coming years.

W. Brad Littlejohn, University of Edinburgh

Political Grace: The Revolutionary Theology of John Calvin. By Roland Boer. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press (UK: Alban Books), 2009. ISBN 978-0-6642-3393-8. 176 pp. £16.99.

Calvin in the Public Square: Liberal Democracies, Rights, and Civil Liberties. By David W. Hall. Philipsburg: P&R, 2009. ISBN 978-1-5963-8099-8. 400 pp. $19.99.

Despite the common caricature of John Calvin as the stern Genevan authoritarian, many scholars have argued that his theology was in fact a dynamic, even revolutionary, cultural and political force. The theology of Calvin and his successors, it is argued, lies behind the early modern interest in constitutionalism, social contract theory, democracy, and even—according to some—political pluralism. However, while the modernized or radicalized Calvin has become popular in diverse ideological camps, these interpretations have been forced to wrestle with what we might call 'the historical Calvin'—that is, the John Calvin who was rather reluctant to embrace more extreme political measures in his own day.

Roland Boer pushes Calvin toward the far left side of the political spectrum, arguing that the reformer's conservative instincts were too little and too late to divert the revolutionary trajectory of his own ideas. Due to its brevity, Boer's study is appropriately limited in focus, emphasizing the internal dynamics of Calvin's writings on political authority rather than various external, social, and intellectual influences (a curious move for a Marxist). Boer suggests that many ideas we now associate with conservative—perhaps authoritarian—Christianity were in Calvin's day far more politically volatile. A high view of the singular authority of the Bible worked to undermine the ecclesial hierarchy of late medievalism. An emphasis on human fallenness accompanied an equally strong view of the transformative power of grace—a grace which animated a radical view of Christian freedom, thereby threatening the status quo of corrupt political structures.

229

For all this, Boer notes that whenever Calvin advances to the precipice of radicalism, the reformer instinctually retreats back to safer ground, apparently discarding his revolutionary theology in favor of a more pragmatic and conservative social system. Boer himself clearly disapproves of this inconsistency, preferring the moments when the *Institutes* sound more like *Das Kapital*. In truth, Boer manages to raise more than a few 'red' flags—so to speak—in his reading of Calvin, and there is much in *Political Grace* that rings true. However one interprets the social history of Calvinism, Boer succinctly demonstrates that the theology of Calvin could at least permit a radical re-imagining of the post-medieval world. His work is quite readable, and, for better or worse, his narrative is not bogged down by an abundance of external scholarly references.

Unfortunately, while Calvin's 'revolutionary' texts are certainly worthy of attention, Boer's central argument concerning the tension in Calvin's theology is less than convincing. While Boer stresses Calvin's transformational rhetoric, he generally ignores or dismisses Calvin's Augustinian eschatology. Yet it is precisely this which helps frame the reformer's discussion of the relationship between the civil and spiritual kingdoms—the 'twofold government' of humanity. By maintaining the centrality of the future eschatological state, Calvin divested the civil kingdom of any ultimate authority, even in its own sphere – hence, the appearance of radicalism. At the same time, while political authority belongs properly to the temporal *saeculum*, it still serves as a proleptic context for the Christian's heavenly pilgrimage. For Calvin, there is an appropriate—even necessary—tension between eschatological expectations and immanent practice. While Boer does well to emphasize the radical implications of the *Institutes* and other texts, his professed discomfort with eschatological tension leaves him ill-equipped to translate the overarching narrative of Calvin's political thought. In short, there is too much impatience in Boer's Calvin.

On the other side of the ideological spectrum stands David Hall, a Presbyterian pastor who has authored multiple books on Calvin covering an impressive range of topics. In his volume, Hall argues that Calvin's political thought and that of his heirs led directly to the development of modern democracy and to the establishment of human rights and freedom of conscience. As a work of intellectual history, the book provides a clear narrative of the parallel development of Calvinist and Western liberal thought. Hall's extensive outlines of Reformation and Puritan political tracts are an excellent introduction to the material.

Although the book presents a good summary of the Calvinist political tradition, many of its broader historical arguments and reconstructions are rather problematic. Hall ably demonstrates the relationship between

Calvinist thought and Western politics, but he does so to the margin-
alization of other (perhaps more meaningful) factors. For example, his
treatment of pre-revolutionary American politics gives the reader a rather
one-sided interpretation of Calvinist contributions that minimizes the
growing influence of Enlightenment theories. Hall wishes to credit the
Calvinist tradition for America's founding, which perhaps prompts his
curious argument that the popularity of Calvinist doctrine did not decline
significantly until after 1776. This interpretation is highly problematic
(and might be explained by Hall's surprising reliance on non-standard
sources like Francis Schaeffer and Rousas Rushdoony).

It would be unfair to discredit Hall's project for choosing to empha-
size the Calvinist influence over others, e.g. voluntarism, social contract
theory, and English common law. However, Hall's work would have ben-
efited from more critical reflection on the complicated relationship of the
various strains of Reformed orthodoxy to emerging liberal theory. Hall's
narrative presents unambiguous heroes (the Calvinists) and villains
(rationalists, Unitarians, and transcendentalists), yet does not examine
the internal inconsistencies and social contexts that would undermine
such categorical distinctions. For instance, Hall suggests that the Calvin-
ist doctrine of total depravity precludes political utopianism. However,
many Calvinist societies, like late Puritan New England, were strongly
influenced by a strain of civic perfectionism—a trait later inherited by the
more revolutionary Emersonians.

The relationship between Reformed social thought and modern polit-
ical theory has received renewed attention lately. At the very least, the
interest in Calvin displayed by such dissimilar scholars as Boer and Hall
shows that the Calvinist tradition continues to haunt the modern politi-
cal imagination. In fact, such divergence of interpretation reminds us that
the line of descent from the Genevan reformer to the modern West is
more complicated than it may appear at first glance and, perhaps, is a cau-
tionary tale against the endeavor to justify one's preferred contemporary
political ideology by appeal to Calvinism.

<div style="text-align: right">David P. Henreckson, University of Notre Dame</div>

Theosis *in the Theology of Thomas Torrance*. By Myk Habets. Surrey: Ash-
gate, 2009. ISBN 978-0-7546-6799-5. x + 212 pp. £55.00.

T. F. Torrance's ecumenical engagement, especially with the Roman Cath-
olic and Eastern Orthodox churches, was well know. His conversations
occurred while remaining embedded in the Scottish Reformed tradition.
Much of his engagement with the broader Christian tradition came pri-

marily from his reading of patristic sources, along with earlier reformed theologians (e.g., Calvin and McLeod Campbell).

Habets offers the first detailed work exploring Torrance's employment of *theosis*, a theme he finds to be often 'misunderstood or ignored in critical studies of [Torrance's] theology' (p. 14). Habets argues that while 'not *the* central point', it is an 'essential part' of his dogmatics, and 'a necessarily crucial integrating theme within his overall theological *oeuvre*' (p. 16). This is qualified by an onus Habets embraces. Admitting direct references to the term are rare in Torrance's work, although Habets displays some occasionally, the 'conceptuality' and 'material content' of *theosis* are pervasive.

Amidst dismissive criticism from those refusing to find *theosis* in Torrance, Habets argues that its presence is robust. *Theosis* is seen bearing functional cognates with Torrance's ideas of 'union, communion and participation' as well as 'engrafting, spiritual union, sacramental union and cognitive union', which are also in Greek patristic theology (pp. 108-9). Union between God and humanity—*theosis*—is based on the mutual mediation of the Son and Spirit, moving God humanward and man Godward.

It is the union of God with full humanity in Christ that enables humans to participate, by the Spirit's working, in Christ's full humanity, united to him. From this union with Christ, communion with God is realised. Jesus became the vicarious Man on behalf of others, deifying humanity in his incarnation and ascension, enabling believers to participate in his ascended humanity and consequently in the fellowship of the Trinity. This communion and *theosis*, however, is only made possible *through the Spirit*, whose work is never independent from the Son. While Torrance's position of union with Christ is distinct from 'divinisation', Habets highlights that this is nevertheless a reality with 'ontological import', not just spiritual. For Torrance, justification is declaration *and* deification. This soteriological participation in Christ points forward to the reality of 'full creaturely participation in the triune God', which indicates '*theosis* as the goal of the Christian life' (p. 179).

Habets is not uncritical of Torrance throughout, identifying tensions within his thought. He mainly relegates criticism and raises unanswered questions toward the end of the last major chapter and in the short concluding chapter. The relationship between Torrance and Barth is also highlighted throughout. Torrance's work is shown to give fruitful soil for further ecumenical dialogue and for furthering developments within Reformed theology.

This book's groundbreaking argumentation is unyielding. And while not alone in articulating Torrance's theology in language other than

what the Scottish theologian used (cf. the reference to Hunsinger, p. 178), the evidence amassed in this work is replete. In its erudition, laden with Latin and Greek terms common to Torrance's work, and being the fruit of Habets's PhD work from the University of Otago under Ivor Davidson (now at University of St Andrews), the manner of presentation of the evidence might be tedious reading for some (although the extensive index is helpful). Yet being able to read Torrance in light of Habets's research on this critical, dominant theme found in Torrance's corpus is a great reward that the effort this New Zealander has put forth to greatly serve readers of Torrance.

Jason S. Sexton, University of St Andrews

Thomas F. Torrance: Theologian of the Trinity. By Paul D. Molnar. Great Theologians Series; Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009. ISBN 978-0-7546-5229-8. viii + 373 pp. £16.99.

The purpose (and outstanding achievement) of this volume is to show how T.F. Torrance's 'theological method and all his major doctrinal views were shaped by his understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity' (p. ii). Paul Molnar, Professor of Systematic Theology at St. John's University, New York, takes the reader by the arm and leads them step by step through the set of theological decisions and convictions that Torrance makes in piecing together his trinitarian theology. Helpful and abundant footnotes guide readers who want to go deeper on a particular topic. The flow is orderly – flowing more naturally and logically than many of Torrance's own books which often consisted of a series of chapters which had been used for occasional purposes in other contexts. The prose is enjoyable, neither simple nor unnecessarily complex. Without talking down to the reader, Molnar's book reads like a theological tutorial, a calm (but assertive) apologetic for orthodox trinitarian faith.

The book begins with an introductory chapter which provides some personal and cultural background to Torrance's life and work. Unlike several other works on Torrance's theology (most notably, Alistair McGrath's, *Thomas F. Torrance: An Intellectual Biography* (T&T Clark, 1999)) in which his interaction with science looms large, Molnar uses only seven pages to note the considerable contribution that Torrance makes in discussions between science and theology. Molnar's aim is to put these in their larger context – namely, that Torrance's interest in and attention to natural science is simply a 'natural' extension of his realist methodology which provides an appropriate methodological analogy. As Molnar concisely states, 'Torrance pursued this scientific theology within a particular context' (p. 29).

Chapter 2 is the foundational chapter of the book, demonstrating how Torrance conceives the mutual conditioning of theological knowledge and godliness in the Apostolic mind as well as the way in which the doctrine of the Trinity became the 'ground and grammar' of the early church. Here one sees that Torrance's method is far deeper than merely proof-texting Scripture, for he penetrates into the dualistic ways of thinking which prevent us from grasping the full extent of God's revelation in Christ.

The next six chapters display Torrance's theology across the core dogmatic *loci*: God the Father and creation, Jesus Christ and incarnation and atonement, the Holy Spirit, resurrection, ascension, the church, sacraments and ministry. The material lends itself to either a sequential reading or a topical 'drop in' according to the reader's immediate concern. Throughout, Molnar is careful not to be repetitive and yet he guides the reader along, helping to make connections between what has come before and what is yet to come.

The only disappointment in the book is the concluding chapter in which Molnar fields critiques of Torrance's theology. This is the least carefully organized chapter, devoid of the section headings which were so helpful to the reader throughout. The conversation 'partners' also tend to be a bit dated, with most of them being drawn from Torrance's published interaction with several theologians in *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* edited by Elmer M. Colyer (Rowman and Littlefield, 2001).

Even with this weakness, Molnar's book remains an exceptionally cohesive and illuminating work. Without a doubt it is the most significant secondary work on Torrance's theology published to date, and should be considered an essential reference and study guide for anyone who intends to seriously wrestle with the theology of T. F. Torrance.

George W. Ziegler, King's College, University of Aberdeen

Incarnation: The Person and Life of Christ. By Thomas F. Torrance; edited by Robert T. Walker. Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008. ISBN: 978-1-84227-607-5. 371 pp. £14.99.

There can be no question that T. F. Torrance is one of those few gifted theologians who, with both grace and doggedness, was unapologetic about the value of serious systematic theology. Beginning in the late 1930's and continuing in some form until his death in 2007, Torrance's work as a teacher, author, and ecumenical leader helped shape various aspects of the theological discussion that remains with us to this day. He avoided the fads, instead soaking himself in historical theology and constructive statements. His doggedness made it possible for a whole generation after him to gain confidence and credibility, but it appears hard to imagine the

renewal of systematic theology without Torrance's consistent voice grac-
ing much of the twentieth century.

Given Torrance's stature as a central figure in this revitalization of
systematic theology, it is a great delight to now have two final volumes
to add to his prolific career. *Incarnation: The Person and Work of Christ*
appeared in 2008, and *Atonement: The Person and Work of Christ* came
out at the end of 2009. Both volumes are heavily based on lectures that
Torrance first delivered to students in his Christian Dogmatics class at
New College, covering the period from 1952-1978. Yet these are not merely
his lectures, as there has been an enormous amount of careful editing that
went into this task.

While some of the early revision work was done by Torrance himself,
the majority of this labour of love was sustained by the efforts of Robert
Walker, one of Torrance's nephews. He carefully has hunted down cita-
tions, added cross-references, provided a fair introduction, and included
detailed end notes that amplify the text with further Torrance material for
interested readers. There are times when some of the transitions between
sections appear to me a bit rough, especially when skipped over material
is moved to the end notes. But generally the editorial decisions are reason-
able and successfully implemented. Overall, because of the nature of this
work originating as lectures, as well as because of Walker's gentle edito-
rial hand, these volumes will prove to be some of the most readable books
from Torrance's vast collection.

It should be noted that much of the material here is touched on in
Torrance's other publications. But nowhere does so much come together
in the way it is mapped out in these two volumes. And there are certainly
whole sections that bear new gems for readers to unearth. For example, in
this *Incarnation* volume, one finds careful discussions about theological
methodology, the place of history and historiography, the role of tradi-
tion and exegesis, as well as constructive explorations of such problems as
the reality of sin, which he unpacks in terms of alienation and contradic-
tion. Furthermore, there is a detailed addendum on eschatology that will
prove interesting to many, especially since this particular material seems
to originate around 1950, which allows one to see how Torrance seeks to
incorporate the eschatological discussions from the first half of the twen-
tieth century.

In the end, I believe scholars will greatly appreciate having these two
volumes to further map out the development of Torrance's christological
orientation that governs all of his theology. And a new generation of stu-
dents will now enjoy a more accessible way into Torrance's theology. This
is good news for everyone.

Kelly M. Kapic, Covenant College

235

*Atonement: The Person and Work of Christ. By Thomas F. Torrance; edited
by Robert T. Walker. Downers Grove: IVP, 2009. ISBN 978-0-8308-
2892-0. 489 pp. $35.00.*

The Christian world almost experienced a great loss when T. F. Torrance
suffered a stroke in 2005. At that time, he was preparing for publication
his lectures on christology. But thanks to Robert Walker, we now have
them. This is the second volume, which Walker warns must be read in
close connection to its predecessor, *Incarnation*, because only together do
they comprise the whole of Torrance's lectures on the doctrine of Jesus
Christ.

Atonement is a dense work in which most significant themes of the-
ology are richly interwoven in Torrance's unique style. This could lead
readers, especially those new to Torrance, into to some confusion and the
sense of being overwhelmed! However, thanks to a very detailed synopsis
following the table of contents and a lengthy editor's introduction, one is
able to maintain both a sense of clarity with respect to the main emphasis
in each chapter and the overall direction of the work. There are also two
bonuses which follow the twelve chapters, an 'Epilogue: The Reconcilia-
tion of the Mind' and a 'Brief Guide to Further Reading'.

Interestingly (and of great significance for Torrance's views on contro-
versial topics such as limited atonement and universalism), the first note
of this book is not the triune relationship within God himself nor between
covenant and atonement, but 'the mystery of the atonement.' Torrance
writes: 'the innermost mystery of atonement and intercession remains
mystery: it cannot be spelled out, and it cannot be spied out. This is the
ultimate mystery of the blood of Christ, the blood of God incarnate, a holy
and infinite mystery which is more to be adored than expressed' (p. 2).
The remainder of chapter 1 concentrates on the covenantal framework of
the atonement. Those familiar with Torrance's works will recognize both
in this chapter and throughout the work a characteristic blend of doxo-
logical and biblical theology which distinguished Torrance from most of
his contemporaries.

The focus of chapters 1-6 is the cross. Torrance works out the rela-
tionships between the OT background and the works of Christ, all of
which culminates in Torrance's heuristic use of the *munus triplex*. That
is, Torrance develops his multi-facetted theology of the atonement by first
providing the many biblical categories and relationships which are sub-
sequently employed as components of the atoning person and work of
Christ. This work of Christ finds its complete meaning only in relation
to the fullness of his person as both Son of God and as God the Son. Tor-
rance's affinity for a clear integration of the OT and the NT leads him to

Hebrews, which he employs as his hermeneutical lens through which to understand Christ's work.

Determined by the sequence of salvation-history, chapters 7-12 explore the relationship between resurrection and atonement. If the first half of the book explored biblical categories, then this half can be seen as plumbing christological categories. For example, in 'The Resurrection of Jesus Christ', Torrance follows his survey of resurrection with the three interwoven themes of (a) the resurrection and the work and being of the incarnate God, (b) the relationships between the *anhypostasia* and *enhypostasia* of Christ to various aspects of his decent and resurrection, (c) the relationship of the virgin birth to the resurrection.

This volume is a gift. It is carried out in deep awareness of God's grace towards humanity in Christ and his Spirit, likewise of the Bible, patristic theology, and John Campbell's work. The result is a theology of the atonement along the lines of Jesus' vicarious representation of humanity before God that avoids what Torrance considers to be crude theologies of the atonement, including penal substitution. It is now incumbent on the evangelical world to clarify its relationship to Torrance and to appropriate the best of his rich view of the atonement.

Scott Harrower, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL USA

Scripture: A Very Theological Proposal. By Angus Paddison. London: T&T Clark, 2009. ISBN 978-0-567-03424-3. 170 pp. £19.99.

Like most writing in the vein of 'theological interpretation of Scripture', Angus Paddison accepts Barth's insight that Scripture is not an artifact, a lifeless deposit subject to human utility, but is a living event under divine prerogative, effective only within a divinely established economy which is transcendent and transformative of human being. Consequently, Paddison begins by specifying the divine order in which Scripture happens and is properly perceived. He turns to P. T. Forsyth's account of Scripture as an instrument of the Gospel and extends it by way of Stanley Hauerwas's ecclesiology where worship practices and liturgical action cultivate the habits necessary for perceiving and receiving God's grace. As the entailment of the Gospel, the church is integral to the divine economy. He criticizes John Webster for an underdeveloped ecclesiology, attributing it to a failure to break free from a competitive understanding of divine and human agency. Paddison probably puts his finger on a deficiency, but surely this is an ecclesiological not metaphysical disagreement with Webster, surely he mistakes Webster's Reformed prioritization of Scripture over the church for opposing divinity and humanity.

The second chapter issues a common complaint against and correction to the rationalist way of relating the Bible to Christian ethics. An exploration of John's Gospel comprises the next chapter, which sees Paddison arguing the relatively uncontroversial point that Scripture requires doctrinal reflection. Chapter 4, 'Preaching and Scripture', ends up being more about preaching than about Scripture, while the final chapter on reading the Bible in the university moves in ways that will be familiar to those who have read the relevant literature.

Has Paddison fully grasped Webster's critique of proposals like his? Webster may be brisk on the church and concrete human action, that is, he may offer little beyond a 'moral ontology.' But that is because he is convinced that theology, fundamentally, is talk about God not merely talk about how humans relate to God or even the effects of God's work. Since Paddison spends his time chastening certain academic discourses or talking about the church's work, I think he proves there is something to Webster's worry.

In fact, 'a very theological proposal' may be a misnomer. First, there is not a unified proposal here, but several independent essays, revised from previous publication, themselves not proposals so much as corrections of what Paddison sees as misconceptions, most of which are dealt with similarly in the existing literature. Second, this is not a bibliology. Most seriously, there just isn't much *sustained* theological reflection in these pages. It would seem that a theological proposal, especially a 'very' theological proposal, would consist primarily of concentrated contemplation of the divine reality and activity. Instead, the book is mostly a patchwork of other recent proposals that Paddison collects and integrates. It is probably better understood as musings on topics common to the literature on theological interpretation that gesture toward a theology of Scripture.

James R. A. Merrick, University of Aberdeen

Deep Exegesis: The Mystery of Reading Scripture. By Peter J. Leithart. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2009. ISBN 978-1-6025-8069-5. viii + 254 pp. £19.99.

Peter Leithart is a prolific author and reader, and these six chapters show him in vintage form, addressing important issues in his Leitharted (lighthearted?) way. He draws on his reading everything from Dante's *Divine Comedy* to 'The Three Little Pigs' to James Joyce's *Ulysses* in order to broaden our conception of what is involved in exegesis. *Deep Exegesis* pushes us beyond our grammatical-historical comfort zone to confront the letter of the text in all its glorious fullness.

Leithart believes we should not confuse literacy (or 'hermeneutics of the letter') with a rigid literalism. Deep exegesis partakes of both special and general hermeneutics: to read with Jesus and Paul (think New Testament use of the Old) is not to employ 'some bizarre form of sacred hermeneutics' (p. viii) but rather to become a more sensitive and sophisticated reader.

The words of the Bible are not train cars that transport semantic grain from author to reader. The so-called 'container' theory of meaning is not deep but shallow. It is blind to the many things words do, many of them novel and surprising. Poetic words in particular do more than label or denote: they evoke and connote, echo and reverberate, such that the reader with ears to hear will detect multiple overtones.

As events take on new properties in light of later events, so texts (the event of someone saying something) take on new properties in light of further events/sayings. Commenting on Matthew's citation of Hosea 11:1, Leithart claims that Matthew gives 'new meaning' to Hosea by extending, not violating, the letter, thus connecting two events. Such typology, however, is not unique to Scripture: Hitler gives 'new meaning' to Wagner.

Leithart makes his strongest case for an exegesis of letters in those chapters where he shows what literary competence looks like in practice. Deep exegesis is like getting a joke whose meaning is often a function of what is not explicitly stated. It's a matter of thinking 'outside the text' (p. 124), of knowing the relevant information and having the requisite sensibility.

Deep Exegesis is not a textbook but a *cri de coeur* from an interpreter-performer who cares about much more than playing (i.e., parsing) the right notes: 'A great performer wants to get as much as he can from the correct notes he plays' (p. 208). Leithart has written a primer for would-be pianists: a series of hermeneutical finger exercises, six lessons for exegetes who want to get beyond note-playing to making beautiful textual music. As with music, so with Scripture: the medium is intrinsically connected to the message. Modern hermeneutics treats the text like a husk, however, to be disposed with as quickly as possible in order to find the propositional pearl or moral lesson inside.

The pearl of great price hid in the biblical texts is the body of Christ— Jesus, yes, but also the church. Leithart uses the story of Jesus' healing the man born blind (John 9) as his primary case study, offering no less than five different readings in an interpretive tour-de-force that runs hermeneutical circles around cut-and-parse approaches typical of grammar-laden exegesis.

Interestingly, Leithart does not read under the banner of theological interpretation of Scripture, but chooses instead to speak in more general

terms about entering into the depths of the text. Some readers may thus regret Leithart's decision not to define meaning. To these he would no doubt say, 'Here's spit in your eye', preferring, like Jesus, to rub his hermeneutical clay-and-spittle on our mind's eye, thus enabling/anointing us to see and hear all the riches of Christ in the music of the text.

Kevin J. Vanhoozer, Wheaton College Graduate School, Wheaton, IL USA

Scripture's Doctrine and Theology's Bible: How the New Testament Shapes Christian Dogmatics. Edited by Markus Bockmuehl and Alan Torrance. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008. ISBN 978-0-8010-3601-9. 240 pp. £12.99.

This collection of vibrant and often difficult essays in theological interpretation originated with a 2007 colloquium at the University of St Andrews. In these pages, some of the most exciting names in contemporary theology take turns answering the question, 'To what extent, and on what grounds, does the New Testament shape and prescribe Christian theology?' The editors are right to acknowledge the 'eclectic, partial and limited' nature of the project. (Not least of all, one might reasonably have hoped in these essays for more sustained readings of specific passages of Scripture.) Such a concession, however, does not change the fact that this scholarship models to great effect the move beyond past parochialisms to a healthier and more promising relationship between biblical studies and systematic theology.

Part one offers a compelling exploration of the doctrine-evoking power of Scripture. Ross Wagner probes the neglected matter of the Septuagint's authority for Christian theology. Markus Bockmuehl proposes three notions around which responsible talk of 'the Church' converge. In his essay on the exclusivity of Jesus Christ, Walter Moberly interprets John 14:6 in light of contemporary secularizing pressures that would have Jews and Christians 'find common ground at the expense of traditional theological understandings'. For N. T. Wright, finally, creedal faith bears a necessary and proper function as 'portable narrative' in telling the great story of God.

The essays of part two comprise critical engagement with recent theologians. Specialists will appreciate James Carleton Paget's thesis that, perhaps unconsciously, Albert Schweitzer gradually moved away from an overemphasis upon the historical and cultural contingency of Jesus of Nazareth. Jan Muis considers the work of Karl Barth and Friedrich Mildenberger, concluding that, on the basis of their guiding premises, each thinker should have arrived at a view of Scripture as indirectly prescriptive of Christian doctrine. John Webster offers an appreciative and wide-

ranging, though not uncritical, assessment of the theology of Rowan Williams, for whom Scripture serves as a sign of the temporal transformation of the Christian community by the infinitely resourceful Christ. Finally, readers less familiar with Catholic theology will find Benedict Viviano's piece illuminating, particularly as he highlights three 'breakthrough paragraphs' from the Second Vatican Council's *Dei Verbum* (1965).

Part three features synthetic essays on the normativity of the New Testament for theology and ethics. Oliver O'Donovan argues that, because moral instruction in the Bible is always framed by narrative context, the good or evil of anything is measurable only in light of the purposes of God as they are fully revealed in the incarnation of the Son. In order to facilitate 'teleology without hegemony', Bernd Wannenwetch details four moments in the practice of Scripture reading—perception, discernment, judgment, and giving an account. Finally, two essays approach the question of how the contemporary reader of Scripture might be understood to participate in the thought and culture of the biblical period. Alan Torrance draws on Athanasius and Kierkegaard, locating the possibility of this 'fusion of horizons' in the free presence of God, who brings about a 'reconciled continuity of mind' in the work of the Son and Spirit. Kevin Vanhoozer, by comparison, articulates the theological solution in terms of the 'habits of apostolic judgment' which readers should acquire. Such habits enable us to understand both ourselves and our church communities as 'caught up in the same basic action (though in a new scene) as the primitive church'.

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Jeremy Wynne, Whitworth University, Spokane, WA, USA

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Four Views on Moving Beyond the Bible to Theology. Edited by Gary Meadors and Stanley Gundry. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009. ISBN 978-0-310-27655-5. 371 pp. $19.99.

The book under review picks up both the title and topic of your reviewer's book *Beyond the Bible: Moving from Scripture to Theology* (Paternoster, 2004), and it carries the discussion significantly further. It collects and compares four models for moving from the Bible to theology. There are rejoinders by each of the four contributors on the others' proposals, and finally three observers – Mark Strauss, Al Wolters, and Chris Wright – evaluate the whole enterprise.

Walter Kaiser advocates a so-called 'principlizing' approach, in which one begins with the specific commands in Scripture, attempts to discover the principles lying behind them that may be at different levels of abstraction, and then extends their application into our situation. This approach is said not to require going beyond Scripture but rather applying it. Kaiser

illustrates the method with the test-cases of euthanasia, women and the church, homosexuality, slavery, and embryos.

'Principlizing' is certainly necessary and valid. The mistake is to claim that nothing more is required. Indeed, application is not just a matter of fully appropriating biblical principles, but tackling issues not known in biblical times (e.g. medical research). And this raises the question of how one identifies which principles are appropriate for particular problems.

Daniel Doriani offers a 'redemptive-historical' model. Basically, he wants to add a use of biblical narratives as commendations of types of conduct (or warnings): 'Where a series of acts by the faithful create a pattern, and God or the narrator approves the pattern, it directs believers, even if no law spells out the lesson'. He is unhappy about my unease with passages that appear to attribute torture to God. I think he may mistakenly attribute an abandonment of hell to me; rather, I attempt to reinterpret it in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere (e.g. in passages on judgement).

Doriani's cases are gambling, architecture (i.e. safe roofs), and especially women and ministry. I do not see any significant difference here from Kaiser's approach. An indication that the first two views are insufficient is the way in which Kaiser and Doriani, practising essentially the same method, arrive at different conclusions on the place of women in the church.

Kevin Vanhoozer's approach is close to that of Tom Wright in speaking of 'the drama of redemption' and is essentially concerned with our involvement as actors in this drama, who are to show our understanding of Scripture by doing God's will and not just talking or arguing about it. His two case studies are Mary and transsexuality.

I share Kaiser's and Strauss's perplexity; I am baffled as to what I am expected to *do*. It is all far too vague, a set of what are more like ideals without any clear indication of how to attain them. Vanhoozer is certainly right that Scripture reading is meant to lead to changed action and character rather than just intellectual understanding, and his contribution is compatible with all the others. But he doesn't provide any principled guidance for dealing with obscure or ambiguous or culturally-shaped texts.

Fourth, we have William Webb's 'redemptive-movement' model. He makes the basic observation that we can trace in Scripture a set of shifts to a more 'redemptive' style of behaviour compared both with some of Israel's neighbours and earlier biblical teachings, as illustrated by the laws and customs regarding slavery. Webb uses the case of corporal punishment, showing how even evangelical scholars who insist on retaining the biblical teaching regarding chastisement of children nevertheless quietly ameliorate it. He argues that the 'trajectory' found in Scripture

is being traversed further in Christian history, as in the abolition of slavery. Granted that biblical revelation is final and definitive, it nevertheless contains the momentum to take its application further. The movement cannot cease with canonization. Scripture must be read in the light of this momentum.

The other contributors are strongly critical, though I am not convinced their objections really grapple with Webb. Kaiser accuses Webb of reading Scripture against its non-biblical context rather than its inner-biblical context. I cannot see why this is improper; it is an essential part of historical exegesis. Kaiser is also unclear as to how the goals of movement are to be identified. Doriani is more appreciative, though he wishes to tie the results to the grammatical-historical approach. Vanhoozer wants greater clarity regarding the terms used by Webb, and raises the problem of the Holy Spirit as the one ultimate author of Scripture acting in an incremental manner.

Wolters notes that movement beyond ancient Near Eastern culture is not always an improvement, and that detecting it may depend on knowledge not available to the ordinary reader and thus impugn the concept of the perspicuity of Scripture. Yet, if the ordinary reader's knowledge is the criteria, we will likely cease to treat the text historically. Wolters doubts that Webb has a criterion for what is a better ethic beyond Scripture when he detects an 'underlying spirit' in the text that is very similar to contemporary humane and liberal values, and worries that texts may have two contradictory meanings, the 'on the page' meaning and the 'underlying spirit' meaning.

Rejecting a position simply because it is held by secular society seems unjustified. To some extent the secular mind may correspond with this Christian mind, but this may be due to acceptance of Christian influence (e.g. on the abolition of the slave trade). Granted that looking for a better ethic is a risky business, it must be insisted that adhering to a traditional ethic is equally risky and liable to lead to sub-Christian behaviour (e.g. unacceptable forms of physical punishment).

Summing up, I agree with the observation of Chris Wright that the four models are all needed, each being inadequate on its own, and are possibly too similar and complementary to be sharply differentiated or for a choice to be forced among them. Ironically, this book shows an eclectic approach is needed, that different types of biblical material require different interpretative methods. Despite the criticisms made of it, Webb's approach is acknowledged to be grasping something that is going on in Scripture.

It is a pity the book pays little attention to the debate outside the conservative evangelical constituency and to seeing if we can learn anything

from or contribute to it. Vanhoozer does briefly mention Richard Hays. It would have been good to have a much fuller appraisal of Hays's work in this volume. Let this be an encouragement to take the matter further.

I. Howard Marshall, University of Aberdeen

The Bible for Sinners: Interpretation in the Present Time. By Christopher Rowland and Jonathan Roberts. London: SPCK, 2008. ISBN: 978-0-281-05802-0. viii + 119 pp. £10.99.

Rowland (Oxford) and Roberts (Liverpool) observe that when it comes to biblical interpretation, listening to what 'others' have to say – the poor, the marginalized, the 'sinners', in short, the people upon whom Jesus' ministry was focused – is shockingly far from the church's basic practice. In response, they urge reform by recovering the voices of those they see as the Bible's true audience.

Chapters 1, 2, and 3 summarize some major ecclesiastical interpretive models championed today by N. T. Wright, the Windsor Report, and the Pontifical Biblical Commission. The authors find much to commend in these models, particularly the role they ascribe on paper to the Holy Spirit. But do these models live up to their own ideals? Not quite. All too often they privilege academic and ecclesiastical authorities, the so-called 'experts' of the Bible's meaning, the modern day 'scribes.' This is at odds with how the Bible talks about the Spirit, specifically the role that Paul assigns to it in Romans 8 and 1 Corinthians 2:10-16. The Spirit is not a license for *any* interpretation, but neither is its enabling power restricted to the powerful. Barth's principle of *Sachkritik* – 'getting at the reality of the text... seeking to put into words what a biblical writer like Paul would be saying if he were here right now' (p. 38) – strikes the right balance. *Sachkritik* is the simple, ordinary Christian discipline of attending to the biblical text in order to hear the Word address the contemporary context in the power of the Spirit.

What models listen to ordinary Christians? Chapters 4, 5, and 6 promote several. The contribution of Liberation Theology has been its contextual emphasis, the belief that God speaks *through* the poor and marginalized. Other ordinary voices include 'Christian radicals' from the Northern tradition: Hans Denck, Gerrard Winstanley, William Blake, and William Stringfellow, all in their own way pushed for more imaginative, *this*-worldly interpretation of the Bible. Has the church appropriated their examples? Recent attitudes toward both Liberation and Feminist Theologies suggest not. Yet our authors persist: on what grounds can the church refuse them?

Imagining a debate on divorce between a 'liberal' and a 'conservative' Christian, the authors in chapter 7 illustrate the need for wisdom in interpretation. Say a woman divorces and then remarries. Her children from the first marriage reject this new marriage on 'biblical principles' as living in sin. Who is right in this instance? Is tradition? The Bible? Or is there room for contextual, Spirit-led interpretation of both? The authors succeed in bringing us to the heart of things, and rightfully enjoin us to take on the example of Christ in our personal and corporate deliberations.

Yet a few problems seem to undermine their project. First, despite efforts not to 'devalue tradition' (p. 2), the authors do not instruct us in any way about what the tradition might be there *for* in our interpretive task. In addition, their advocacy of Barth's division between the Word of God as Jesus Christ and the words of Scripture as witness to that Word is not without its debatable features – particularly with regard to the Spirit's past activity in authoring Scripture. Finally, the authors suggest in one place that 'the prime responsibility of a Christian is to find Christ outside, rather than inside, the pages of Scripture' (p. 21). But why not both/and?

For these reasons I recommend the book with some reservation. Its aims, though crucial, call for more complexity than 119 pages could facilitate. Even so, the authors initiate an important conversation. For this they are well worth the read.

Ian Clausen, University of Edinburgh

The Death of Scripture and the Rise of Biblical Studies. By Michael C. Legaspi. Oxford Studies in Historical Theology; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. ISBN 978-0-19-539435-1. xiv + 222 pp. £45.00.

Few studies since Hans Frei's *Eclipse of Biblical Narrative* (Yale Univeristy Press, 1974) have inspected the hermeneutical transformation effected by modern biblical criticism. Enter Michael Legaspi. He examines the work of influential eighteenth-century biblical scholar Johann David Michaelis whom he believes exemplifies the movement away from viewing the Bible as Scripture, God's governance of the church, to seeing it as an historical artifact useful for scholarly knowledge and cultural progress.

The author considers the interplay between the Bible, the classics, and the formation of the University of Göttingen, the seedbed both for the modern university and for modern theology. Michaelis, who believed the university exists to improve society and refine culture, refashioned biblical studies into the image of classical studies. The Bible deserved academic attention because it is a source of culture enriching for citizens and politicians alike. Accordingly, he tried to revision ancient Israel as an exemplary civilization like Greece and Rome. Though unsuccessful, his

efforts had the effect of inventing an 'academic Bible'. Michaelis, in other words, so alters the nature, purpose, and context of the Bible and its interpretation that he establishes a new nexus of meaning which effectively creates a rival Bible.

Legaspi does not trace Michaelis's approach through to J. P. Gabler who cites Michaelis in his famous address, 'On the Proper Distinction between Dogmatic and Biblical Theology and Their Specific Objectives', which many believe to be the inauguration of the modern biblical theology. But his conclusions are interesting enough. His treatment of Michaelis supports the sentiment that, although the conflict between theological and critical interpretation is usually fought on the grounds of history, in fact the clash is ideological.

This monograph proves a nice supplement to Frei's aforementioned work and will be most profitable when read alongside Thomas Howard's masterful *Protestant Theology and the Making of the Modern German University* (OUP, 2006). It is a significant, insightful contribution to our knowledge of the development of modern biblical interpretation and an important examination of Michaelis's role in such.

James R. A. Merrick, University of Aberdeen

God's Word in Servant-Form: Abraham Kuyper and Herman Bavinck on the Doctrine of Scripture. By Richard Gaffin, Jr. Jacksonville: Reformed Academic Press, 2008. ISBN 978-0-9800-3700-5. 107 pp. $12.95.

Even the most cursory survey of recent Anglophone interest in Dutch Neo-Calvinism quickly highlights the doctrine of Scripture as the focus of much debate. In 1980, Jack Rogers and Donald McKim's *The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible* attempted to pit Amsterdam against Old Princeton on this issue. In doing so, Rogers and McKim portrayed Bavinck and Kuyper – Neo-Calvinism's outstanding dogmaticians – as concerned with Scripture's salvific, rather than verbal, content. In this respect, it was alleged, they sat uncomfortably with their American cousin B. B. Warfield.

In the three following decades, this account of Bavinck and Kuyper has been variously engaged. Indeed, the debate currently lives on via the invocation of Bavinck's name in controversial works such as Andrew McGowan's *The Divine Spiration of Scripture* and Peter Enns' *Inspiration and Incarnation*.

By way of recent developments, one finds the republication (albeit with minor revisions) of Richard Gaffin's 1982-3 piece *God's Word in Servant Form*, which was originally written as a direct challenge to Rogers and McKim. Gaffin offers a fundamentally different picture of Bavinck and

Kuyper on Scripture, one considerably less opposed to Warfield's iner-
rantism. Two points are crucial in evaluating Gaffin's reply to Rogers and
McKim.

The first concerns language. In 2009, the Anglophone reader has
access to an outstanding standardized English translation of *Reformed
Dogmatics*. Prior to the sterling efforts of the Dutch Reformed Translation
Society, however, the situation was somewhat different. In the early 1980s,
a comprehensive command of Dutch was essential to an accurate, holistic
reading of Bavinck and Kuyper. In this regard, Gaffin's credentials are
beyond doubt. His engagement with the Dutch sources, primary and sec-
ondary, is impressive.

Secondly, one must consider how convincingly Gaffin presents his
reading of Bavinck and Kuyper. Noting the Berkouwerian tendency
(reflected by Rogers and McKim) to homogenize Bavinck and Kuyper,
the skill with which Gaffin demonstrates the distinctive nuances of both
men is reassuring.

In this regard, it is perhaps most notable that he successfully highlights
how Rogers and McKim have, in various places, misapprehended Bav-
inck's most basic concerns (principally organicism versus mechanism).
Gaffin also notes that they neglect to mention key sections in Bavinck;
for example, his dictum that, 'In the thoughts are included the words,
and in the words, the vowels' (*RD* 1.438; Gaffin, p. 84). This fact dents
one's confidence in Rogers and McKim somewhat. Gaffin's description of
Kuyper follows suit.

Significantly, Gaffin's work accords with the understanding of Bav-
inck and Kuyper (particularly in relation to Warfield and the doctrine
of Scripture) found in the works the Netherlands' current leaders in this
area: Dirk van Keulen (*Bijbel en Dogmatiek*, pp. 163-4) and Henk van den
Belt (*Autopistia*, p. 312).

Although Rogers and McKim's book has not been reprinted, this re-
release of Gaffin's response is justified because a key facet of their pres-
entation of Bavinck and Kuyper contained therein nonetheless continues
to resurface in contemporary literature on Scripture: the wedge driven
between Amsterdam and Old Princeton. This can be found in McGow-
an's aforementioned book, for example: while he acknowledges (ironically
by citing Gaffin) that Rogers and McKim fundamentally misunderstood
Bavinck on various issues, he frustratingly ignores that Gaffin flatly con-
tradicts major features of his own description of Bavinck.

A veteran Dutch theology professor once offered the following sage
advice: 'Be careful with most of these new English language books that
use Bavinck. Many of them tell far more about the author than about Bav-
inck.' Gaffin's careful scholarship exempts him from this criticism. He

offers a clear headed, accurate picture of the doctrine of Scripture found in Kuyper and Bavinck which will prove a resource to those encountering newer versions of an old thesis.

James Eglinton, University of Edinburgh

Did the first Christians Worship Jesus? The New Testament Evidence. By James D. G. Dunn. London: SPCK, 2010. ISBN 978-0-2810-5928-7. viii + 168 pp. £12.99.

As he always does, Prof. Dunn gives us an up to date treatment of a key area of New Testament study, in this instance tied to Christology. The book's title presents the key question the book pursues. In contrast to the work of Larry Hurtado and Richard Bauckham, Dunn argues that worship of Jesus was not common in the earliest period of this new movement, although he qualifies the answer by noting how worship of God the Father through the Son is often what is taking place. He stresses that the focus in such worship is aimed at the Father. Dunn's work looks at the language of worship, its practice, as well as the issues tied to heavenly mediators and divine agents. Last of all, he examines the theme of the Lord Jesus Christ. Key terminology, concepts, and texts are treated with care.

At the end of the book, he warns about Jesusolatry, worship of Jesus that falls short of worship due to the 'One God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ' (p. 147). He calls it a short circuit of the true worship of God. On the other side, the exalted role of Jesus, which utilizes ideas from Jewish discussion of Wisdom, Word, and divine agents, shows the high position the earliest believers gave Jesus as an embodiment of God and his presence. That position always acknowledged, however, the subordinate position of the Son to the Father. In sum, Dunn argues that the early church believed Jesus embodied the divine presence but was honoured in a manner that kept the focus on God the Father. Dunn crafts a position distinct from Hurtado and Bauckham that argues that Jesus had high honour but something less than what most Christians think and confess about him.

What is one to make of his case? Dunn recognizes that Revelation does present worship of Jesus in chapters 4-5. He argues this is the exception versus the rule. He discusses the *maranatha* invocation as evidence as well, but sees such an invocation like a Jew may have called out to Elijah in hopes of deliverance. Dunn does us a service to remind us that Jesus is not worshipped apart from his relationship to the Father and that the bulk of the attention is given to the Father, especially when it comes to formal terms of worship and acts of worship. But does this say enough,

even while Dunn also is careful to highlight the consistent exalted role Jesus does have?

It is important, perhaps, to note that Dunn's real question could be restated as: Did the early Christians worship Jesus alone or in isolation from the Father? On this point, Dunn brings forth much evidence to show that the answer to this question is mostly 'no'. Nonetheless, this reviewer was left slightly uneasy with the way the issue has been framed. A slight adjustment of his question might yield another emphasis. Did the earliest Christians worship Jesus in conjunction with the Father? Here the answer is likely to be a more resounding 'yes'—and for reasons from texts Dunn either undervalues for their implications or because the issue in the early church was never to consider Jesus apart from the role he had as one sent on a mission from God.

To this reviewer, undervalued texts, among others that also could be noted, include the lack of discussion of the real significance of Paul's invoking Isa 45 as he presents every knee bowing to Jesus in the Phil 2 picture of Jesus' exaltation. Isa 45 is one of the most vigorous defenses of monotheism in the Hebrew Scripture. For that language to apply to Jesus says much about him in a context where divine honor is explicitly what is being described. In 1 Cor 8:4-6, Paul gives a 'binitarian' confession echoing the *Shema* (as Dunn also recognizes) and Jesus is placed on the side of Creator, not creation. This says much about which side of the line he is regarded as residing in ultimately. Appeals here to wisdom like background do not say enough about how Jesus, clearly a distinct entity, is seen. Nowhere is there a development of how Acts 2 has the name of Jesus invoked, even with respect to a religious rite like baptism, an act of authority to forgive sins and an act of worship for sure. This text is especially significant, since calling on the name of the Lord is said to save earlier in the speech in an appeal to Joel 2 that initially looks like an invocation of the God of Israel and that in Joel certainly was a call to God (Acts 2:21 with 30-38). Here Dunn chooses to discuss how Joel 2 is used in Romans 10:9-13, but this is the less developed of the passages related to this idea. Often when faced with a reading that sees Jesus as divine or an option that sees him in close proximity to the divine, Dunn opts for the latter sense or at least argues that is a possible reading (e.g, p. 37, where the parallel of Elijah coming or the latter church's appeal to the saints is invoked as a call for deliverance or aid). Also understated are the implications of a text like Titus 2:13-14, where the appearing of divine glory is the point and not the explicit naming of Jesus as God.

In putting this all together, I think of a see-saw as a child where the weight is on one side of the plank or the other. The evidence Dunn stresses as yielding a more limited perception of Jesus, I would suggest

brings more weight to the other side of the plank, provided we all recall that Jesus is not isolated in his activity from the Father. In other words, Dunn's study reminds us that early believers presented Jesus consistently as part of a hierarchy of relationship in his connection to the one God that extended back before the Creation. In a sense, no one sees the Father without the Son and vice versa. It is a merit of Dunn's study that we never lose sight of this connection nor the way in which it is ranked, although I would tend to weight the overall case as pointing to a more affirmative reply and significance than Dunn gives to the data.

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A Theology of John's Gospel and Letters. By Andreas J. Köstenberger. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009. ISBN 978-0-3102-6986-1. 652 pp. £25.99.

The author of the Baker Exegetical Commentary volume on John and New Testament professor at Southeastern Baptist Seminary in North Carolina has set a high standard with this inaugural volume of Zondervan's Biblical Theology of the New Testament series. The work could well have been entitled 'an introduction' as well as a theology, as Köstenberger spends nearly 240 pages before he comes to his actual task. First, he establishes the historical context for John's Gospel and epistles—80s and 90s, respectively, penned by the son of Zebedee, in and around Ephesus, interacting especially with the struggles in Judaism after the fall of the temple. The genre of these documents is Jewish historical narrative combined with elements of Greco-Roman biography, one circular letter and two 'simple, straightforward' letters. Another chapter itemizes in great detail John's overall linguistic and literary style. Then we read a synopsis of the contents of the documents, section by section, with small bits of theological commentary interspersed.

Köstenberger's understanding of the structure of the Gospel of John leads him to find key texts replete with all the major themes of these writings at the beginning (1:1-18), middle (13:1-3) and end (20:30-31) of the Gospel. Once he actually begins his theological analysis, he introduces John's overall worldview and presents at length his use of Scripture. Each of the next nine chapters falls under one of the three strategically placed thematic clusters. Topics addressed include 'The Messiah and His Signs' (from 20:30-31); 'The Word: Creation and New Creation'; 'God: Father, Son, and Spirit'; 'Salvation History: Jesus' Fulfillment of Festal Symbolism'; 'The Cosmic Trial Motif: The World, the Jews, and the Witnesses to Jesus'; 'The New Messianic Community: Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility' (from 1:1-18); and John's 'love ethic,' 'theology of the cross,'

and 'trinitarian mission theology' from 13:1-3. A short concluding sec-
tion compares John's theology with the other canonical voices.

The theological summaries, of course, merely use the introduction of
a theme in one of the three key sections of the Gospel as springboards to
range throughout the whole document, and the letters, for material on the
same theme. There is a fair amount of repetition from the earlier walk
through these documents' contents, because Köstenberger often discusses
in turn each passage in which a key theme occurs. He explains that he
wrote the volume, as only someone who had already authored a major
commentary on much of this material could do, simply by writing out
a complete first draft of what he wanted to say based just on Scripture
and only then going back and adding footnotes, interacting with second-
ary literature, especially the most recent scholarship, and editing his text
accordingly. Where this interaction is fuller, it is usually because Kösten-
berger is drawing on earlier, more specialized publications on the topics at
hand besides just his commentary.

The value of this approach is that his prose is very readable. The dis-
advantage is that a lot of the discussion that one might have expected of
others' studies and competing views is absent. In other words, with a
handful of exceptions, we learn in meticulous detail what Köstenberger
thinks John is teaching but not nearly as much about what others have
thought. No doubt, because almost all of his previous published work on
Johannine literature has been on the Gospel, this document gets much
fuller treatment than do the letters.

Helpful charts regularly punctuate the book, along with topical bib-
liographies at the beginning of each chapter. While Köstenberger has
not produced *the* definitive synthesis of every topic that he treats, for a
'one-stop shopping,' but still detailed introduction to the Johannine epis-
tles and Gospel from a conservative evangelical perspective, this book is
where students, pastors and scholars alike should turn, now and for some
time to come.

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Unlocking Romans: Resurrection and the Justification of God. By J. R.
Daniel Kirk. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008. ISBN 978-0-8028-6290-
7. xiv + 245 pp. £23.99.

Unlocking Romans is a distilled version of J. R. Daniel Kirk's doctoral
dissertation, completed under the supervision of Richard Hays at Duke
University. As indicated by the title, this ambitious project attempts to
offer a fresh perspective on Romans by studying the theme of resurrection
throughout the letter.

Kirk's main claim about Romans is that the letter is a theodicy. Paul answers the question of God's fidelity to the historical covenant promises given to Israel by pointing to the resurrection of Christ and the inclusion of Gentiles within the church. According to Kirk, the character of Romans as a theodicy comes to the fore when one recognizes the central hermeneutical role the resurrection of Christ plays in Paul's engagement with the Scriptures of Israel.

Following a survey of the functions of resurrection in the literature of Second Temple Judaism, Kirk suggests that the centrality of Christ's resurrection in Romans is signaled by its presence in the bookends of the theological and parenetic argument, Romans 1:1-7 and 15:7-13. From the citation of Habakkuk 2:4 in Romans 1:17 to the citation of Isaiah 11:10 in 15:12, Kirk claims that Paul consistently (re)reads Israel's Scriptures with a lens shaped by the resurrection of Christ.

Chapters 4-10 are devoted to demonstrating this claim in passages drawn from each major section of the letter. Kirk's cumulative argument is that Paul uses a resurrection-hermeneutic throughout Romans to interpret Israel's Scriptures so that the resurrection of Christ and the Jew-plus-Gentile church appear as the legitimate fulfillment of God's prophetic promises. In the final chapter, Kirk concludes with both theological and practical reflections on theodicy, justification, church unity, and the usefulness of Paul's resurrection-hermeneutic for the church today.

Regarding justification, Kirk asserts that it is a re-working of the Jewish doctrine of God's *vindication* of his covenant people through resurrection at the final judgment. According to Kirk, justification is integral to the theodicy project of Romans because the vindication of God's people is an essential element of the promises that God must fulfil in order to vindicate himself.

As a whole, *Unlocking Romans* proves to be immensely stimulating. It is filled with tantalizing exegetical proposals, and the major debates within Romans on which Kirk does not register an opinion are few. Although some of his proposals are less than persuasive, Kirk draws attention to the importance of resurrection throughout Romans with exegetical sensitivity, resisting the temptation to impose a single grid on how it functions in different passages.

Kirk's synthetic proposal of a Pauline resurrection-hermeneutic, however, is not without problems. In the final chapter, Kirk declares Paul to be a 'revisionist' reader, decrying the possibility of 'organic' connections between Israel's Scriptures and Paul's interpretations. If this were the case, one begins to wonder who would have found such a revisionist theodicy compelling. More importantly, however, Kirk's portrayal of Paul as a *revisionist* reader of Israel's Scriptures stands in stark contrast

to Paul's self-portrayal as one *revealing* mysteries truly contained in the prophetic writings, but hidden in ages past (Rom. 16:25-26). In fact, on the very point where Kirk thinks Paul must employ a resurrection-hermeneutic in order to gain rhetorical leverage (the inclusion of Gentiles), one of Paul's main arguments is a straight-forward chronological reading of the Abraham story (Rom. 4:1-12). Although Paul's encounter with the risen Christ certainly did affect the way he read Scripture, it is doubtful that Kirk's portrayal of Paul as a revisionist reader with an idiosyncratic hermeneutic will ultimately result in anything more than a reductionist account of Paul's engagement with Scripture.

Fortunately, Kirk's exegesis is often better than his theory, and his book is well worth reading for the vigorous engagement he provides on that front.

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IN THE NEXT ISSUE

Proceedings of the Edinburgh Bavinck Conference

held 1-2 September, 2010
Guest Editor: James Eglinton (Kampen)

Including contributions from:

Henk van den Belt (Utrecht)
John Bolt (Calvin Theological Seminary)
George Harinck (VU Amsterdam)
Dirk van Keulen (PThU Kampen)
Donald Macleod (Free Church College)

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