Editorial

This edition of the Bulletin includes two articles that relate to Jonathan Edwards's theology. Edwards was one of the most renowned puritan preachers. During his ministry he witnessed a revival, which then faded, but then returned and there was an even more widespread awakening. During this time evangelical Christianity made significant advances in the west.

It cannot be a coincidence that momentous events happened around figures such as Edwards. Psalms 80 and 85, which are concerned with restoration and revival in a broken land, indicate knowledge of God and his past works are keys to recovery. Edwards's command of scripture is readily apparent in his writings. His observations and writings are formed through his understanding of the Bible. He was famous for his devotion to God's word. Crossway recently produced an interleaved edition of the Bible, which follows Edward's practice of inserting a blank page for notes alongside each page of the Bible.[1]

Puritans are rightly remembered for applying Christian truth. These preachers were masters of practical theology. Their profound knowledge of God and his works was matched by their ability to apply that knowledge to the hearer. Puritan preachers skilfully applied the gospel, through prayer and study. This was not an easy task! The Westminster Public Directory of Worship identifies sermon application as an especially difficult task for a preacher, 'albeit it prove a work of great difficulty to himself, requiring much prudence, zeal, and meditation'.[2] Today we still benefit from the labours which produced the spiritual fruit of that time, especially through the puritan writings.

Edwards's *The Religious Affections*, referred to in Fergus Macdonald's article, is one such book. He draws extensively from scripture in order to discern characteristics that belong to a lively Christian faith. His book gathers numerous examples of behaviours evident among biblical characters, providing evidence for what may or may not indicate genuine Christian faith.

When we think of those who skilfully and wisely apply scripture, Christ is pre-eminent. The Lord faithfully applies the word in every circumstance and interaction. That is one reason why the gospels make for such compelling reading. Through observing Christ we learn from his knowledge and application of God's word.

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1 Edwards's notes are available to read online through the Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale University: <edwards.yale.edu>.

2 The Westminster Directory for Public Worship, Sec 6.

After his resurrection, Christ showed from the Law, Prophets and Psalms how he had fulfilled the whole of scripture. He taught his disciples the whole of God's word and gave them comprehensive understanding of its meaning. His knowledge and use of the scriptures formed his disciples.

Christ's influence among his disciples, forming them with scripture, was recently impressed upon me while preaching through the Book of Revelation. John's knowledge of the Bible is evident throughout the text. He is thoroughly familiar with it and it is therefore natural for him to record the vision in biblical terms. He freely draws from the Old Testament in describing what he sees.

The same can be said of the other disciples when we consider their use of scripture in the New Testament. Each page makes use of the Old Testament. Faith in Christ leads to an increase in the knowledge of God (Colossian 1:9-10). Evidently that comes through God's word.

As we learn from Christ, so we also learn from those who have walked most closely to him. So readers of the Bulletin will hopefully be spurred on from the articles here to read Jonathan Edwards. His insights cause us to turn to the Bible and consequently to Christ, to observe God at work in ways we have perhaps not observed before, filling us then with the desire to know more of him and his works. With the Bible open, and with faith in Christ, we can trust a good harvest for him will follow.

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Revd Kapolyo's paper was the Finlayson Memorial Lecture, delivered at the 2018 SETS conference, 'Learning with the Global Church' in Glasgow on 16 April 2018.

African and Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Theological Education and Ministry[1]

Joe M. Kapolyo

Finlayson Memorial Lecture 2018

The following paper presents personal thought and reflections and is not to be understood as representative of current African scholarly opinion.

Professor Andrew Walls describes the importance of theological education and ministry in Africa for the future of global Christianity:

> Christian history indicates that searching, fundamental scholarship arises naturally out of the exercise of Christian mission and especially from its cross-cultural expression.
> What happens there [Africa, Asia and Latin America] will determine what the Christianity of the 21st and 22nd centuries will be like […]. The quality of African and Asian theological scholarship, therefore, will not only be vital for Africans and Asians and Latin Americans; it will help to determine the shape and quality of world Christianity.
> In a word, if Africa, Asia and Latin America do not develop a proper capacity for leadership in theological studies, there will for practical purposes be no theological studies anywhere that will be worth caring about.[2]

AFRICA AND THE FUTURE OF CHRISTIAN MISSION

It is now generally recognised that the principal theatres of Christianity have shifted from the western heartlands to the southern hemispheres of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Rough statistics suggest that in 1900 more than 80% of all Christians lived in the West. By 2000 the number

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1 Most of the material that follows and forms the bulk of this article is published in an article I wrote entitled 'Theology and culture; An African Perspective' in Bowers, Kapolyo, Olofinjana (eds.), *Encountering London* (London: London Baptist Association 2015), pp. 68-79. Subsequently, I gave the paper at the gathering of Missio Africanus in Oxford in July 2017. The material is used here with appropriate permission and references.

2 These quotations, taken from an unpublished paper by Professor Andrew Walls, are reflected in Chapter 5, entitled 'Africa in Christian History' in Andrew Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History*, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2002).

of Christians in the south had risen to about 50%. In a hundred years' time, if the Lord has not returned and if the trends continue as they are now, more than 80% of all Christians will be from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The quality of interaction between the Gospel and the cultures of Africa will determine the quality not only of African Christianity but also of world Christianity. If the quality of that interaction is healthy, we can confidently expect great things; new theologies, Christologies, mature and attractive standards of Christian living, a clear Christ stamp on the African Church and of course the growth of the universal Church into the full stature of Christ. However, if the quality is poor, then we can look forward with fear to 'distortion, confusion, uncertainty and hypocrisy'.[3]

Rwanda was the cradle of the East African Revival. By 1990, Rwanda was one of the most Christianised countries in Africa. But in 1994, for one hundred days 'Spirit-filled' evangelical Christians hacked to death other 'Spirit-filled' evangelical Christians because they belonged to a different tribe! I understand that in one country in Sub Saharan Africa criminals will pray before engaging in their evil nefarious activities. If they are successful, they will tithe their ill-gotten gains to the Church. It is said that some pastors drive around in new cars donated for their use by such criminals! I sincerely hope this story is apocryphal and riddled with embellishments. But if it has any element of truth in it then it is a serious sign of the kind of potential gross corruption that could so easily infect the Church. However, there is a window of opportunity to do what is right. I do not know how long that opportunity will last. But like most finite things, I know it is limited. Therefore let all, particularly African Christians, who have interest in the development of world Christian mission, grasp this opportunity with both hands and work to develop an empowering and attractive theological methodology, a liberating hermeneutic, to enable people of African descent to think, speak and write theologically in forms that arise from the deep wells of the African soul not mediated in a second hand manner through Western intellectual categories to satisfy a culturally Eurocentric theological agenda.

Fifteen years ago, shortly after I took over as the principal of the All Nations Christian College in Ware, Hertfordshire in England, I noticed the lack of black British students not only at All Nations but in many of the evangelical theological institutions in the United Kingdom. At that time, these colleges in general and All Nations in particular, could easily fill their student places with European and third world students. Third

[3] Quotation taken from the same unpublished paper referred to in note 2 above, but see in addition Walls, *Cross-Cultural Process*, 119.

world students were hindered by lack of funds and increasingly in fortress Europe, lack of visas. But black urban British students were a rarity. Perhaps the picture has changed in the intervening years since I left the college, although I have my doubts. At that time, I took the opportunity to consult with two of the leading black Christians in the country; Joel Edwards, then head of the Evangelical Alliance UK (EAUK) and Mark Sturge, then head of the now defunct African Caribbean Evangelical Alliance (ACEA). In response to my quest, both gentlemen were quite clear that the curricula of our colleges offered nothing to the Black British Urban experience. The colleges and the theology they espoused, were irrelevant to the experience of life of this particular people group. Why?

I once gave a paper at a gathering of the German Evangelical Missionary Alliance in which I suggested that 'there is no such thing as theology but only theologies' including enlightenment (European), feminist, womanist, liberation, black theology, African, Asian, etc. I suggested that there needed to be a revolution in theology similar to the one that took place in social anthropology when the idea of plurality of culture was introduced in contrast to the dominant concept of a universal singular culture.[4] The latter dominated 19th century European thought and coupled it with imperialistic ideas of evolution, progress and development. Accordingly, a supposed continuum existed on which all ethnic groups could be located from the most primitive to the most civilised or cultured. Primitive ethnicities, mostly colonised peoples, were located towards the beginning of that line while the most civilised, represented by most if not all Caucasian peoples, were located towards the end of the continuum. I suggest that this situation or something similar exists in theology. My paper was put on a website for wider distribution. A few months later I had an email from an American missionary working in Japan who had seen my paper and taken issue with my basic thesis. He suggested instead that what Europeans, Africans, Asians etc. need is a biblical theology not 'ethnic' theologies. As I contemplated the contents of his email, I looked up to see on my bookshelf an international dictionary of pastoral theology and ethics. I flipped through it casually looking for an article on 'spirit or demon possession and pastoral practice'. I looked in vain. I suppose there must have been a reference to the subject under the article(s) on the Holy Spirit. But my point was that theologians from cultures that are not troubled in general by demon possession would not think to ask the theological questions that would deal with that subject. African pastors deal with demon possession regularly in their ministries. An inter-

[4] See N. Rapport and J. Overing, *Social and Cultural Anthropology* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 110.

national dictionary of theology would surely give them help in that area. But alas no, because the authors of the articles included were grounded in very different cultures from those represented in Africa. Every theology is culturally biased because it is developed by people who are contextualised in time and space.

But how did we get here and what should we do about it in regard to theological discourse in education and ministry?

DEVELOPMENT OF THEOLOGY

Strictly speaking, theology, a word derived from two Greek words, *Theos* and *logos*, means a study of ideas about God, more particularly, the Christian God. Sometimes we use the expression the doctrine of God. This is certainly the sense in which the term was used by the early North African church fathers, who coined the phrase, in the City of Alexandria in the second century AD. These included Clement, Cyprian and Origen. But even Tertullian the second century writer and lawyer from North Africa spoke of theology as the study of the God of the Christians.[5] As a matter of fact, systematic theology as a discipline of study originated in Alexandria, in Egypt.

Theology as a modern academic discipline was born with the founding of universities in the European cities of Paris, Bologna and Oxford. Originally the universities offered only four subjects: these included the arts, which was the entry programme for scholars. Then they would graduate to do medicine, law and theology. By the 13th century, theology was increasingly used to refer to the systematic study of Christian beliefs in general and not just the articulation of beliefs about God. The establishment of the discipline in universities drew a distinction between the much favoured and more academic theoretical and speculative study of theology, over against the practical subjects to do with the practice of churchmanship. Until relatively recently, practical theology, the practice in ministry arising out of the study of theology, was seen as a very poor relation within the faculties of theology.

With the onset of secularism arising from the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century in Europe and America, it was argued that theology needed to be free from any external authorities such as the church or even the creeds. This led directly to the dropping of theology from the faculties of universities in those countries with a strong secularist ideology. In those countries, like France and Australia, it has taken a long time before universities would admit theology as a bonafide academic discipline. The

[5] Alister McGrath, *Christian Theology* (Oxford: Blackwells, 2007), pp. 6-7, 102.

more secular the countries became, the more likely that theology was looked upon with suspicion and excluded from public education at every level.[6] In the United Kingdom, it is relatively recently, in the final quarter of the 20th century that university authorities have allowed Bible Colleges to offer degree programmes for their courses (CNAA or direct accreditation with established universities).

Objective theology, as taught in the universities, has several basic components: Bible, systematization, philosophy, history, pastoral and spirituality.

From my point of view, western theology as outlined above, is founded on biblical ideas, filtered through Greek philosophical methods, married to rationalism and the enlightenment ideology, focussed almost solely on an objective discussion of ideas (cognitive and informative), even if these ideas are about God. As a result two major weaknesses in the western theological enterprise have become apparent. These are silence and collusion; silence (the typical sin of an individuating culture) in the face of gross injustices suffered at the hands of the west by many colonised people and collusion with the whole western cultural, economic and political imperialistic agenda.

THEOLOGY AND THE IMPERIALISTIC AGENDA

The western theological enterprise was not just silent but positively encouraged the triangular slave trade in which upwards of sixty million Africans were displaced from their homelands and sold into chattel slavery or perished during the long voyage from Africa to the Caribbean and the Americas. It was a Roman Catholic nation, Portugal, which first took slaves from the Congo in 1444 AD. The Protestant nations which eventually overtook Portugal in colonial expansion were no more concerned for the freedom and salvation of the Africans. They allowed economic interests to blind their sense of justice and mercy, righteousness and godliness. There were significant western voices of dissent (most notably John Newton, William Wilberforce, Thomas Fowell Buxton, etc.) but by and large the whole theological establishment had little to say to counter the injustices against black people and other people of colour; both African and Indian. The Baptist Union Great Britain (BUGB) issued an apology in 2007; a recognition of the Union's complicity (even if by silence) in the slave trade. It was also an acknowledgement of the economic benefits derived from such an inhumane business.

[6] Ibid., 105.

In the year 2007, the National Council of the Baptist Union of Great Britain made a public apology primarily to the Baptist Union of Jamaica and generally to black people. The apology was significant, not because the sins of the fathers were unfairly visited on the children as so many seem to think; that was not the issue. This generation of white Christians is not to be held directly responsible for the transatlantic slave trade. However, the tragedy of the connection with Africa made by the Iberian powers back in the middle of the fifteenth century when they first exported a few slaves from the Congo has come to dominate and haunt relations between black and white people for centuries. In those relationships white people have proved dominant and powerful in every way. This is a result of the slave trade and has serious continuing consequences for the way white and black people relate to each other.[7] This is the crucial point.

J. H. Cone makes the point clear by saying, 'While I had not lived during the time of the legal slavery, its impact upon black life is still visibly present in the contemporary economic, social, and political [I would add theological] structures of the United States. Lynching is the most dramatic manifestation of the legacy of black slavery. Incidentally, lynching, a verb derived from the surname of Mr William Lynch, is not just the physical brutality connected with summary executions of black people at the hands of white racists, it is especially a way of sowing distrust among black people so that they can never trust each other but wholly trust their slave masters.

The debilitating effects of the slave trade on Africa are easy to identify. Not only were the most able-bodied men, women and children taken, leaving older less able people, but the coastal lands and their hinterlands were turned into war zones as tribe fought tribe to capture slaves for sale to European slave traders of the time. Theology was silent; it did not seem to influence either Catholic or Protestant powers in their quest for more and more slaves to satisfy the seemingly insatiable appetite for labour of the burgeoning plantations and their slave traders, which in turn fed the ever-growing appetites of the nations' coffers back in Europe. The slave trade created untold wealth for the trading nations while despoiling the continent of Africa.

Again, with a few exceptions, the western theological establishment in Germany was silent or irrelevant over the slaughter of six million Jews in the Third Reich during the Second World War. With the exception of people like Dietrich Bonhoeffer who was martyred for his opposition to the Nazi regime and Karl Barth, the majority of German theologians

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7 Andrew Walls, 'Africa in Christian History: Retrospect and Prospect', *Journal of African Christian Thought* 1:1 (1998), pp. 5-6.

remained silent when this gross miscarriage of justice was committed by the Nazis.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, theology was too easily the handmaiden of the European colonial enterprise and all the problems of land acquisition and the wholesale dehumanisation of non-white peoples all over the world.

During the pre-colonial period white missionaries in places like Calabar, Zululand, Basutoland, Buluwayo in Zimbabwe, were strictly controlled by the local tribal political figures; Moshoeshoe, Lobengula, Mzilikazi, etc. But during the high-water mark of colonialism (1880-1930) missionaries were part of the governing system. Undoubtedly there were many individuals who bucked the trend and espoused the aspirations of Africans and fought against the injustices that characterised the colonial rule (Cripps in Rhodesia, Frank Barlow in Kenya – a Scottish missionary turned land tenure expert who fought to give back land to the Kikuyu from the government and the Mission).[8] But in general, the voice of the missionary enterprise and the voice of their theology were silent in the face of these gross miscarriages of justice!

Western cultural and therefore theological domination was particularly acute in certain parts of Africa, both Anglophone and Francophone. During the period of colonialism, the colonized were not encouraged to develop confidence in using their local languages and cultures for formal education, which tended to have been developed by Westerners for Westerners then adapted and re-packaged for the colonies. This Eurocentric approach to education, history, culture and intellectual development excluded the possibility of serious engagement with indigenous thought patterns, categories, idiom and indeed general concerns. This is especially true in countries in the areas ranging from East, Central and Southern Africa where white settler presence inculcated a near total abandonment of the local languages and their cultures for anything but personal and domestic use. The riches of African languages and cultures would not and did not form any serious part of educational curricula at either secondary or tertiary levels. As Gordon Molyneux observed, 'Imperial western values and concepts […] were at one and the same time opening to African societies the intellectual and economic means of [modern] nationhood and also creating a universe where their traditional worldview found no place.'[9] To the detriment of the African Church, this state of affairs has

8 Walls, *Cross-Cultural Process*, p. 98.

9 K. Gordon Molyneux, *African Christian Theology* (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1993), p. 27.

been perpetrated even in the postcolonial era in life in general and especially so in the church and its theological discourse.

It is depressing to find many, perhaps even the majority, of educated sub-Saharan African Christian ministers preferring to preach or teach in their adopted colonial lingua franca instead of their mother tongues even when the context of such ministry, e.g. college, church, family funerals, is totally mono-cultural. Kalilombe, writing from the context of Malawi, emphasizes this point when he laments the dearth of grassroots theological reflection because 'the Christian masses tend to doubt whether they can do their own reflection on their faith'.[10]

Cone, writing from an African American context, makes a similar point when he says,

> I think that black professors are still too captivated by structures of white thought and therefore cannot think creatively. What we think and how we organize our ideas are too much determined by our training at Union, Harvard, Yale and other white schools that imitate them. The academic structure of white seminary and university curriculums require that black students reject their heritage or at least regard it as intellectually marginal.[11]

In apartheid South Africa, the doctrine of separateness and the designation of black people as 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' for white people were underpinned by the Dutch Reformed Church's (DRC) interpretation of certain biblical passages from the early chapters of the Book of Genesis (Genesis 9:24-27). They misinterpreted the curse on Canaan, traditionally understood to have been fulfilled in the subjugation of Canaan by Joshua, to be a universal curse on Canaan's father Ham and all his descendants, people of colour, for ever.[12] The demise of the Apartheid system of government in South Africa was in part based on a revision of this official doctrine of the DRC.

Perhaps, as Bediako states, it is for these and other reasons that western Christianity seems to have lost its vigour and has become 'dispirited [...] with declining numbers' year on year. Perhaps that is why, in God's economy, the centre of gravity of the Christian Church has shifted to the

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10 Patrick Kalilombe, *Doing Theology at the Grassroots* (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1999), p. 193. I would add African professional theologians and ministers to this assertion.

11 J. H. Cone, *My Soul Looks Back* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1993), p. 76.

12 Allen P. Ross in John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament* (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1985), p. 41f.; contra Erich Sauer, *The Dawn of World Redemption* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1951), p. 75ff.

southern continents.[13] This shift is the third in the history of the Christian Church. The first occurred in the first and second centuries AD. The shift from Jerusalem to Rome enabled the faith to survive the demise of the Jewish State, after 70 AD and especially after 135 AD when the Romans made it illegal for Jews to live in Palestine. Similarly, the shift from the Mediterranean basin to the northern European states enabled the Church to survive the invasion of Rome by the Barbarians. The Church will again be preserved from the ravages of rapid secularisation, even in theology, and pluralism in the west as it finds a home in the heartlands of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

REDEEMING THEOLOGY – THE IMPORTANCE OF THE READER AND HIS OR HER CONTEXT

Contextualisation is the theological movement that has caught the imagination of many people of the southern continents leading to such theological expressions as liberation theology, black theology, feminist and womanist (black women) theologies, and many others besides. Simply put, contextualization is the abandonment, by Latin Americans, black Africans, Indians, Asians, etc., of the western theological agenda; the traditional 'marriage between theology or Christian reflection and western norms of thought and life'.[14] The contexts are varied; Latin American liberation theology has been dominated by the economics of injustice in that part of the world. Black Theology has been dominated by black people's fight against white racism and the injustices of white domination of black people especially in the United States and South Africa. Historical, economic, political and cultural contexts have become pivotal in the theological reflections that characterise what are pejoratively called non-western theologies. I must reiterate, *there is no such thing as theology; there are only theologies! There is no such thing as non-contextualised theology – all theologies, western theology included – are contextualised!*

Every one of these contexts needs to be reflected in the world-wide Church's theological expression and taught as such in all our theological colleges. This has significant eschatological ramifications. In that day when the redeemed will be drawn from every tribe, tongue, language and nation, there will be a great multicultural mosaic to glorify the Lord.[15] I fear that on that day a lot of us who have come under the influence of

[13] K. Bediako, 'Facing the Challenge', *Journal of African Christian Thought* 1.1 (1998).

[14] C. S. Song, *Third-Eye Theology* (London: Lutterworth, 1980), p. 4.

[15] D. A. Carson, *The Gagging of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), p. 540.

western theology will simply reflect a faded carbon copy of the imperial image of theology bequeathed to us by those whose intellectual developments took their cues from Aristotle and Plato but neglected the wisdom that built great empires like the Ashanti of Ghana, the Zulu of South Africa and Monomotapa of Great Zimbabwe!

Liberation theology, Black theology, Feminist and Womanist theologies, etc., are all in their contexts able to speak to each other meaningfully because of their basis – the self-disclosure of the triune God revealed in nature, the written Scriptures and supremely in the Living Word of God, Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

BLACK THEOLOGY – JAMES HARVEY CONE

Cone was troubled when he asked the question, 'How could I continue to allow my intellectual life to be consumed by the theological problems defined by people who had enslaved my grandparents? Since there was nothing in Euro-American theology that spoke directly to slavery, colonisation and poverty, why should I let white theologians tell me what the Gospel is'?[16]

Cone found his solution, his context, in the black struggle for liberation. Black theology is the marriage between Black Power and Christianity; an enterprise created and engaged in solely by black theologians struggling alongside their brothers and sisters for freedom from political bondage and cultural imperialism. The issue for him was whether the biblical Christ was to be limited to what he calls the prejudiced interpretations of the white scholars.[17] At that time any attempt to speak positively with the gospel into the historic-political movements was anathema to any serious theologian who adhered to the divine revelation (although perhaps it is more accurate to say that the majority were just too scared to raise their voices of protest).

Cone was a man reborn! His theological reflections could no longer ignore the current violence against black people; the deaths of Martin Luther King Jr, Malcolm X, and the historic killings of so many blacks in the cities of the Southern United States, the slave ships, the auction blocks, and the myriads of lynchings.

> When it became clear to me that my intellectual consciousness should be defined and controlled by black history and culture and not by standards set in white seminaries and universities, I could feel in the depth of my being a

[16] Cone, *My Soul Looks Back*, p. 43.
[17] Ibid., 44.

> liberation that began to manifest itself in the energy and passion of my writing. Writing for the first time became as natural as talking and preaching.[18]

'When a person writes about something that matters to him or her existentially, and in which his or her identity is at stake, then the energy comes easily and naturally'.[19] Cones's rationale for writing theology, may well explain why there are very few truly significant black African contributions to theology. The African Bible Commentary, a remarkable achievement in its own way, although written by Africans including me, is in effect, with few exceptions, a Western document on account of the fact that all the authors were mentored by Westerners and all of us seem to have bought into the myth of objective theology of the Enlightenment. There are some remarkable exceptions like Samuel Waje Kunhiyop's article on witchcraft in the context of Saul's visit to the witch of Endor (1 Samuel 28).[20] As we look to the future, it is imperative that all theological colleges end the division between Theology and Contextualised Theologies. There is no such thing as theology there are only theologies. All theologies however, have a common denominator for they derive from the triune God revealed in Scripture. On a practical level, this does mean all theological library holdings must include authors from non-western countries. It also means a determination where we teach in multicultural contexts, that we include on the faculties men and women who represent different ethnicities and cultural backgrounds.

For those of us who are African, we need the courage to move away from doing theology on the basis of what Bediako called, the 'shifting sands of a borrowed culture'. God has kindly left tremendous deposits of his grace in every culture. Therefore, we need the confidence to develop the skills to think like Africans, to engage with Scripture like Africans, using African thought forms and categories even when we are writing and speaking in any of the universal languages of commerce and trade. Let me end with an example: Cleansing of widows is a funerary rite practised by many Zambian people in their cultures. Cleansing of widows or widowers takes place a few days or weeks after the death and burial of a spouse. Traditionally, this ritual involved in part sexual intercourse between the surviving spouse and a member (married or single) of the family of the deceased. The practice raises obvious questions of infidelity for Christians. Although sadly, apart from blanket condemnation of

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18 Ibid., 47.

19 Ibid., 51.

20 Tokunboh Adeyemo (ed.), *Africa Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), p. 374.

the practice, which is the easy thing to do, there is very little courageous and nuanced analysis of the practice; an analysis that could potentially prove useful to African Christian thought and practice. Underlying this practice of cleansing of widows and widowers are certain beliefs including an understanding that when two people marry the marriage is not just a physical union, it is a spiritual one. The respective spirits of the two-people involved in a marriage live in each other's bodies. Therefore, at death, the spirit of the deceased needs to be released from the body of the surviving spouse, to return to its people; hence the sexual intercourse. Note the understanding and belief that sexual intercourse is not just two bits of flesh rubbing against each other but that it is a deeply spiritual or sacred activity between two people in a committed relationship not only sanctioned by the families and society but binding the families involved. Surely this African belief and practice, albeit encrusted in centuries of sinful behaviour, harbours a deeply embedded even collective memory of a biblical view of sex and sexuality; sexual union is more than just physical it has deeply spiritual significance for good or ill (see Ephesians 5:32, cf. 1 Corinthians 6:15)? Similarly, the understanding that marriage is not just two people in physical union but that it is deeply spiritual for it is an exchange of the human spirit that binds two married people. Surely these taken for granted beliefs in Zambian culture are in line with the Bible's teaching on the nature of Christian marriage and foreignness of the ideas of marital infidelity and divorce. There must be a way by which African theologians could and should tease out these deposits of grace to help liberate them from these practices encrusted in sinful behaviour and use them to inform Christian teaching on the subjects of marriage, sexuality and death. The study of cultures is thus imperative in the context of theological study, especially so in the increasingly multicultural contexts in which we live out our Christian faith.

Returning to where I started, the intellectual energies released from this kind of study of the Bible which takes seriously the host cultures of each ethnic group, will forge new and inclusive ways of looking at the Scriptures to bring about what Andrew Walls calls 'the Ephesian moment'.[21] Ways that will be attractive to all groups of people we seek to draw into the Kingdom of God.

[21] Walls, *Cross-Cultural Process*, p. 81.

Two-way Traffic between Azusa Street and Northampton?[1]

Fergus Macdonald

In his book *The Presbyterian Way of Life*, published in 1960, John A. Mackay described Presbyterians as 'a theologically minded people.'[2] For Presbyterians and all Reformed Christians, theology addresses the human mind. But Calvin's crest testifies that Reformed Christians also experience theology as energising the heart. The design depicts an outstretched arm with the hand grasping a heart in flame being offered to God, encircled and interpreted by the words: 'My heart I give You, Lord, eagerly and sincerely.' Reflecting on Calvin's crest, Mackay comments: 'deep in the heart of Calvinism […] resides a profound piety, that is, a personal experience of God linked to a passionate devotion to God.'[3]

This paper was prepared with a view to promoting and stimulating creative discussion between reformed and charismatic Christians in light of some recent rapprochement between these two groups.[4] It recognises that both reformed and charismatic Christianity regard spirituality essentially to be seeking to obey and fulfil the Great Commandment: to love God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind, and to love our neighbour as ourselves (Mark 12:28-31; Matt. 22:34-40). This presentation is set within the broad parameters of traditional reformed theology as articulated in the *Westminster Confession of Faith* (1646), with a special focus on the work of Jonathan Edwards (1703-58), the famous preacher-theologian of New England in the 18th century, whose treatise *The Religious Affections* is widely regarded as an outstanding examina-

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1 Azusa St, Los Angeles, is widely recognised as the birthplace in 1906 of modern Pentecostalism. Northampton, Massachusetts, is where Jonathan Edwards, author of *The Treatise Concerning Religious Affections*, preached for over 20 years, during which time he witnessed two remarkable spiritual awakenings. This article is a slightly revised version of a paper entitled 'Reformed and Charismatic Relations', presented at the Theological Commission of the World Reformed Fellowship, in Bethesda, Maryland, USA, in October 2016.

2 *The Presbyterian Way of Life* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1960), p. 34.

3 Ibid., p. 9.

4 For example, by C. Hansen, *Young, Restless, Reformed* (Wheaton, Il: Crossway, 2008).

tion of reformed spirituality. [5] Reference is also made to the writings of contemporary Anglican theologian, J. I. Packer.

Although there have been and there still are among the denominations affirming the Reformed confessions, those which seek to restrict their membership to people showing accredited evidence of being among the elect, the *Westminster Confession* recognises that Churches on earth are 'more or less pure' and even the purest are 'subject to mixture and error' (XXV.3,4). In the Preface to *Affections*, Jonathan Edwards acknowledges 'that so much good, and so much bad, should be mixed together in the church of God' is a mystery (p. 16), a reality which prompted him to preach and write on what he calls 'the distinguishing signs of truly gracious and holy affections' (p. 120). For Edwards the term 'affections' includes inclinations of the human mind as well as emotions such as love, hope, fear, anger and zeal.

The essence of this paper is an exploration of five key elements in classic reformed spirituality together with a preliminary exploration of how each of these might resonate to a greater or lesser extent with facets of charismatic devotion in ways which might mutually enhance dialogue between reformed and charismatics. These elements are: the glory of God, the humiliation of sinners, the activity of the Word, the indispensability of the Holy Spirit, and the duty of self-examination. We shall see that, despite significant differences, there is more common ground visible today between charismatics and reformed in the case of the doctrines of God, Scripture and the Holy Spirit, while the commonality in relation to humiliation and self-examination lies in the fact that they are largely neglected by both groups.

We now turn to the first of these: the glory of God.

GOD IS GLORIFIED

The nerve centre of reformed spirituality is captured in the answer to the first question in the *Westminster Shorter Catechism*: 'Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him for ever.'[6] Glorifying God is the supreme aim of every aspect of human living, and Christians are called to make every effort to give God the highest honour in everything they do.

There is no doubt that Jonathan Edwards' spirituality focuses on the glory of God. He recognises that God is glorified when we love him according to the Great Commandment. He regards love as the chief

[5] In this paper all unattributed page numbers refer to *Select Works of Jonathan Edwards, Volume III, Treatise Concerning the Religious Affections* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1961).

[6] The answer in the *Larger Catechism* adds 'fully' before 'to enjoy him for ever.'

affection and the source of all other affections (p. 35). He asserts that the primary reason why a true saint glorifies God is that the saint loves 'the divine excellency and the glory of God' (p. 166).

> The first foundation of a true love to God is that whereby he is in himself lovely, or worthy to be loved, or the supreme loveliness of his nature. This is certainly what makes him chiefly amiable (p. 168).

A few pages further on in *Affections* Edwards writes:

> True and holy love in the saints arises not because they first see that God loves them, and then see that he is lovely, but they first see that God is lovely, and that Christ is excellent and glorious, and their hearts are first captivated with this view, and the exercises of their love are wont from time to time to begin here, and to arise primarily from these views; and, then, consequentially, they see God's love and great favour to them. The saint's affections begin with God; and self-love has a hand in these affections consequentially and secondarily only (p. 172).

Anticipating later biblical scholars, Edwards regards holiness to be the primary divine attribute, for, it is God's holiness that 'renders his other attributes glorious and lovely.' He goes on to assert: 'A true love to God must begin with a delight in his holiness' (p. 183). For Edwards it is the beauty of God's holiness that captivates the saint. This Edwardian emphasis is reflected in Packer's *Knowing God* which urges us to 'turn each truth that we learn about God into matter for meditation *before* God, leading to prayer and praise *to* God.'[7] For Packer, as for Edwards, there is no more exalted and no more compelling human goal than knowing God! Knowing God produces in those who know him likeness to God, or 'godliness' which Packer asserts to be 'true religion' and describes as 'responding to God's revelation in trust and obedience, faith and worship, prayer and praise, submission and service' (p. 16).

We now pose three questions which might help us to investigate the extent to which charismatic and reformed pieties converge in focusing on glorifying God:

- In what ways might the prominent role of praise in charismatic worship echo Edwards' exhortations to love God in the beauty of holiness?

[7] J. I. Packer, *Knowing God* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1973), p. 20.

- Why has the delight of enjoying God's presence highlighted in the two Westminster Catechisms and manifested in charismatic worship services become an untapped vein in many reformed worship services?

- How might charismatics help us in our reformed ivory towers rediscover that a key logical outcome of theology is praise?

The second element of reformed piety I wish to highlight is humiliation.

PEOPLE ARE HUMBLED

The Westminster 'Directory for Public Worship'[8] makes provision in certain circumstances for the churches to observe a day of public fasting, and on both sides of the Atlantic some churches in the reformed tradition have appointed days of humiliation and prayer. These special days were held 'when some great or notable judgments are either inflicted upon a people, or apparently imminent, or by some extraordinary provocations notoriously deserved.'[9]

In the reformed tradition humiliation in the sense of being humbled before a holy and sovereign God is seen as a personal as well as a public act, for it is regarded as a preparatory phase in what the *Shorter Catechism* entitles 'effectual calling' (Answer to Question 31). The Catechism reminds us that prior to persuading and enabling us to embrace Jesus Christ, God's Spirit convinces us of 'our sin and misery.'

This personal humiliation is highlighted by Edwards. For him, one of 'the distinguishing signs of truly gracious and holy affections' is that they are 'attended with evangelical humiliation' (p. 237). He distinguishes evangelical humiliation from legal humiliation. While legal humiliation may lead to evangelical humiliation, it lacks the dynamic of the Holy Spirit's indwelling, arising rather from the 'common influence' of the Spirit in assisting conscience. It is not a sign of gracious affections because 'there is no spiritual understanding, the will is not bowed nor the inclination altered.' The conscience may be convinced, but only in the sense that 'the consciences of all will be most perfectly [convinced] at the day of judgment' (p. 238). 'Men may be legally humbled,' he says, 'and have no humility: as the wicked at the day of judgment will be thoroughly convinced that they have no righteousness, but are altogether sinful, exceedingly

[8] 'The Directory for Public Worship', in *The Subordinate Standards and Other Authoritative Documents of the Free Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1955), pp. 162-64.

[9] Ibid., p. 162.

guilty, and justly exposed to eternal damnation' (p. 238). Edwards warns that legal humiliation can produce a legal spirit:

> Some who think themselves quite emptied of themselves, and are confident that they are abased in the dust, are full as they can hold with the glory of their own humility, and lifted up to heaven with a high opinion of their own abasement (p. 245).

On the other hand, evangelical humiliation arises from 'a sense of the transcendent beauty of divine things in their moral qualities' (p. 237) which brings people 'voluntarily to deny and renounce themselves' and to mortify the pride of their hearts (p. 238). Evangelical humiliation embraces 'the great Christian duty of self-denial' which consists in two things. It consists first in 'a man's denying his worldly inclinations, and in forsaking and renouncing all worldly objects and enjoyments.' Secondly, it consists in a man 'denying his natural self-exaltation, and renouncing his own dignity and glory, and in being emptied of himself' (p. 241). The eminent saint who is evangelically humiliated is thereby convicted of 'the high degree in which he ought to love God' by 'the greatness of his remaining corruption' (p. 251).

Confronted by the holy, transcendent beauty of God, the sinner is convicted of both his smallness and his sinfulness. A common physical posture in Old Testament worship was bowing down. For example, in Psalm 95 the congregation declares the supreme majesty of God: 'The Lord is the great God, the great king' and immediately responds with the exhortation: 'Come let us bow down in worship' (Ps. 95:3, 6).

Rightly or wrongly, services of public humiliation and prayer are today out of fashion. This is certainly the case in many reformed churches, and also I suspect in charismatic fellowships, which prompts the following questions:

- In what ways might reformed and charismatic Christians help one another to recover evangelical humiliation?

- How might the strengths of charismatic and reformed Christianity combine to combat (and to humble) contemporary humanism?

- Could charismatic enthusiasm temper reformed introspection and reformed solemnity moderate charismatic excitement?

The third facet of reformed spirituality I wish to consider is the centrality of Scripture in public and private worship.

THE WORD IS ACTIVE

In its chapter on Religious Worship, the *Westminster Confession* highlights, along with Prayer, Praise and Sacraments, 'The reading of the scriptures with godly fear, and conscionable hearing of the word, in obedience unto God, with understanding, faith and reverence' (XXI.5). The centrality of reading and hearing the Word is the primary worship emphasis in the reformed family of churches.

There is no doubt that Edwards stands full square in this tradition. He continually supports his arguments from Scripture as well as affirming the importance of the Word in both preaching and personal devotion, as is evidenced in the following quotation:

> The impressing of divine things on the hearts and affections of men is evidently one great and main end for which God has ordained that His Word delivered in the holy Scriptures should be opened, applied, and set home upon men in preaching (p. 44).

Good commentaries and theological literature may supplement preaching by imparting good understanding of the things of the Word of God, but they lack 'an equal tendency to impress them in men's hearts and affections' (p. 44). Edwards regards preaching as having a unique capacity 'to stir up the pure minds of the saints and quicken their affections,' particularly love and joy. (p. 44).

While affirming that personal, prayerful, and meditative reading of Scripture enlightens the mind and warms the heart, Edwards insists that the reading of Scripture calls for care and attention on the part of the reader. He complains that most persons read in an 'inattentive, unobserving way.'[10] Our full attentiveness is required because 'The Word of God enables the saints to see the excellency of Christ's person and to appreciate the preciousness of his blood and its sufficiency to atone for sin' (p. 200).

Edwards distinguishes between a notional understanding of Scripture and its teaching on one hand and a heart-felt engagement with the text on the other.

> There is a distinction to be made between a mere notional understanding, wherein the mind only beholds things in the exercise of a speculative faculty, and the sense of the heart, wherein the mind does not only speculate and behold, but relishes and feels (p. 198).

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[10] Works, quoted in James M. Gordon, *Evangelical Spirituality: From the Wesleys to John Stott* (London: SPCK, 1991), p. 49.

A couple of pages later Edwards pleads for more than an academic approach to Scripture: 'Take away all the moral beauty and sweetness of the Word, and the Bible is left wholly a dead letter, a dry, lifeless, tasteless thing' (p. 200). Yet in his *Works*, Edwards affirms that 'Even the most apparently arid parts of Scripture are "mines and treasures of gospel knowledge."'[11]

Most charismatics like many reformed profess a high view of the role of Scripture in the church.[12] However, two differences are apparent. For charismatics 'worship' (continuous praise for up to twenty minutes) replaces the sermon as the focal point in the service.[13] Secondly, there is an important difference regarding the sufficiency of Scripture. The reformed believe that Scripture is sufficient to instruct us concerning the way of salvation. Charismatics on the other hand supplement Scripture with prophecies and other revelations. This brief comparison between charismatics and reformed regarding the role of Scripture in public worship suggests that both groups might learn from each other by considering together the following questions:

- Has praise become too perfunctory in reformed worship?
- How might charismatics and reformed meaningfully explore together the relation between preaching and praise?
- Might the use of the term *apokalypsis* in 1 Corinthians 14:26 and Ephesians 1:17 allow us to speak of 'revelation' in two senses – with a capital 'R' and with a lower case 'r'?

The fourth feature of reformed spirituality I wish to consider is the indispensability of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS AT WORK

The Shorter Catechism asserts 'We are made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ, by the effectual application of it to us by his Holy Spirit' (Answer to Question 29). Christ's Spirit does this by 'working faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling' (Answer to Question 30). The Catechism goes on to explain effectual calling as,

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11 Ibid.

12 For example, Pete Ward, *Liquid Church* (Carlisle: Peabody, 2002), p. 67.

13 'As the Mass is for Catholics and the sermon is for Protestants, so the singing of songs for charismatics'; Pete Ward, *Selling Worship: How what we Sing has Changed the Church* (Bletchley, UK: Paternoster, 2005), p. 199.

> the work of God's Spirit, whereby convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel (Answer to Question 31).

Edwards' treatment of affections is in line with Westminster theology. He contends that gracious exercises and affections (as distinct from natural or carnal affections) are wrought in the minds of the saints through the saving influences of the Spirit. He distinguishes the 'saving influences' of the Spirit from the 'common influences' of the Spirit which only affect natural human principles. While exercising his common influences, the Spirit may convict, but he does not indwell. Edwards was convinced of this distinction from both Scripture and from pastoral experience. 'Not all those persons who are subject to any kind of influence of the Spirit of God are ordinarily called spiritual in the New Testament' (p. 126). And from the revivals he had observed that 'not everyone who is religiously affected has true grace' (p. 54).

In Edwards' view the saving influences of the Spirit go very much deeper as the following rather lengthy quotation makes clear. The Spirit of God is given to the saints,

> to dwell in them as his proper lasting abode; and to influence their hearts, as a principle of new nature, or as a divine supernatural spring of life and action. The Scriptures represent the Holy Spirit not only as moving and occasionally influencing the saints, but as dwelling in them as his temple, his proper abode, and everlasting dwelling place, 1 Cor iii.16, 2 Cor vi.16, John xiv.16, 17. And he is represented as being there so united to faculties of the soul that he becomes there a principle or spring of a new nature and life. So the saints are said to live by Christ living in them, Gal ii.20. Christ by his Spirit not only is in them, but *lives* in them; they live by his life (pp. 127-8).

Edwards resists the idea that the witness of the Spirit is either a personal revelation that one is converted (despite Romans 8:16!) or the gift of extraordinary signs. Rather, the witness of the Spirit is closely connected with the Spirit's interpretation of the Word: 'If a sinner be once convinced of the veracity of God and that the Scriptures are his Word, he will need no more to convince and satisfy him that he is invited' (p. 151). In this Edwards is in accord with the *Westminster Confession* which identifies the witness of the Spirit as coming 'by and with the word in our hearts.' The *Confession* goes on to elaborate as follows:

> The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, is either expressly set down in scripture, or by good and necessary conse-

> quence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men (I.5, 6).

Edwards seems to regard the witness of the Spirit, the seal of the Spirit and the earnest of the Spirit as synonymous terms describing the Spirit's vital dwelling in the heart of the saints (p. 161). For him, the virtues or fruits of the Spirit are surer evidence of true spirituality than are possessing the gifts of the Spirit (p. 127).

In *Knowing God*, Packer complains that 'The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is the Cinderella of Christian doctrines'.[14] That may possibly be true of mainstream evangelicalism, but it cannot be directed at either reformed or charismatics. Both have the highest regard for the work of the Spirit. Calvin is known as 'the theologian of the Holy Spirit' and all the reformed confessions testify to the indispensable presence of the Spirit to bring light and energy in both evangelism and Christian nurture. While many charismatics may hold an Arminian view of conversion and the new birth, all of them lay huge stress on the Spirit, focusing especially on his supernatural gifts such as prophecy, healing and tongues-speaking. The very real differences between the reformed and charismatic doctrines of the Spirit prompt many on both sides to dismiss as futile any creative doctrinal dialogue between the two. However, the very strength of affirmation of the Spirit by both reformed and charismatics should surely enable meaningful and respectful debate to take place. Some of the issues that might be discussed include the following:

- As the Holy Spirit bears witness 'by and with the word in our hearts' (Westminster Confession, I.5), does the Spirit energise the text of Scripture as well as illuminate it?

- How might the evangelistic and discipleship programmes of both reformed and charismatic be reviewed (and revised) in the light of Edwards' distinction between the 'common' and 'saving' influences of the Spirit?

- To what (if any) extent might the reformed identification of the preached sermon with the Word of God overlap with the charismatic understanding of prophecy?

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[14] Packer, *Knowing God*, p. 70. Some eleven years later in his *Keeping in Step with the Spirit* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1984) Packer offers a revised view: 'The power of Christ, not only to forgive sin, but also, by his Spirit, to deliver from enslaving evil is becoming again what it was in the first Christian centuries, a major ingredient in the church's evangelistic message' (p. 25).

The final characteristic of reformed spirituality to be considered here is self-examination.

THE SOUL IS EXAMINED

Question 80 of *The Westminster Larger Catechism* asks: 'Can true believers be infallibly assured that they are in a state of grace, and that they shall persevere therein unto salvation?' The answer given is as follows:

> Such as truly believe in Christ, and endeavour to walk in all good conscience before him, may, without extraordinary revelation, by faith grounded upon the truth of God's promises, and by the Spirit enabling them to discern in themselves those graces to which the promises of life are made, and bearing witness with their spirits, that they are the children of God, be infallibly assured that they are in the estate of grace, and shall persevere therein unto salvation.

In the light of both his own early rather tortuous spiritual journey and his later attempts to cope with multiple manifestations during two revivals, Edwards in his *Affections* seeks to evaluate religious experience by theological explanation and perceptive spiritual analysis. For him the affections are the route to the soul. However, he freely acknowledges that religious affections can be either true or counterfeit. For this reason Edwards sought in the spirit of Paul's exhortation in 2 Corinthians 13:5 to help his congregation – and later his readers – to examine themselves in order to evaluate their religious affections. *Religious Affections*, is made up of three parts. In the first, Edwards deals with the nature of affections and their importance in religion. In the second he details twelve common features of the New England revivals in 1735 and 1740 which, he contends, cannot be taken as certain signs of true spiritual life. He then goes on in the final part to identify twelve signs that are evidence of 'truly gracious and holy affections,' all of which reveal a sense of sin, a longing for holiness, a living faith in Christ and obedience to the will of God.

Edwards was especially wary of people founding their religious hope on elevated spiritual experiences. In his work *Original Sin*, he writes:

> What they are principally taken and elevated with, is not the glory of God, or beauty of Christ, but the beauty of their experiences. They keep thinking of themselves, what a good experience is this! […] and so they put their experi-

> ences in place of Christ, and his beauty and fullness; and instead of rejoicing in Christ Jesus, they rejoice in their admirable experiences.[15]

For Edwards as a Calvinist, biblical self-examination was of great importance. First, because some of the revival conversions were proving to be spurious. Second, because conversion is God's work, not man's. Yet Edwards argues that assurance of salvation is possible:

> All those who are truly gracious persons have a solid, full, thorough and effectual conviction of the truth of the great things of the gospel; I mean, that they no longer halt between two opinions (p. 217).

Again,

> It is unreasonable to suppose that God has provided for his people no more than probable evidence of the truth of the gospel. He has with great care abundantly provided and given them the most convincing, assuring, satisfying and manifold evidence of his faithfulness in the covenant of grace – ordered in all things and sure (p. 230).

However, many Christians find that assurance is not easily come by. One major impediment to being assured of one's salvation is what the *Westminster Confession* identifies as our 'remaining corruption' militating against perfect obedience to God (IX.4). Edwards reflects this emphasis, frequently referring to the corruption that remains in all believers until they are glorified (p. 251). Although an awareness that God's love persists despite our remaining corruption can stimulate a great love for God in the believer (p. 251), the continuing existence of sin in the earthly life of the saints means that self-examination by itself is unlikely to lead to assurance. 'Although self-examination be a duty of great use and importance, and by no means to be neglected,' Edwards writes, 'yet it is not the principal means by which the saints do get satisfaction of their good estate. Assurance is not to be obtained so much by *self-examination* as by *action*.' (p. 123). Two actions highly commended by Edwards are mortifying our corruption and living holy lives.

The Scriptures call on us to mortify our corruption and its indicators (Rom. 8:13; Col. 3:5). Becoming aware of this corruption is an integral dynamic of the evangelical humiliation we have already noted. Mortifying that corruption consists of voluntarily and sincerely denying oneself. Edwards presses the mortification metaphor to its limit when he describes

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[15] C. A. Holbrook (ed.), *Original Sin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), p. 251, quoted in Gordon, *Evangelical Spirituality*, p. 49.

the believer as someone committed 'freely and from his very heart' to 'renounce and annihilate himself' (p. 241).

For Edwards, mortification is a healthy, though negative, manifestation of the new nature where there is 'a holy breathing and panting after the Spirit of God to increase holiness, which is as natural to a holy nature as breathing is to a living body' (p. 307). The presence and power of the indwelling Spirit will inexorably express itself in transformed living. This is why Edwards deplores a lack of symmetry between faith and conduct, which, in his view invalidates any profession of faith (pp. 292-302), and contends that Christian practice is 'the chief of all the evidences of a saving sincerity in religion' (p. 347; cf. pp. 308-82).

Today neither self-examination nor mortification feature prominently, if at all, in church lifestyles, be they charismatic or reformed. These practices are seldom encouraged. Both the *Confession* and Edwards would urge both reformed and charismatics to reclaim these biblical practices. This paper suggests that with God's blessing such a recovery might profitably be realised together in at least the following ways:

- The charismatic focus on subjective experience and the reformed concentration on theology could become creative counterpoints to each other.

- In attempting to recover today the art of self-examination, reformed and charismatic theologians could become a foil to each other so as to ensure dialogue engages both the right and left hemispheres of the brain.

- By prayerfully exploring together biblical teaching on mortification, charismatics and reformed might equip contemporary Christians to counter more effectively the baleful influences of the dominant narcissistic culture surrounding us in the West.

SUMMARY

In brief summary, this paper draws from the Westminster documents and Jonathan Edwards' *Religious Affections* to focus on five spiritual activities identified in the reformed tradition as key indicators of vital spirituality. These are: God is glorified; people are humbled; the Word is active; the Holy Spirit is at work, and the soul is examined. The paper goes on to suggest that these key indicators would create a meaningful preliminary agenda for any reformed-charismatic conversations.

Jonathan Edwards, Dispositionalism and Spirit Christology

S. Mark Hamilton

INTRODUCTION

Looking into the relationship that Christ's humanity shares with the Spirit of God is called Spirit Christology. There are a variety of theologians in the Christian tradition—Jonathan Edwards being a significant, though underappreciated one—who have made the case that the constitution, identity and agency of the God-man is intimately bound up with how we make sense of this pneumatologically-specific aspect of Christology. What we conclude about Edwards' Spirit Christology is inimitably linked to those conclusions we make about Edwards' trinitarianism. And at the heart of Edwards' trinitarianism is what is now more than a quarter-century-long debate about the extent to which Edwards developed and employed a *Dispositional Ontology*. In this article, I trace the development of this dispositional reading of Edwards, after which I measure the impact that this dispositional reading has had for making sense of several aspects of Edwards' Spirit Christology. In this way, this article is concerned primarily with prolegomena to interpreting Edwards and in particular, interpreting his Spirit Christology.

To measure this impact is a three-stage move. The first move is definitional and is concerned with the question: what *is* a dispositional ontology? Here I consider some of the broad contours of the dispositional ontology reading of Edwards' metaphysics, focusing primarily on the seminal work of its progenitor, Sang Hyun Lee. Some readers of Edwards may well find themselves already thoughtfully committed to one side or the other of the debate surrounding Lee's conclusions. There are still others who remain either uncommitted or unconscious of the more systematic implications that this dispositional reading of Edwards presents for understanding (or misunderstanding, as the case may be) his theology. Pursuant to a clear understanding of the third part of this article, it is fitting that we rehearse some of the fundamentals of this dispositional interpretation of Edwards. For, the Lee-thesis, as it is commonly referred to, has not only remained an integral set of philosophical assumptions for several recent and important engagements of Edwards' theology, its adoption appears to be increasingly less critical. Because it is my intent here to deal primarily with the secondary literature, particularly in the first two parts of article,

quotations of Edwards himself appear less frequently than some readers might hope. Unfortunately, canvassing such highly-nuanced interpretive developments in order to engage a more recent expression of them sometimes means selecting those passages that seem to lend the most support to this or that portion of the overall argument. In other words, readers should expect a little less Edwards and a little more Lee in this first part.

The second of this three-move strategy is developmental and is concerned with this question: to what extent has a dispositional reading of Edwards' metaphysics since governed interpretations of Edwards' theology? This is, of course, a huge question. For this reason, I will only attempt to proffer a meaningful rather than a comprehensive answer. In this section, I look specifically at Edwards' so-called *Dispositional Soteriology*. Because it is far more important to the larger argument of this article to show *that* interpretive developments have appeared since the debut of Lee's dispositional reading of Edwards than it is to delve into the details of *how* such developments have since been received, I have kept this part of the argument relatively brief. For more extended, critical engagements of a dispositional soteriology reading of Edwards, I will, in due course, point my readers elsewhere.

The third and final move—what makes up the bulk of this article—is exploratory and considers the most recent instalment of this interpretative tradition. I call it *Dispositional Christology*. I have self-consciously limited this exploration to Edwards' Spirit Christology for fear of falling deeper into the rabbit-hole that is Edwards' Christology at large. The reason for this, as we shall see, is that the challenges of reading Edwards according to a dispositional Christology are set in clear relief by a closer examination of the pneumatic aspect of Edwards' account of the God-man. I conclude with several suggestions for an alternate reading of Edwards' Spirit Christology. Let us turn now to Lee.

I. DISPOSITIONAL ONTOLOGY: A DEFINITION

The longstanding and controversial claims that have motivated much of the recent interest in Edwards' metaphysics are those made by Sang Hyun Lee, in his formidable work, *The Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards*.[1] Lee's work remains, despite several challenges to it, one of the

[1] There are several helpful summaries of Lee's thesis that can be found in his, 'Editor's Introduction', *WJE*: 21:1-106, 'Grace and Justification by Faith Alone', and 'God's Relation to the World', in *The Princeton Companion to Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Sang Hyun Lee (Princeton: Princeton University, 2005), pp. 130-46 and pp. 59-71, respectively. Other summaries, both critical and helpful, include: John J. Bombaro, 'Jonathan Edwards's Vision of Salva-

most influential interpretations of Edwards' philosophical-theology to date, having all but completely governed the bulk of scholarly interpretations of Edwards' metaphysics until the recent past. Those who have since Lee's mantle, include, George Hunsinger, Michael McClymond, Gerald McDermott, Anri Morimoto, Amy Plantinga-Pauw, and more recently, Seng Kong Tan.

According to Lee, Edwards '[re-conceived] the nature of reality itself', the result of which was Edwards' self-conscious and 'thoroughgoing metaphysical reconstruction of his entire theology'.[2] Lee claims that Edwards rejected traditional Aristotelian-scholastic metaphysics, because of 'the inadequacy of the old metaphysics of substances and substantial forms to function as the intellectual framework in an age that was increasingly thinking of reality in terms of motion, power, and relationship laws'.[3] Aristotelian-scholastic metaphysics, as Lee describes, is a specific reference to Aristotle's, and later, Aquinas' designation between being as substance and being as accident. According to Lee, Aristotle regarded,

> substances as either fully actual or purely potential, this not allowing any middle point between potentiality and actuality. So a substance or the existence of an entity cannot be in a state of a habit. Although the place of habits in the potentiality/actuality metaphysics is fully developed only in Saint Thomas, it is clear already in Aristotle that habits play a role only on the level

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tion', *Westminster Theological Journal* 65 (2003): 45-67, et al., 'Dispositional Peculiarity, History, and Edwards's Evangelistic Appeal to Self-Love', *Westminster Theological Journal* 66 (2004): 121-57, 'The Formation of Jonathan Edwards' Metaphysics', *The Clarion Review* (January 2004): 8-19 (Versions of various sources have more recently and collectively in: John J. Bombaro, *Jonathan Edwards' Vision of Reality: The Relationship of God to the World, Redemption and the Reprobate*, The Princeton Theological Monograph Series (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011); Oliver D. Crisp, 'Jonathan Edwards on Divine Nature', *Journal of Reformed Theology* 22 (2009): 175-201, et al., 'Jonathan Edwards' Ontology: A Critique of Sang Hyun Lee's Dispositional Account of Edwardsian Metaphysics', in *Religious Studies* 29 (2009): 1-20; Stephen R. Holmes, 'Does Jonathan Edwards Use a Dispositional Ontology? A Response to Sang Hyun Lee', in Paul Helm and Oliver Crisp, eds. *Jonathan Edwards: Philosophical Theologian* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), pp. 99-114 (hereafter, 'Does Jonathan Edwards Use a Dispositional Ontology?').

2 Sang Hyun Lee, *The Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), p. 3 (hereafter, *PTJE*).

3 Lee, *PTJE*, p. 10. According to Crisp, 'such radical revisions to traditional Aristotelian ways of carving up ontology into substances and their properties was very much a part of the intellectual furniture of the period in which Edwards was active' (Crisp, 'Jonathan Edwards' Ontology', p. 7).

> of the accident and not the substance. So habits, according to Saint Thomas, occupy the unique ontological status of being neither fully actual nor purely potential. By participating both in potentiality and in actuality, habits help explain how potency can be moved to actuality.[4]

Rejecting Edwards' commitment to any vestige of the philosophical inheritance of Aristotle, Lee argues that Edwards went on to develop a 'modern conception of reality as a dynamic network of dispositional forces and habits', according to which, created things are no longer substances which possess dispositions but *are themselves dispositions*—real, active tendencies or principles of action that possess various powers even if unactualized.[5] Then turning to Edwards' theology proper, Lee carries his revisionist account of Edwards' metaphysics into his reading of Edwards' doctrine of God, claiming that 'Edwards's dispositional definition of the divine being means *that God is inherently a tendency toward and increase or self-enlargement of God's own being*. God, in other words, is truly actual, *but* he is also inherently disposed to achieve that actuality again and again as the divine disposition is further exercised'.[6] Let's look a bit closer at Lee's two principal, controversial claims. Looking closely at these two matters will inform our exploration of Edwards' dispositional Christology in the final analysis.

According to Lee's first claim, Edwards altered such distinctions as 'forms and substance', substituting them for more modern designations of 'dispositions and habits'.[7] Lee defines his understanding of Edwards' use of 'habit', as 'a mode of reality apart from its manifestations in actual actions and events. A habit, as an abiding, though latent principle, is also law-like for Edwards, in that it actively and prescriptively governs the occurrence and character of actual events'.[8] Lee's second claim follows from the first, namely, that Edwards was ultimately compelled to reconsider the nature of God's very existence. Lee concludes that 'Edwards' dispositional ontology, which underlies his re-conception of the divine being, is the clue to the originality and unity of Edwards' philosophical theology as a whole'.[9] On Lee's reading of Edwards, he maintains that Edwards fundamentally reworked the nature of God's very existence to meet his own dispositional account of reality. In short, Lee's argument is

4 Ibid., pp. 4, 7.
5 Ibid., pp. 20-22.
6 Lee, *PTJE*, pp. 170, 184 (emphasis added).
7 Ibid., p. 4; see also: Lee, 'God's Relation to the World', pp. 59-60.
8 Lee, *PTJE*, p. 4.
9 Ibid., p. 7.

that Edwards ultimately rejected classical theism.[10] For God to be dispositional by nature requires that 'God is inherently a tendency toward an increase or enlargement of God's own being'.[11]

Similar in part to Lee's claim of the insufficiencies of pre-eighteenth-century metaphysical categories to satisfy the demands of enlightenment thinkers, Lee argues that Edwards 'replaced the older notion of God as the absolutely self-contained *actus purus* with the dynamic conception of God as at once eternally actual and inherently and inexhaustibly self-enlarging'.[12] Lee goes so far as to suggest that Edwards' notion of God

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10 Ibid., pp. 104, 170. There are now not a few dissenting opinions regarding this claim. The first to seriously call Lee's dispositional approach to Edwards into question is Stephen Holmes. Of the variety of criticisms Holmes levels against the Lee's thesis, it is Lee's notion of God's 'self-enlargement' that comes to the fore. According to Holmes, 'the Lee-thesis leads Edwards toward a wholesale rejection of classical theism, according to which, God is *actus purus*—a simple (non-composite), self-existent, fully actualized being.' The impact to Lee's account of Edwards' Christology, Holmes argues (quoting Lee's *Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards*) is that '[b]oth the generation and the procession of the Spirit are described as "exercise[s] of the Father's disposition" (p. 192). Given this, the trinitarian grammar that demands that the origin of the Spirit is different from the origin of the Son is seriously endangered by Lee's constructions', see: Stephen R. Holmes, 'Does Jonathan Edwards Use a Dispositional Ontology? A Response to Sang Hyun Lee', in Paul Helm and Oliver D. Crisp, eds., *Jonathan Edwards: Philosophical Theologians* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2003), pp. 99-114. The Lee thesis has many adherents in the Edwards fraternity whose work rests squarely on the assumption that Lee's thesis is the most accurate explanation of Edwardian metaphysics and for this reason, Lee's thesis is likely to endure in these quarters, despite recent challenges to it. See e.g.: Oliver D. Crisp, *Jonathan Edwards on God and Creation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

11 Ibid., p. 184.

12 Holmes, 'Does Jonathan Edwards Use a Dispositional Ontology? A Response to Sang Hyun Lee', p. 110. The Latin phrase, *actus purus*, is 'a term applied to God [describing him] as the fully actualized being, the only being not in potency; God is in other words, absolutely perfect and the eternally perfect fulfilment of himself. It is of the essence of God to be *actus purus* or *purissimus* insofar as God, self-existent being, is in actu (q.v.), in the state of actualization, and never in *potentia* (q.v.) in the state of potency or incomplete realization. This view of God as fully actualized being lies at the heart of the scholastic exposition of the doctrine of divine immutability (*immutabilitas Dei*, q.v.)'. See: Richard A. Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms: Drawn Principally from Protestant Scholastic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006), p. 24.

ought best to be spoken of in terms of 'becoming' rather than 'being'.[13] God's act of first creation is, on this interpretation of Edwards, simply the 'increase or enlargement of God's own being'.[14] On this account, Edwards perceived God himself as a disposition and that the second and third persons of the Trinity become no more than the 'exercise of the Father's disposition'.[15] In the end, Lee's account of Edwards' theism does not merely move Edwards away from his own tradition (which, in the case of his trinitarianism would be located among the Protestant Scholastics), it moves him all but entirely outside the boundaries of doctrinal Orthodoxy.[16] Despite several efforts to push back on Lee's dispositional ontology from Holmes and more recently from Crisp, the Lee-thesis has since been co-opted and developed, perhaps no more prominently or explicitly than in Anri Morimoto's work on Edwards' soteriology.

II. DISPOSITIONAL SOTERIOLOGY: A DEVELOPMENT

Lee's theory, having offered up a revision to Edwardsian metaphysics—divine and otherwise—has resulted in several attempts to square Lee's thesis to the rest of Edwards' theology. Foremost among those to develop Lee's thesis is Anri Morimoto. It is Morimoto who takes Lee's dispositional ontology into Edwards' soteriology, developing the concept of what he calls a Dispositional Soteriology. Lee himself attempted to make several inroads into Edwards' soteriology with his dispositional ontology proposal. For example, according to Lee, among the more impactful implications of Edwards' dispositional ontology (beyond that which characterizes his trinitarianism) is its effect upon the Spirit's work of justification regeneration and sanctification. Lee argues that,

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13 Lee, *PTJE*, p. 203.

14 Ibid., p. 203.

15 Lee, *PTJE*, p. 192. It should be noted that Lee has since developed this notion in the revised edition of his work to include all three divine persons as at once actuality and disposition. I am grateful to Seng Kong Tan for pointing this development out to me.

16 According to Holmes, Lee's reading of Edwards is a rejection of 'the basic grammar of orthodox Trinitarian theology that was developed by the patristic theologians and enshrined in the ecumenical creeds', 'Does Jonathan Edwards Use a Dispositional Ontology?', p. 105. For more on Edwards' Protestant Scholastic heritage, see: Adriaan C. Neele, *Before Jonathan Edwards: Sources of New England Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), ch. 1.

> A disposition is a law that certain type of action or event should occur upon certain kinds of occasions. The most fundamental occasion necessary for the divine disposition to exercise in the regenerate, this precondition is the Holy Spirit's immediate action of causing an act according to the divine disposition. But according to Edwards' epistemology and the logic of disposition, appropriate sense data have to be received from outside the mind or order for the internal disposition to be triggered into exercises. Since the disposition involved is the third person of the Trinity, the appropriate external sense data would come from earthly embodiments of the transcendent beauty of God. The beauty of God embodied in time and space functions as the occasion that triggers the habit of grace to exert itself into acts of knowing and loving that true beauty.[17]

Like Lee, Morimoto characterizes dispositionalism as a specific mode or character of being, inherent to all [by means of the atoning work of Christ], and by which all individuals are then enabled, under certain natural constraints of its 'law-like powers and forces', to actuate their innate, ontological tendencies (i.e. habits or dispositions) to be saved without any 'particular acts and exercises' of faith.[18] 'In Edwards' dispositional view', Morimoto claims, 'all being is a disposition, an active tendency to realize itself in certain ways'.[19] Elsewhere Morimoto argues that, 'being is, for Edwards, essentially a network of laws that prescribe certain actions and events to take place on specified occasions. These laws are active and purposive tendencies, or dispositions, that automatically come into "exertion" when the specified circumstances are met'.[20] John Bombaro helpfully describes Morimoto's dispositional soteriology as, 'a logic of being in terms of law-like powers and forces, in which dispositions are conceived as active and real tendencies that have ontological reality even when unexercised'.[21] In other words, dispositional soteriology refers to

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17 'Editor's Introduction', *WJE* 21:56-8.

18 Bombaro, 'Dispositional Peculiarity', p. 123. According to Bombaro, 'particular acts and exercises', are references to 'means or ordinances', or 'the gospel of Jesus Christ and its accompaniments'.

19 Morimoto, *Catholic Vision*, p. 6 (emphasis added). For a helpful and additionally constructive account of Edwards' soteriological deployment of Morimoto's dispositional ontology, see: Steven M. Studebaker, 'Jonathan Edwards's Pneumatological Concept of Grace and Dispositional Soteriology: Resourses for an Evangelical Inclusivism', *Pro Ecclesia* 14.3 (2005): 324-39.

20 Ibid., p. 6.

21 Bombaro, 'Dispositional Peculiarity', p. 123. It is notable that Bombaro goes on to out that 'McDermott suggests that, in Edwards's theology, theoretically there is enough non-Christian revelation in the world to mechanistically 'trigger' the [universally applied] disposition and justify the religiously

the specific action of an individual's inherent tendency toward salvation. On Morimoto's way of thinking about Edwards' soteriology, individuals are enabled, under certain natural constraints of its 'law-like powers and forces', to actuate their innate, ontological tendencies (i.e. dispositions or habits) to be saved, without any 'particular acts and exercises'.[22]

Morimoto's development of a dispositional soteriology has had the most significant impact on discussions of Edwards' doctrine of justification, particularly as it relates to Protestant and Catholic debates surround the infusion and imputation of divine grace.[23] And cleverly organized in terms of what Morimoto calls Edwards' *Catholic Concerns* and *Protestant Concerns*, Morimoto fixes at one notable point upon Edwards' doctrine of infused grace, thus drawing him into the middle of Lombardian and Thomistic pneumatological discussions regarding *gratia increata* and *gratia creata* or 'uncreated' and 'created' grace. Roughly, this debate orbits around whether the infusion of the Holy Spirit to human persons amounts to his indwelling them either holistically—Lombard's view—or as a habitual principle—Thomas' view.[24] And this forms provides the footing for Morimoto to summarily describes Edwards' Protestant concern as the notion that salvation is neither achieved nor maintained by anything but 'God's immediate and continual activity from above', while at the same time describing Edwards' Catholic concern in terms of how 'the transformative power of grace effectuates in human nature a real and qualitative change that regenerate persons enjoy [as] an abiding reality of salvation created with them'.[25] So that we might see the extent of this

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or philosophically inclined', p. 124. The result of those who contend for an Edwardsian inclusivism necessarily argue for his private abandonment of particularism, and more importantly, his Christocentrism, see: McDermott, 'Jonathan Edwards, John Henry Newman, and non-Christian Religions', in Paul Helm and Oliver D. Crisp, eds., *Jonathan Edwards: Philosophical Theologian* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), pp. 129-30.

22 Ibid., p. 123.

23 Notably, a relatively recent surveyor of the Protestant doctrine of justification, John Fesko, while noting Alister McGrath's inclusion of Edwards into the broader Reformed tradition, nevertheless follows the trend of recent scholarship, which contests Edwards' theological orthodoxy on this point, and that, as a result of Morimoto's claims; see: John V. Fesko, *Justification: Understanding the Classic Reformed Doctrine* (Philipsburg, NJ: P&R: 2008), pp. 34-9. McGrath, by contrast, positions Edwards' formulation of justification, well within the boundaries of the Reformed tradition; see: Alister E. McGrath, *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2005), pp. 208-18, 291.

24 Morimoto, *Catholic Vision*, p. 42-3.

25 Morimoto, *Catholic Vision*, p. 7 (emphasis added).

impact, let us briefly consider the following three aspects of Morimoto's reading of Edwards' soteriology.

First, it makes Edwards' doctrine of the justification effectual *only* in the sense that it universally infuses all people with a disposition. For, according to Morimoto, the unexercised, or 'bare possession of [this disposition] constitutes regeneration and, therefore, salvation'.[26] Second, given the emphasis of dispositional soteriology upon 'ontological transformation (i.e. infusion) and not legal imputation', Edwards' notion of faith is as the necessary and volitional act of union to Christ whereby, what is natural (i.e. not moral and thus meritorious) receives its 'due recognition', because this act is love—what Thomas Schafer once argued is the Roman Catholic notion of 'formed faith'.[27] Putting the first two points together, Morimoto suggests that, 'In Edwards's view of faith, the division between Christians and non-Christians is not simply a division between those who have faith and those who do not. Rather, the difference lies in whether or not the disposition in faith has been actualized'.[28] Third, finally, and following from the first two points, Morimoto's dispositional soteriology attempts to redraw certain historical lines, once drawn from Edwards to his traditionally recognized, theological benefactors (i.e. the Reformers, Protestant Scholastics, and the Puritans), now to Roman Catholics such as Thomas Aquinas and Peter Lombard.[29] At this, Morimoto and several of his exponents go a step or two further, suggesting that because of Edwards' supposed admiration for the metaphysical successes gained by non-Christian religious commentators and ancient philosophers in revealed theology, *and* because Edwards had supposedly conceded to the reasonableness of Deist objections to particularism, *and* because of his supposed use of a natural typology as a solution to such objections, *and* because of his development of a dispositional soteriology, Edwards 'clearly opens the possibility that these heathen could have used revelation for their own spiritual benefit—a notion that is incoherent unless it means they can be saved'.[30]

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26 Bombaro, 'Jonathan Edwards's Vision of Salvation', p. 47.

27 Morimoto, *Catholic Vision*, p. 97.

28 Ibid., p. 6 (emphasis added).

29 Ibid., p. 92. Interestingly, Morimoto also cites Tillich's, 'to accept acceptance' (cited as: Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. [1951, Chicago: University of Chicago, 1963], 3:222, 224-26, 228) as possessing some explanatory value for making sense of Edwards.

30 Gerald McDermott, *Jonathan Edwards Confronts the Gods: Christian Theology, Enlightenment Religion, and Non-Christian Faiths* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 141.

There is, of course, a great deal more that might be said about reading Edwards along the lines of a dispositional soteriology. Indeed, no book-length response to Morimoto's thoughtful *Catholic Vision* has yet appeared. That said, any additional commentary need not detain us here. For, the point of this otherwise brief engagement with Lee and Morimoto is necessary for clarity's sake to set the stage for the ensuing exploration and to show that Edwards' philosophical theology faces a variety of new worrisome consequences that seem to emerge in the wake of a dispositional interpretation of Edwards' metaphysics and theology. And with this now before us, we come to *Dispositional Christology*.

III. DISPOSITIONAL CHRISTOLOGY: AN EXPLORATION

So impactful has Lee's theory of Edwards' dispositional ontology been that is has gone on to fund (at least in part) several explorations of not only Edwards' soteriology, but now—in some ways as the next logical step—Edwards' Christology. It is perhaps best to think of these works as in varying degrees *governed* by Lee's thesis rather than as explicit Christological out-workings of it.[31] That is, they seem to assent to some or all of Lee's dispositional reading of Edwards as an assumption—incorporating it as part of their investigative prolegomena—but provide little specific evidence for just how it bears upon Edwards' Christology at large. Hence the following exploration.

Edwards' Christology is in itself an enigma. Discerning those particular points at which the Lee-thesis actually makes a significant conceptual difference for our understanding Edwards' doctrine of the *person* of Christ (as opposed to work of Christ) is all the more challenging. Thus, in what remains of this article, I will attempt to stake out such differences by

[31] According to what is the first explicit inquiry of Edwards' Christology that assumes the explanatory power of Lee's thesis for making sense of Edwards' broader metaphysics, Michael Bush argues that, 'One of the most fruitful insights of recent Edwards studies is Sang Hyun Lee's recognition that the metaphysics underlying Edwards's understanding of reality is a "dispositional ontology" […]. It is in this relational, dispositional perspective that it makes sense to say of Edwards that everything is Christological, even though Edwards does not proceed methodologically in a Christocentric way; perhaps one might say that for Edwards, reality is Christocentric, in that Christ is at the center, holding everything together, but theology is not Christocentric at the level of method (at least not in the way it is for Karl Barth) because Jesus Christ is not the key to the answer to every theological question', *Jesus Christ in the Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Phd Thesis, Princeton Theological Seminary, 2003), pp. 12-13.

interacting with the recent, and formidable work of Seng Kong Tan. Tan's treatment of Edwards' Christology is among the most thorough to appear in the literature. A discerning reader of both the Patristic and Thomistic traditions—both of which play a considerable part in his treatment and classification of Edwards—Tan offers up a philosophically sophisticated reading of several aspects of Edwards' Christology. Interestingly, it is in his (relatively brief) treatment of Edwards' Spirit Christology—a subject that has to date, not received a great deal of attention in the literature—where Tan's dispositional assumptions about Edwards' metaphysics are most apparent. For the sake of brevity and clarity, in what follows, I consider what I think are three points of Tan's treatment of Edwards' Spirit Christology where assumptions about Lee's dispositional ontology appear, the results of which present several challenges to our understanding of Edwards' Christology. The first is a matter of the *pneumatic identity* of the God-man. The second is a matter of the *pneumatic constitution* of the God-man. The third is a matter of the *pneumatic agency* of the God-man. As we shall see, from the first matter to the last, there is what appears to be a momentum of sorts to the problems that are generated by a reading of Edwards' Christology with dispositional ontology as part of the interpretive equation. Let us take the pneumatic identity problem first.

III.1. Dispositionalism and Christ's Pneumatic Identity

Tan is mostly straightforward about his thinking that Edwards articulates (albeit in Edwards' own way) something like what Ian McFarland has recently called *Pneumatic Chalcedonianism*.[32] To this end he says, 'Edwards favors the pneumatic Christology of Irenaeus rather than a more developed Logos Christology that describes the divinity as the ointment of Christ's human nature'.[33] However, Tan's reading of Edwards on the Spirit of God *as a divine* person *and* a divine disposition seem to imperil both the Spirit's personhood and the manner of his indwelling of the humanity of Christ.[34] Tan himself introduces this worry when he distinguishes between the Spirit as disposition and the Spirit as pure act when he says, 'since the divine "Habit and Act" are [for God] identical, *the Spirit of God is both "the disposition* […] *of the divine mind" as well as the pure and perfect act of God*'.[35] Elsewhere Tan argues that 'as God's *disposi-*

[32] Ian A. McFarland, 'Spirit and Incarnation: Toward a Pneumatic Chalcedonianism', *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 16.2 (April, 2014): 143.

[33] Tan, *Fullness Received and Returned*, pp. 112-13.

[34] Caldwell observes that Edwards' 'formulation of the Holy Spirit as divine love threaten[s] the personhood of the Spirit', *Communion in the Spirit*, p. 7.

[35] Ibid., 'Trinitarian Action', pp. 128-29 (emphasis added). See also: Jonathan Edwards, 'Discourse on the Trinity', in Sang Hyun Lee, ed., *The Works of*

tion is identical to God's *act*, divine Love [i.e. the Spirit] is in perfect fruition in God'.[36] With such delicate (i.e. Trinitarian) concepts in view, we need to move forward with the greatest of care. For, not only are we trading in some of the most refined and subtle categorical distinctions about the divine nature, we are interpreting one interpreter's (Tan) interpretation of another (Edwards). This is where mistakes can be quickly compounded. That said, what I am claiming is that on a dispositional reading of Edwards' account of the divine nature, the risks run high to depersonalize the personhood of the Spirit of God.[37] Being himself conscious of such risks, Tan admits of the fact that 'Edwards's trinitarianism comes under fire for depersonalizing the Holy Spirit—the well-worn critique of the Augustinian psychological analogy'.[38] Despite this, in other places Tan seems to equate Edwards' account of the person of the Spirit with a mere disposition, saying that for Edwards, '[t]his disposition in God—*the Holy Spirit*—is both the moving and final cause of the creation'.[39] The

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Jonathan Edwards in 26 Volumes, Vol. 21 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957-2006), p. 122 (emphasis added).

36 Ibid., *Fullness Received and Returned*, pp. 15-16 (emphasis added). I think we might be better off reading Edwards in light of Bruce Marshall's helpful explanatory statement, 'The Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son eternally as love in person, the suit and seal of the Father's infinite donation of himself to the Son, infinitely returned by the Son', 'The Deep Things of God: Trinitarian Pneumatology', in Gilles Emery and Matthew Levering, eds. *The Oxford Handbook on the Trinity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 407 (emphasis added).

37 Interestingly, a similar claim is made by Thomas Weinandy, namely that 'The Holy Spirit is love fully in act'. He does, however, without diminishing either the personhood of the Spirit or the Son, see: 'Trinitarian Christology: The Eternal Son' in Gilles Emery and Matthew Levering, eds. *The Oxford Handbook on the Trinity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 390. In his treatment of Augustine's pneumatology, Chris Holmes helpfully explains some of the mechanics of how this construction works, saying that, 'All three are love, but the Spirit is love in a distinct sense. That the Spirit is love (charity) is because the Spirit proceeds as love from the Father. The Spirit cannot author anything other than love, for that is what the Spirit is. However, unlike the Son, who is eternally born of the Father, the Spirit proceeds eternally from the Father and/through the Son. The Spirit proceeds from the Son too, but the Son has this only from the Father. The Spirit has a different originating relation with respect to the Father than the Son does—proceeding rather than begetting—and so is love in a different way', *The Holy Spirit*, New Studies in Dogmatics (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015), p. 173 (emphasis added).

38 Tan, *Fullness Received and Returned*, p. 13.

39 Ibid., p. 55.

question for us is: which is it? Who (or what) is the Spirit, on Tan's reading of Edwards' account of Christ's pneumatic identity? A divine person? A divine disposition? Both? Unfortunately for us, these are muddy theological waters that are made muddier by Edwards' own lack of clarity on this point; something which, as we have already seen, Tan is also quick to point out. However, a clue to Tan's thinking on the matter—what I take to be a clue to the evidence of his indebtedness to Lee (and thus to the momentum of the problems that are at issue here)—appears at two points.

The first clue is his admission—directly following Lee—that, '[Edwards] not only restated the Reformed tradition by appropriating many philosophical ideas of his time but also *advanced a thorough reconstruction of the substance ontology of the Western theological tradition*'.[40] By 'thorough reconstruction', I take Tan to mean not only that Edwards renovated his metaphysics in general, as Lee suggests, but that he renovated the metaphysics of the divine nature, as Lee also goes on to suggest. The second clue appears in Tan's discussion of God's 'self-enlargement', something about which much has been made by Lee. Similar to Lee, who we recall argues that, 'God is inherently a tendency toward an increase or enlargement of God's own being', it seems that Tan appears to ground Edwards' controversial emphasis on God's self-enlargement Christologically. Tan explains that 'the temporal "Becoming" of God, (and the world) in some sense echoes the "becoming" that happens in the eternal, hypostasis differentiation within God'.[41] Accordingly, we ought to regard this 'self-enlargement' as a consequence of Christ's being enfleshed and therefore restrict such assertions to his human nature.[42]

Now, of the two points, this later one is arguably the most significant clue to Tan's assumptions about the Lee-thesis. So, what does all this mean? And how is this a Christologically-specific problem for the pneumatic identity of the God-man? Edwards' own apparent lack of clarity on these matters aside, a dispositional reading of his account of Christ's divine nature that amounts to something less than full divine personhood and therefore less than a full divine nature is a possibility that seems to be compounded by a dispositional Christology. In other words, if the Spirit is merely a disposition and the Spirit indwells the humanity of Christ dispositionally, he does so, on this reading of Edwards' Christology anyway, in

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40 Tan, *Fullness Received and Returned*, p. 4, n. 7 (emphasis added). In personal correspondence, Tan explains that Edwards' 'thorough reconstruction' of Western theological sensibilities may not have been so thorough as to include depersonalizing the Spirit.

41 Lee, *PTJE*, p. 184.

42 Tan, *Fullness Received and Returned*, p. 169, n. 65.

a manner that undercuts not only an orthodox Trinitarianism but also an orthodox Christology. That this is a problem of no mean significance for Edwards' Christology at large should be, I think, quite evident.

Now, lest we think that Tan's work on Edwards' Christology is a wholesale buy-in, as it were, to the dispositional interpretation of Edwards, we would do well to remind ourselves that Tan is not only conscious of this depersonalizing worry, but that at least at one point he does defend against the idea, however dangerously close he elsewhere gets to making claims to the contrary.[43] For our part, such questions are indicative of the momentum of this dispositional interpretation of Edwards to which we previously alluded. Keeping one eye on that, let us now turn and consider dispositional Christology in terms of the pneumatic constitution of the God-man.

III.2. Dispositionalism and Christ's Pneumatic Constitution

What I mean by Christ's pneumatic constitution is the metaphysical make-up of Christ's humanity-plus-Spirit. According to Edwards, 'In Jesus who dwelt here upon earth, there was [sic] immediately only these two things: there was the flesh, or the human nature; and there was the Spirit of holiness, or the eternal Spirit, *by which he was united to the Logos*. Jesus who dwelt among us, was as it were compounded of these two'.[44] Earlier in the same Miscellany—one upon which Tan spends a good deal of interpretive capital—Edwards explains that,

> As the union of believers with Christ be by the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ in them, so it may be worthy to be considered, whether or no the union of the divine with the human nature of Christ ben't by the Spirit of the Logos dwelling in him after a *peculiar manner* and *without measure*. Perhaps there is no other way of God's dwelling in a creature but by his Spirit. The Spirit of Christ's dwelling in men causes an union, so that in many respects [they may be] looked upon as one: perhaps the Spirit of the Logos may dwell in a creature after such a manner, that that creature may become one person [with the Logos], and may be looked upon as such and accepted as such.[45]

What is this 'peculiar manner'? And what does Edwards' mean by 'without measure'? What I am interested in here is Tan's account of the Spirit's indwelling of the God-man—Christ's pneumatic constitution—and more to the point, how, if at all, Tan's dispositional assumptions about the Spirit factor into Edwards' understanding of this Christological 'compound'.

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43 Tan, *Fullness Received and Returned*, p. 13.

44 'Miscellany' no. 487, *WJE* 13:531 (emphasis added).

45 Ibid., *WJE* 13:529 (emphasis added).

Tan also poses the question about Edwards' 'peculiar manner' reference to the indwelling, saying: 'if sanctification (whether in Christ or in the saint) involves a self-communication of the Spirit no different from the Spirit's operation *ad intra*, how does Jesus have the Spirit in a "peculiar" manner'?[46] It is Tan's assumption of the equivalence between the Spirit's indwelling of the humanity of Jesus and the Spirit's dispositional sort of relation in the Godhead that is the worry about which I am concerned. In order to get at Tan's actual meaning, let us briefly zero in on his account of Edwards' doctrine of sanctification, which is interestingly something that Edwards thinks extends (all at once) to the God-man. This will bring us to the fore of the question of Tan's dispositional ontology and Edwards' account of the Christ's union with the Spirit and the pneumatic agency, to which we will turn next.

How Tan makes sense of Edwards' meaning that the human nature of Jesus is indwelt by the Holy Spirit—and that, Edwards says, 'without measure'—is a two-part answer. The first part, according to Edwards, is that the humanity of Jesus was sanctified. Edwards himself says that the Father 'incarnated [the Son] *by* sanctification' and thereby his humanity was 'quicken[ed], enliven[ed], and beautif[ied]'.[47] Edwards believes that this indwelling, as Tan rightly points out, is a personal union of the Spirit with the humanity of Jesus. Edwards explains that by 'personal union'—and thereby 'without measure'—he means 'the consequence of God's communicating his Spirit *without measure* to [Jesus'] human nature, so as to render it the same person with him that is God'.[48] This is the second part of the answer. For, Edwards explains elsewhere, saying, 'in the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit the Spirit of God exerts its own proper nature; that is to say, it communicates and exerts itself in the soul in those

46 Tan, *Fullness Received and Returned*, p. 113.

47 'Miscellany' no. 709, *WJE* 18:333 (emphasis added); 'Efficacious Grace', *WJE* 21:123. Such assertions as these raise the question: Just how do we get at Edwards' Spirit Christology? For my part, I think the answer lies in his doctrine of regeneration. For as we have now seen, Edwards thinks that Christ's human nature was sanctified by the Spirit, which amounts to the same sort of change that Edwards thinks saints undergo by the Spirit's regeneration of their corrupt natures. Seeing the manner in which Edwards thinks the soul (as well as the body) is regenerated and is thereby indwelt by the Spirit will, I think, set in relief the manner in which the humanity of Christ is indwelt. In other words, the one who gets to the bottom of Edwards' account of regeneration and its metaphysical substructure will get closer to the bottom of the metaphysics on which his Spirit Christology hangs—a subject where there is still much research to be done.

48 'Miscellany' no. 764b, *WJE* 18:411 (emphasis added).

acts which are its proper nature, natural and essential acts in itself *ad intra*, or within the Deity from all eternity'.[49] Putting these two things together, it looks *prima facie* like Tan's notion of dispositional indwelling, despite several clear assertions to the contrary, makes Edwards once again fall short of an orthodox Christology. For, if the *ad intra* nature of the Spirit is strictly dispositional (though somehow still personal), and this dispositional nature of the Spirit becomes one with Christ's human nature, then it looks like at least two things happen. First, the humanity of Jesus is itself either reduced to a disposition or completely divinized or perhaps somehow both. This borders on a near-Apollonarian reading of Edwards' Christology, according to which the human mind of the God-man is replaced by a divine agent (or a divine disposition)—in this case the agency of the Spirit. Second, the agency of Christ's humanity seems thus undercut, making him impotent and therefore unable to do the very work he set out to do as a representative of humanity. Tan's assertions of Edwards' Christological orthodoxy notwithstanding, the matrix of doctrinal complexity that Edwards presents seems to me to push in the opposite direction. In the end, I think we can assert that this is critical to understanding Edwards' Spirit Christology at large and that much more work on Edwards' account of 'personal union' and 'without measure' is thus required.[50] For now, let us consider the third worry that a dispositional reading of Edwards' Christology presents.

III.3. Dispositionalism and Christ's Pneumatic Agency

The third worry is the matter of Christ's human-Spirit agency. This worry arises not so much from direct statements that Tan makes, but from a compound of several assumptions that together bear upon the matter. Let's consider the compound first, after which, I will propose what I think is one implication.

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[49] 'Miscellany' no. 471, *WJE* 13:513 (emphasis added).

[50] In some further personal correspondence, Tan helpfully explains that by consequence of the forgoing argument, Edwards' reference to 'without measure', would mean that 'saints would potentially have the Spirit as Jesus does since our nature grows sempiternally. Not only is the hypostatic union uniquely Christ's, His possession of the Spirit is "in a peculiar manner" insofar as Jesus has the Spirit as the Spirit of the Logos. Only Jesus can be said to have the Spirit as His own, unlike us'. I am tempted to think and have argued elsewhere that the hypostatic union of the God-man is something that Edwards may have understood as extending (eschatologically) to the saints; see: *A Treatise on Jonathan Edwards, Continuous Creation and Christology*, vol. 1 (Fort Worth, TX: JESociety Press, 2017, A Series of Treatises on Jonathan Edwards), p. 63ff.

According to a dispositional interpretation of Edwards' Christology, these assumptions, which for the sake of brevity and clarity I've broken down into a series of numbered theses, seem to go something like this:

1. All reality is by nature dispositional, which means that—recalling Lee—'created things are no longer substances which *possess* dispositions but *are themselves dispositions*—real, active tendencies or principles of action that possess various powers even if unactualized'.[51]

2. God is himself a disposition. Once again quoting Lee, this means that '*God is inherently a tendency toward an increase or self-enlargement of God's own being.* God, in other words, is truly actual, *but* he is also inherently disposed to achieve that actuality again and again as the divine disposition is further exercised'.[52]

3. The Spirit, who is God, is thus a disposition. This means that he is either still a personal being or it means that he is merely an impersonal force or it means that he is (rather awkwardly) somehow both. Recall that Tan himself hints at this worry when he says that, 'since the divine "Habit and Act" are [for God] identical, the *Spirit of God is both "the disposition* […] *of the divine mind" as well as the pure and perfect act of God*'.[53]

4. Christ's human nature—his body and soul (and its agency)—is not a substance but merely a disposition. This follows from thesis (1). That his human nature is merely dispositional means that he has the potential to do this or that (i.e. Lee's 'real, active tendencies or principals of action') but to do this or that he must be supplied with agential power from another agent (i.e. the indwelling and animating Spirit).

5. The humanity of Christ possesses no agency wherewith to perform any moral act. The Spirit of God is the agent who, to put it bluntly, animates Christ's humanity, similar to how an astronaut animates a spacesuit.

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51 *PTJE*, pp. 20-22.

52 Lee, *PTJE*, pp. 170, 184 (emphasis added).

53 Tan, 'Trinitarian Action', pp. 128-9 (emphasis added). See also: Jonathan Edwards, 'Discourse on the Trinity', in Sang Hyun Lee, ed., *The Works of Jonathan Edwards in 26 Volumes*, Vol. 21 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957-2006), p. 122 (emphasis added).

Summarily speaking, if the human nature of Christ is reduced from a substance to a mere disposition, which, by consequence, means that his human nature is powerless and requires the power of another (that is, the indwelling Spirit, who, as Tan suggests might also by nature be a mere disposition) to perform a morally responsible act, then it appears that the God-man is less than fully human after all. That Christ's human nature is thus powerless on a dispositional reading is corroborated by a metaphysical story about his humanity that claims that his humanity never exists long enough to perform a moral act before the Spirit continuously re-creates his humanity out of nothing at each moment. This is Edwards' doctrine of continuous creation (or at least one version of it).

Discussing the hypostatic union of the God-man, Tan argues that, 'The *unio*, on Edwards' ontology, being a *unio continua*, involves an ongoing moment-by-moment re-creation and re-assumption of the human nature into the person of the Son'.[54] Those familiar with Edwards' doctrine of continuous creation will doubtlessly understand the implication this has for agency of Christ's humanity.[55] In short, Christ has no agency in himself, but what is afforded by the Spirit (of the Son). For those less familiar with Edwards' curious account of creation and conservation, Tan goes on to explain his understanding of the matter quite clearly, saying,

> As the Spirit of the Father, the Spirit continually gives existence to Christ's human nature (*enypostaton*). As the Spirit of the Son, the Spirit ensures that this individual human nature has personhood in its perpetual in-existence in the Word (*enhypostaton*). In a static idea of the *unio personalis*, the *enypostatos* would have to exclude the *anypostatos*, but in a dynamic conception of the union, the case is quite difference. Of itself the *humanitas* has no *dispositio* to become and remain as the human nature of the Word; it has to be continuously occasioned by divine power. Christ's human nature is not self-perpetuating but is granted both reality and in-existence by the *Dispositio* of God moment-by-moment. The Holy Spirit must continually cause the incarnation

54 Tan, *Fullness Received and Returned*, p. 146.

55 According to Edwards, 'It will certainly follow from these things [i.e., from the consideration of whether God is constantly upholding the world by his power], that God's *preserving* created things in being is perfectly equivalent to a *continued creation*, or to his creating those things out of nothing at *each moment* of their existence […]. It will follow from what has been observed, that God's upholding created substance, or causing its existence in each successive moment, is altogether equivalent to an *immediate production out of nothing*, at each moment', 'Original Sin', *WJE* 2:401, 402.

> as the Spirit of the Father and Son, creating and uniting the human nature to the Word in one (two-fold) act.[56]

This is one of the most explicit and, consequently, most challenging conclusions of Tan's reading of Edwards' Christology. For, on this view, the humanity of Christ quite literally exists for no more than a moment (however long that is) before the Spirit re-assumes or 'creates' the human nature of Jesus anew at each subsequent moment to the incarnation. The incarnation then is merely the Spirit's inaugural work of the formation and sanctification of a series of numerically distinct, individual slices of time and space which the human nature of Christ occupies and these are, by the Spirit, systematically and chronologically united to the Son. In other words, the incarnation is simply the first of many temporal slices of the earthly career of Christ's human nature that are united to the Son, by the Spirit, for what may be innumerable, duration-less intervals of time that span not only the earthly, but also the heavenly career of Christ's human nature.[57] Insofar as this account of the pneumatic agency of Christ is held up as Edwards' view, Edwards must no longer be held up as Christologically orthodox.[58] It is not Tan's reading of Edwards' doctrine of continu-

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[56] Tan, *Fullness Received and Returned*, p. 146; 'Discourse on the Trinity', *WJE* 21:122. In a more recent (and doubly thought-provoking) work on Edwards' Christology, Tan puts the dispositional ideas of Christ's constitution and agency together, claiming that, 'for Edwards, this continual communication of consciousness from the divine to the human nature just is the communion of natures', 'Jonathan Edwards's Dynamic Idealism and Cosmic Christology', in Joshua R. Farris, S. Mark Hamilton, eds. *Idealism and Christianity, Vol. 1: Christian Theology* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2016), p. 210.

[57] It is notable that, however one carves up the metaphysics, it seems that on this reading, there is no end (eschatological or otherwise) to the Spirit's work of sustaining this divine-human relation, in this particular way is ongoing. Now, Edwards certainly does think—and Tan is careful and right to point out—that the Spirit continually communicates and acts as the 'bond of union' and means of conveyance between Christ's human and divine natures. Presumably, Edwards thinks this pneumatic work is ongoing. However, one need not be swept up in the momentum of a dispositional reading of Edwards' Christology to affirm that.

[58] I have elsewhere argued at length that Edwards' Christological orthodoxy is not impeded by a commitment to a doctrine of continuous creation (see: *A Treatise on Jonathan Edwards, Continuous Creation and Christology*). Briefly, I argue that on an abstract-nature reading of Edwards' account of hypostasis, for example, where the Son bears or exemplifies the human nature of Jesus of Nazareth as a property or set of properties, the Son takes on or assumes a set of (necessary and sufficient) properties essential to human nature—the par-

ous creation that imperils his orthodoxy, however. Edwards' orthodoxy is imperiled on a dispositional interpretation of it because the human nature of the God-man is more God than man. Tan's account of Edwards' doctrine of continuous creation simply fleshes-out the implication for us. For, if the Spirit is the agent of Christ's human nature, then the humanity of Christ cannot properly to be a moral agent. If this is the case, then Christ cannot be said to have done the soteriological work that Edwards and his interpreters think he does.[59] In the final analysis then, the full swing of this dispositional momentum seems to present more problems than solutions for Edwards' Christology at large, and his Spirit Christology more narrowly.

CONCLUSION

We've covered a lot of ground in this article. We attempted to define the interpretive tradition begun by Sang Lee known as dispositional ontology. We then considered the development of this interpretive tradition at the hands of Anri Morimoto. We then explored several implications that a dispositionally-seasoned-reading of Edwards can have by looking at Seng Kong Tan's reading of Edwards' Christology, and his Spirit Christology

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ticular mind and body of Jesus. The God-man thus remains a divine person with a contingent human nature, one that, assuming Edwards' immaterialism, is comprised merely of simple and complex ideas that are nothing but percepts. On this reading of the Spirit's agency in Christ's humanity, Christ's human mind endures from moment to moment, whereas his body does not. His mind being a created substance, remain a constant. His body (being comprised of ideas), however, remains, as Edwards says, 'in constant flux' ('Original Sin', *WJE* 3:404). In other words, Jesus' humanity is not falling out of existence and subsequently being re-created by the Spirit every moment. What the Spirit is doing betwixt the divine and human natures of Christ is continuously creating all of the perceptions of the God-man, not creating the humanity of Christ out of nothing every moment. By consequence, the humanity of Christ retains its agential powers. So also does the Spirit.

[59] That Edwards' Christology has much to do with his soteriology, and in particular, with the unequal and inaugural sanctifying work of the Spirit is echoed by Tan. Accordingly, Tan argues that 'Edwards constructs his theology of the incarnation upon a Chalcedonian dyophysitism which emphasizes a new relation inaugurated between God the Father and Jesus Christ. The Logos-Jesus unity and Jesus-Father relation, in turn, are built upon a Spirit Christology in which the Father 'incarnated him [the Son] by sanctification'. Edwards thus reintegrates the Father and Spirit into his Christological thinking', 'Trinitarian Action in the Incarnation', p. 130 ('Miscellany' no. 709, *WJE* 18:334).

more specifically. Several things should be clear by this point about the impact that this interpretive strategy has for reading Edwards' Christology. First, it should be clear that a dispositional reading of Edwards' metaphysics has far-reaching interpretive implications. However self-evident this seems, it should also be clear that many of the implications of a dispositional reading of Edwards have yet to be explicitly measured in the literature. For, no one (no one that I am conscious of anyway) has yet explicitly responded to Tan's formidable and copious work. Until such a time, it should remain clear that the momentum of a dispositional reading of Edwards presents some worrisome consequences for the metaphysics that underpin Edwards' Christology, and those that underpin his Spirit Christology in particular.[60]

[60] I am grateful to Oliver Crisp, Joshua Farris, Doug Sweeney, Seng Kong Tan, and Willem van Vlastuin for comments on previous drafts of this article.

Division with a Cause: A Reconsideration of The Scottish Disruption in Canada

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INTRODUCTION

The Disruption of 1843, in the words of S. J. Brown, 'was probably the most important event in the history of nineteenth-century Scotland and a major episode in the history of the modern Western Church.'[1] The upheaval had global ramifications, especially in colonial societies where Scottish settlers carried their ecclesiastical controversies with them, giving rise to rival Presbyterian denominations from Nova Scotia to Australia. Remarkably few scholars have carefully probed the impact of the Disruption beyond Scotland, however, and much of the existing literature rests upon impressionistic evidence and doubtful theoretical assumptions.

The controversy in British North America, for example, has typically been viewed through an interpretative lens focused upon Canada's transition from colonial subordination to independent nationhood. In this telling of the tale, Scottish colonists initially transplanted ecclesiastical traditions ill-suited to their new circumstances; these needed to be jettisoned in order for distinctively Canadian institutions to emerge. In this perspective the theological and political battles between Presbyterians in Scotland had no relevance in America, and the split between Kirk and Free Church loyalists in Canada (i.e. modern Ontario and Quebec) and the Maritime colonies constituted tragic and altogether pointless schisms which only served to delay the birth of a unified and authentically Canadian denomination. This analysis appears in textbooks by Presbyterian scholars such as John Thomas McNeill, H.H. Walsh, and H. Keith Markell, the latter concluding that the division between the Kirk and the Free Church in Canada was 'to some extent exotic' and that the 'whole controversy had a certain air of unreality.'[2]

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1 S. J. Brown, 'The Disruption and the Dream: The Making of New College, 1843-1861', in D. F. Wright and G. D. Badcock (eds.), *Disruption to Diversity: Edinburgh Divinity, 1846-1996* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1996), p. 30.

2 H. Keith Markell, 'Part II', in Neil G. Smith, Allan Fraser, and H. Keith Markell, *A Short History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada* (Toronto: Presbyterian Publications, 1966), p. 51. Also see John Thomas McNeill, *The Pres-*

Scholars have often displayed an overt bias against the Free Church, emphasizing that a few firebrands instigated the Canadian disruption out of misguided commitment to their ethnic loyalties and irrelevant theological principles. Thus, Neil Gregor Smith described the men who launched the Free Church in Canada as well-intentioned rigorists who 'held strong convictions on the spiritual independence of the church and the headship of Christ.' Unfortunately, in Smith's view, they placed the importance of 'a principled stand' ahead of the concrete needs of Canada's churches. These impatient zealots failed to recognize that the 'essential work of the church could be carried on effectively in the church as it was,' and that grievances could be aired and errors corrected 'patiently.' By plunging Canadian Presbyterians into 'an unseemly rivalry' over ecclesiastical issues that had no local significance, they demonstrated that 'idealists in a hurry' might be 'martyrs by mistake.'[3]

John S. Moir linked the controversy to the long struggle of colonial Kirk leaders to gain recognition as a co-established Church alongside the Anglican. Under the Clergy Reserve Act of 1840, the Church of Scotland in Canada received twenty-one percent of the funds generated by the 'Clergy Reserve' lands. Moir showed that this modest legislative victory deeply influenced some ministers when the Scottish Disruption threatened to divide the Synod of Canada. Like other interpreters, Moir regarded the issues that triggered the 1843 Disruption as irrelevant in North America and argued that the zeal for disunion in the colonies was driven by newly arrived Scots who had not yet adapted to the Canadian environment. Their attachment to Scottish causes constituted a 'deadly' threat to the prosperity of the Canadian Kirk. The formation of a Canadian Free Church in 1844, Moir concluded, 'appeared to be a triumph for Scottishness over Canadianization.'[4]

Barbara C. Murison acknowledged an even broader range of factors, including the crucial role of lay leaders who exercised *de facto* control over most local congregations. Yet Murison failed to develop this important

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byterian Church in Canada, 1875-1925 (Toronto: Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1925), pp. 13-15; and H. H. Walsh, *The Christian Church in Canada* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1956), pp. 210-15.

3 Neil Gregor Smith, 'By Schism Rent Asunder: A Study of the Disruption of the Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1844', *Canadian Journal of Theology* 1.3 (1955), pp. 175-83.

4 John S. Moir, 'The Quay of Greenock: Jurisdiction and Nationality in the Canadian Presbyterian Disruption of 1844', *Scottish Tradition* 5 (1975), pp. 38-53 (quote on p. 39), and 'The Backwash of Disruption', in *Enduring Witness: A History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada* (Toronto: Presbyterian Publications, 1970), pp. 101-27.

observation, and ultimately reached the same conclusion as Moir. The disruption of the Presbyterian churches, both in Canada and the Maritime colonies, constituted 'divisions without causes' and signified the 'triumph of denomination over environment.' Murison assigned much of the blame to outside agent provocateurs, most notably Dr. Robert Burns of Paisley, the former Chair of the Glasgow Colonial Society and a leading Free Church partisan, who toured Canada and the Maritimes in early 1844, and according to his critics sowed 'poisonous seeds' of discord wherever he travelled. 'The Disruption was deliberately exported from Scotland to the colonies […] and as deliberately received there,' Murison concluded, by settlers who ignored the best interests of Canadian Presbyterianism because 'their mental horizons remained emphatically Scottish': 'Whatever good came to Scotland (and this is a matter for debate), it is difficult to see a great good resulting from the Disruption in the "colonial Zion."'[5]

An alternative view was offered by Richard W. Vaudry, who argued that the new denomination 'was firmly rooted in Canadian soil' and constituted a 'successful adaptation' of Scottish tradition to the colonial environment.[6] Vaudry sympathetically cast the Free Church as an evangelical 'revival movement' that injected into Canadian Presbyterianism a missionary zeal and activism that had been lacking, and that soon became the dominant strand of Canadian Presbyterian identity. In a study of theological education at Knox College, Toronto, Brian J. Fraser took a similar approach, emphasizing the dynamic 'entrepreneurial […] evangelicalism' of the Free Church that 'appealed to a growing number of Canadians in the late 1840s and the 1850s.'[7]

Although valuable, none of these works provides a satisfactory explanation for the Disruption in Canada. Existing scholarship has largely ignored the apologetic literature produced by colonial Free Church leaders, who exhaustively answered the charge, echoed by later historians, that

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5 Barbara C. Murison, 'The Disruption and the Colonies of Scottish Settlement', in Stewart J. Brown and Michael Fry, eds. *Scotland in the Age of the Disruption* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993), pp. 135-50 (quote on p. 147), and 'The Kirk versus the Free Church: The Struggle for the Soul of the Maritimes at the Time of the Disruption', in Charles H. H. Scobie and G. A. Rawlyk, eds. *The Contribution of Presbyterianism to the Maritime Provinces of Canada* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997), pp. 19-31 (quote on p. 31).

6 Richard W. Vaudry, *The Free Church in Victorian Canada 1844-1861* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1989), xiv.

7 Brian J. Fraser, *Church, College, and Clergy: A History of Theological Education at Knox College, Toronto, 1844-1994* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), p. 7.

they blindly followed Scottish events and fomented needless schism. Even Vaudry's sympathetic treatment glosses over the carefully constructed arguments they offered in defence of their actions. We especially need to weigh their analysis of the local Canadian context, for like Scotland, Presbyterianism in the colonies varied considerably from place to place. P. L. M. Hillis found that 'the sociology of the Disruption varied according to region and according to the different social groups within each region,' and that numerous factors, 'including the personality of the local ministers and local traditions, played an important role in deciding who stayed and who went out of the Established Church in 1843.'[8] The same was true of the 1844 Disruption in Canada.

CANADIAN PRESBYTERIANS & THE EMPIRE

Let us begin with the much-discussed theme of 'Canadianization,' an especially troublesome construct when applied to nineteenth century Presbyterians of the Scottish diaspora. A generation ago Phillip Buckner critiqued the notion that Canadian national consciousness developed via rejection of competing loyalties, instead emphasizing that imperial subjects in the Victorian world typically held multiple complementary identities.[9] Canadians who strongly identified with their colonial homeland could also be passionately committed to the Empire and think of themselves proudly as British. Many studies of Nineteenth Century Scotland reach parallel conclusions about Scottish identity. John M. MacKenzie, for example, has argued that Victorian Scots manifested their deep sense of cultural distinctiveness by participation in the British Empire, an entity that 'had a tendency to perpetuate and enhance regional and ethnic identities among indigenous peoples.'[10] Thus, most Canadian Presbyterians of the early Victorian Age simultaneously identified as Scottish, British and Canadian, and experienced no tension in holding these overlapping attachments together. The notion that they must jettison their Scottish identity in order to forge an authentically Canadian Church would simply never have entered their thinking.[11]

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8 P. L. M. Hillis, 'The Sociology of the Disruption', in Brown and Fry, eds. *Scotland in the Age of Disruption*, pp. 44-62.

9 Phillip Buckner, 'Whatever Happened to the British Empire', *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 4 (1993), p. 12.

10 John M. Mackenzie, 'Empire and National Identities: The Case of Scotland', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 8 (1998), p. 231.

11 Denis McKim makes a similar point in '"Righteousness Exalteth a Nation": Providence, Empire and the Forging of the Early Canadian Presbyterian

This reality alone undermines the dominant interpretation of the Canadian Disruption. When the Synod of Canada in Connection with the Established Church of Scotland convened in July 1844, laity and clergy alike had wrestled with the theological, social, and political dimensions of the crisis for many years. Deep-seated commitments to the Kirk or Free Church side of the dispute had already crystallized in the Canadian Scottish community; the Synod's deliberations did not so much cause the schism as formalize an existing division. Of the ninety-one ministers on the Synod's roll in 1844, three broad groups had emerged by the opening of their annual meeting. Approximately twenty were determined to repudiate the Synod's nominal ties to Scotland's Establishment, while perhaps twice that number wished to maintain the *status quo*. The rest constituted a middle party that sympathized with Free Church principles but hoped to find a compromise that could preserve institutional unity.[12] There is no good evidence that any of these factions were any less Scottish in their identity, nor any more Canadian in their commitments, than the other two groups.

Although critics have charged Free Church leaders with blindly pursuing Scottish developments while ignoring the needs of Canadian Presbyterians, the dissenting ministers themselves argued strongly the opposite case. In a pastoral letter, setting forth their reasons for withdrawing from the Synod, they emphasized the need to stake out their independence from the homeland, and to build a Church that could embrace all North American Presbyterians and not merely those attached to the Scottish Kirk:

> In a country like Canada, the Presbyterian population of which is composed of immigrants from all quarters of the world, the idea of the dependence of the Synod on the Church of Scotland has […] prevented that Catholic and comprehensive growth and development to which she might […] otherwise have attained. She has been little better than a Church for the Scotch, or rather, we might say, the Scotch of the Establishment.

The mission of the Canadian Free Church, the letter concluded, was to become 'really and thoroughly a Free, Independent and Catholic Church […] around which all Presbyterians might rally because adapted and intended for all.'[13]

Identity', *Historical Papers: Canadian Society of Church History* 39 (2008), pp. 47-66.

12 Vaudry, *The Free Church*, pp. 14-37.

13 *The Ecclesiastical and Missionary Record for the Presbyterian Church of Canada*, 1.1 (August, 1844), p. 4.

Free Church spokesmen wanted to clarify the ambiguous relationship between colonial churches and the Scottish Kirk, a critical issue ignored by clergy on both sides of the Atlantic until the Scottish Disruption forced them to grapple with the problem. Canadian Free churchmen attributed much of the blame for their ecclesiastical crisis to this longstanding failure to codify their independence, clouding all discussion of Presbyterian affairs in the colonies:

> The exact nature of the relation in which the Synod in connexion with the Church of Scotland has hitherto stood to that church, and the terms on which she has held her endowments from the State, are still matters about which conflicting views are entertained. The whole subject of the relation in which, on Presbyterian principles, a Colonial Church should be held to stand to the parent Church in Britain, has never yet received that consideration, or derived the advantage of that thorough elucidation, to which its great importance entitles it; and each party is apt to make their own crude and undigested views on what they think to be proper and desirable in this matter, the rule as to what actually is.[14]

At the Synod of 1844 the Free Church party first attempted to end this confusion by offering resolutions proclaiming the independence of the Canadian Synod from the Scottish Kirk and dropping the phrase 'in connection with the Established Church of Scotland' from their name. Contrary to the common assertion that this issue was purely academic, urgent matters of essential practice and polity were at stake. Although all factions agreed that the Church of Scotland held no appellate authority over them, most ministers in the Bathurst, Montreal, and Quebec Presbyteries insisted that their connection to the Established Church was more than nominal but that the Canadian Synod was in fact an integral part of the Scottish Kirk, was constitutionally bound to maintain a *bona fide* connection with it, and that their legal right to church property and temporalities required their continued adherence to the Scottish Establishment. Peter Campbell, a professor at Queen's College in Kingston and a vocal opponent of the Free Church cause, forcibly argued in widely circulated newspaper columns preceding the Canadian Disruption that '*that insofar as the Church of Scotland can possibly exist in Canada, we are that Church*':

> That we have, all along, not merely admitted, but demanded, that we should be considered as such; that, contending for rights long withheld from us, we have affirmed our identity with the Church of Scotland; that without such affirmation these rights would have no existence; and finally, that the advan-

[14] Ibid., p. 2.

> tages, such as they are, conceded to "The Church of Scotland in Canada" have been claimed by us on the ground of our being not merely sprung from, or similar to, but of our being that Church, as a member is part of the body […].[15]

Campbell argued that this organic union permitted the Canadian Synod to enjoy perfect liberty in all ecclesiastical matters, but at the same time it precluded the Church in Canada from making any public statements in opposition to the policies or standards of the mother church.

THE QUESTION OF AUTONOMY

Free Church dissenters found Campbell's position intolerable. They believed that Campbell, who as a professor at Queen's was deeply invested in the establishment of the Canadian Church, advocated a novel interpretation that few if any clergy had held when the Synod was first organized in 1831 from various tributary streams of Presbyterianism.[16] Henry Esson of Montreal's St. Gabriel Street Church, who had come out to Canada in 1817 from the Presbytery of Aberdeen and had played an important role in the Synod from the beginning, derisively rejected Campbell's views as pure 'fiction.' Esson, who was one of only two ministers in the Montreal Presbytery to withdraw in 1844, recollected that the phrase 'in connection with the Established Church of Scotland' had been adopted with little discussion or reflection, but that nobody at the time understood the colonial Synod to be bound organically to the Scottish Kirk or in any fashion dependent upon her for either ecclesiastical guidance or civil support. For most clergy and laity, Esson insisted, the name signified merely that a majority of the ministers and people had originally belonged to the Church of Scotland before their emigration, but they were no more united to that body than an adult son is bound organically to the parent whose name he carries. If the Synod was indeed ecclesiastically independent, as even many 'Adhesionists' conceded, and if the name had now become an offensive stumbling block to large numbers of Canadian Presbyterians, then Campbell's position seemed a stunningly irresponsible prod to needless schism. In the present crisis the Canadian Church simply needed to declare independence, formally codifying the complete freedom that virtually all ministers and laity assumed that they had possessed since the Synod's formation. Esson charged Campbell and his supporters with

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15 *Kingston Chronicle & Gazette*, 13 January 1844, p. 2; *Toronto British Colonist*, 19 January 1844, p. 2. Italics are Campbell's.

16 The streams are traced in William Gregg, *History of the Presbyterian Church in the Dominion of Canada* (Toronto: Presbyterian Printing & Publishing Company, 1885).

caring more about the 'endowments and emoluments which are derived from clergy reserve lands or from the bounty of Government' than the unity and liberty of the Canadian Synod.[17]

The Synod's autonomy was certainly at risk in the controversy. During the winter of 1843, as the Colonial Committee of the Scottish Kirk wrestled with future financial support for Canadian missions, it drafted an unprecedented circular letter which it sent directly to colonial ministers, assuring them of continued monetary assistance but only if they maintained '*bona fide attachment*' to the Established Church of Scotland.[18] In the Committee's report to General Assembly, it frankly acknowledged its intent to minimize the impact of the disruption abroad by gaining pledges of loyalty from colonial ministers in advance of the forthcoming Canadian Synod meeting. The Colonial Committee also warned that should a disruption occur in Canada and the withdrawing clergy seek a share of the Clergy Reserves, it would move at once to have the action 'disallowed by the Government at home.'[19] Canadian Free Church proponents saw this as an ominous violation of Presbyterian polity and a dire threat to the freedom of the Canadian Synod. Official correspondence between independent churches must properly be exchanged between the appropriate governing authorities, in this case the Moderator of the Synod of Canada rather than private ministers. Together with the General Assembly report the controversial circular letter signalled that the Church of Scotland regarded the Canadian Synod as a dependent entity, that it claimed the right to interfere in colonial ecclesiastical affairs, and that it would not allow Canadian Presbyterians freedom to make their own decisions through their constitutionally elected representatives in Synod unless they conformed to the wishes of the Scottish General Assembly. As Henry Esson trumpeted:

> There is no unambiguous intimation here, no uncertain sound, in *the warning or almost threat* held out, that the connection with the Parent Church shall no longer be suffered to be purely nominal. Let the Canadian Church once bow her neck to the yoke, now for the first time sought to be imposed upon her, let her suffer herself to be saddled, bridled, and mounted, she will soon prove to

[17] Henry Esson, *An Appeal to the Ministers and Members of the Presbyterian Church Under the Jurisdiction of the Synod of Canada, on the Question of Adherence to the Church of Scotland as by Law Established* (Montreal: J. C. Becket, 1844), p. 32.

[18] Ibid., pp. 26-27.

[19] Ibid., p. 48.

> her cost, like the steed in the Fable of Aesop, that the rider will laugh to scorn all her claims of liberty, and will mock at all her remonstrances.[20]

The Canadian Synod had passed resolutions in 1841, 1842, and 1843 upholding Free Church principles and voicing unequivocal support for the Church of Scotland's struggle against 'intrusion' and government interference in ecclesiastical matters. These resolutions received unanimous support in 1841 and 1842, from many ministers who later refused to sever their ties with the Scottish Establishment. When the Presbytery of Hamilton introduced similar resolutions of sympathy for the Scottish Free Church in 1843, after the Scottish Disruption, eleven members of Synod, led by Peter Campbell, dissented. Still, however, a strong majority of 28-11 approved.[21] To the Free Church supporters, these acts of Synod constituted the official voice of the Canadian Church and could not subsequently be simply ignored or set aside for the sake of expediency or out of fear of losing temporalities. If, as Campbell openly stated, and the Colonial Committee of the Scottish Kirk seemingly insisted, '*bona fide attachment*' meant that the Canadian Synod could not criticize the actions of the Established Church in Scotland but must maintain silence in the face of what many Canadian Presbyterians considered sin, it was difficult to understand how colonial Presbyterians could be regarded as fully independent in ecclesiastical matters.[22]

It also appeared that the Synod of Canada lacked consistency in its doctrinal statements and had nothing authoritative to offer Canadian Presbyterians seeking theological guidance on fundamental matters of faith and practice. Throughout Canada confused laity looked to their pastors for clarity about the Synod's position *vis a vis* both the Scottish Establishment and the new Free Church. To which denomination would Canadian Presbyterians now contribute missionary offerings? From which denomination would they seek missionaries and new ministers? 'Could we,' Esson demanded, 'as true men, faithful to our principles, to our God, and to our cause, feel one moment's hesitation in deciding between these two churches? Was not the choice already made, predetermined before the disruption by the resolutions of 1841 and 1842? If we are to hold any

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[20] Ibid., p. 47. Italics are Esson's.

[21] See Esson's Appendix for these resolutions, which were also reported in British newspapers. See, for example, *Belfast News Letter*, 13 August 1841, p. 1 and *Caledonian Mercury*, 17 August 1843, p. 1.

[22] Alexander F. Kemp, *Digest of the Minutes of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada; with a Historical Introduction* (Montreal: John Lovell, 1861), pp. xiii-xiv, highlights the importance of this issue in the birth of the Canadian Free Church.

communion or connection with any church on earth, one would have supposed that there was no room for deliberation.'[23]

The difficulty in the Canadian Synod's position was acknowledged even by some who adhered to the Scottish Kirk. During the March, 1844, meeting of the Quebec Presbytery John Cook, of St. Andrew's Church in Quebec, set forth the position which was to carry a majority of the Synod several months later. Cook, a student of Thomas Chalmers who had Evangelical leanings, pastored a politically influential congregation in a heavily French Catholic province. He had worked tirelessly on the campaign to gain government support for the Presbyterian Synod and had no intention of risking this hard-won victory unless absolutely necessary. The Presbyterians of Canada depended heavily upon assistance from Scotland and the government, Cook reasoned, and would for many years to come. Their connection to the Established Church of Scotland assured them of vitally needed support, and if the mother church did not attempt to interfere in the internal ecclesiastical affairs of the Canadian Synod his conscience did not bother him in maintaining a nominal connection to her. Yet Cook recognized that in light of the recent schism in Scotland, their relationship to the established Kirk, acknowledged by the government as the legal basis of their share in the Clergy Reserves, might in fact lead to troubling restrictions on the long-standing freedom claimed by Canadians:

> It never occurred to us to consider to what extent her internal dissensions might proceed, and how injurious they might prove to us. Our connection with the Church of Scotland was, as we supposed, our tower of strength. Now amidst the distractions of party it may become a reed to pierce us, or a stone of stumbling. We cannot […] feel sure, that the peculiar authority which she possesses over us, will be exercised with the same forbearance as heretofore—and certainly our own position is unnecessarily insecure and […] unfavorable to an independent course of action. We receive Government support, very needful in the present state of our Church. But for the continuance of this support we are dependent […] on our giving satisfaction to a third party, altogether removed from the sphere of our labors, and otherwise exercising no authority over us.[24]

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[23] Henry Esson, *Substance of an Address Explanatory and Apologetic, in Reference to the Late Disruption of the Synod of Canada in Connection with the Established Church of Scotland, Delivered to the Congregation of Saint Gabriel Street Church, on Tuesday, the 30th of July 1844* (Montreal: J. C. Becket, 1844), p. 16.

[24] *Kingston Chronicle and Gazette*, 13 March 1843, p. 2.

In July 1844 a majority of the Canadian Synod upheld resolutions offered by Cook to maintain for the time being their legal connection to the Scottish Kirk and to refrain from criticizing her policies. Most adhering ministers held charges in Quebec and the eastern townships of Upper Canada, in areas where the Presbyterian populace was dwarfed by Catholics, Anglicans, and other sects, or in urban churches where prominent Scottish businessmen and politicians worshipped. Many, like Cook, undoubtedly hoped that in the future they could secure a new basis for their temporalities that would free them from any external interference in Canadian ecclesiastical affairs; but in the meantime, they believed that their best interests dictated a stance that critics deemed hypocritical in light of Synod's previous resolutions upholding Free Church principles. Henry Esson and the minority who withdrew to organize a new Canadian Free Church believed that these 'adhering' brethren had both fatally compromised their integrity and had badly miscalculated the best interests of Canadian Presbyterianism. The modest amount of government support derived from the clergy reserves constituted a pittance that could be dispensed with should they actually lose these temporalities. However, the inevitable loss of their *people*, which in the Western regions of the province would certainly include entire congregations, signified the destruction of the living Church that they were called and sworn to serve and protect as Christian shepherds.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL CONTEXT

Henry Esson was no voluntarist. Like virtually all Free Church leaders he believed that government had a moral obligation to support a national church; yet he recognized that Presbyterians in Canada could not expect to thrive and expand if they placed their hopes in the clergy reserves. Esson estimated that at best these could afford each minister in the Synod £60 annually, a sum that would quickly plummet as new congregations organized and new clergy joined the Synod's roll.[25] Clearly no expansion of Presbyterianism was conceivable in Canada without the generous voluntary support of committed laity, and in large swaths of the colony, especially to the West of Toronto, the people overwhelmingly supported the cause of the Scottish Free Church.

Although Peter Campbell indignantly rejected the accusation that he leaned toward 'prelacy,' his side failed to understand the thinking of many Scottish settlers. In a running polemical battle against Free Church editor Peter Brown of the *Toronto Banner*, Campbell habitually employed

[25] Esson, *An Appeal*, p. 39.

sarcastic language guaranteed to offend many rank and file Presbyterians. For example, in one widely reprinted editorial, Campbell lampooned 'Free Church principles' with impolitic words:

> Miserable but most prevalent delusion! How many, alas! do we see starting up around us, who by mouthing melodramatic fustian about the Covenanters, expect to repair a damaged reputation, or to gain a good one. Never, I believe, was the Church more exposed to be overrun with a pest, or all its landmarks of doctrine, discipline, and order more in danger of being removed, than by those who vex godly men with their loud talk about the Headship of Christ.[26]

Such language could not have clashed more dramatically with the deeply held convictions of countless Presbyterians in Canada, including many laity in those eastern presbyteries that voted overwhelmingly to adhere to the Scottish Establishment in 1844. Even before the Synod convened, it was clear that many disaffected Presbyterians would leave churches where the ministers pledged loyalty to the Kirk. In the vacant congregation of Ramsay, near Ottawa, the people gathered a week before Synod to make their views known. Although situated in the Bathurst Presbytery, whose ministers stood solidly with the Scottish Establishment, Ramsay's laity unanimously resolved that the Scottish Kirk was an apostate body that had betrayed the principles of their ancestors: 'We therefore consider it to be our duty, from this day forward, to withdraw from all connexion with the established Church of Scotland.' They castigated those Canadian ministers who, having previously condemned Erastianism, now pledged adherence to the 'Residuary Church,' warning that such men had forfeited their claim to be legitimate shepherds. Henceforth, the Ramsay congregation proclaimed, 'we will not receive any missionary or minister as a preacher amongst us, except he maintains the principles of the Free Church.'[27]

In Spencersville, also within the Bathurst Presbytery, a group of disgruntled Scots in early 1844 announced their 'withdrawal from the Synod of Canada in Connection with the Established Church of Scotland' and their determination to secure a Free Church minister. These settlers built a 'plain handsome church,' sufficiently large to accommodate several hundred worshipers, and soon had crowded assemblies each Sabbath. Four of these separatists, who had migrated from Ruthwell, reached out to their former pastor, Rev. Henry Duncan (1774-1846), seeking his help in finding an evangelical preacher from the Scottish Free Church. In a private letter to Duncan accompanying the official letter from the con-

[26] *British Colonist*, 27 February 1844, p. 2.
[27] *Bathurst Courier and Ottawa General Advertiser*, 2 July 1844, p. 1.

gregation, colonist John Weir wrote: 'glad would I be, and esteem it my highest honour, to sit at the feet of that beloved Church of which you are a member.'[28]

Scattered throughout the Bathurst, Montreal and Quebec Presbyteries were Scottish Presbyterians who had not yet been organized into churches but who met regularly on their own for worship.[29] Many were Gaelic speaking Highlanders who seldom if ever received visits from missionaries. When John Bonar of Larbert toured the colonies in 1845 on behalf of the Scottish Free Church, he discovered near Sherbrooke, in Lower Canada, nearly one hundred families that had migrated from Inverness who had gone more than six years without a sermon. Shortly before the Canadian Disruption, Bonar related, these people learned that a Gaelic missionary was to preach forty miles away, and eager to have their children baptized the entire settlement trekked through the woods to meet him. But once they discovered that the man was from the Scottish Kirk rather than the Free Church, 'they toiled their way home again, saying that they would wait till the Presbytery sent them a faithful minister.'[30]

It was not only in rural Scottish enclaves that dissension brewed. Even in St. Andrew's, Kingston, among the wealthiest and most politically connected congregations in the colony, the majority Kirk faction discovered that they could not control the sizable minority of disgruntled Free Church sympathizers who wished to sever ties with the Church of Scotland. When Robert Burns of Paisley visited Kingston in April, 1844, during his tour as a Scottish Free Church deputy, minister John Machar and the St. Andrew's Trustees determined that he would not preach from their pulpit. A petition signed by one hundred and eleven pew holders challenged this decision to no avail, whereupon the dissenters organized a meeting to plan an ecumenical welcome for the Free Church dignitary. Following Burns' visit, seven of the eight divinity students at Queen's College withdrew from the school in protest, after Principal Thomas Liddle disciplined them for their attendance at Burns' sermon in the neighbouring Wesleyan Chapel. A large public meeting, led by St. Andrew's dissenters, passed resolutions declaring approval of the Scottish Disruption and determination 'to use every effort to aid […] the Free Church of Scotland.'[31]

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28 *Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, 19 June 1844, p. 2.

29 *Canadian Christian Examiner and Presbyterian Review* 1.2 (April, 1837), p. 59.

30 *Elgin Courier*, 29 August 1845, p. 1.

31 *Kingston Chronicle and Gazette*, 13 April 1844, p. 3; 20 April 1844, p. 2; Robert Burns, *Report Presented to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland on Canada and Nova Scotia* (Paisley, 1844).

If Free Church sympathizers could not be silenced in Kirk strongholds, the cause of '*bona fide attachment*' was hopeless in the extensive and rapidly rising territory to the West of Toronto, which would always be the demographic centre of the Canadian Free Church. From Hamilton on the western tip of Lake Ontario, westward to Lake Huron, 'bush settlements' were fast filling up with a polyglot populace from Holland, Ireland, and especially the northern Scottish Highlands. Many Scots came from Ross and Sutherland and carried with them their strong attachment to evangelical religion. Zorra Township in the Brock District, for example, was a large Highland enclave made up almost entirely of families who had left Dornoch and Rogart parishes in the wake of the Sutherland Clearances. They had been led to Canada by a blacksmith, George MacKay, one of the revered 'men' who was popularly known as *Duine Righ-lochan*, 'The Man of King-lochan.'[32] Such settlers—and there were many in the Hamilton Presbytery—harboured bitter memories of social injustice and sustained in perhaps equal measure a fierce devotion to the peculiar strain of layled evangelicalism they had known in Scotland and animosity toward the noble family of Sutherland and the establishment that it represented.[33]

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[32] Anna Ross, *The Man with the Book; or Memoirs of John Ross of Brucefield* (Toronto: R. G. McLean, 1897), pp. 5-6.

[33] Donald Macleod, who wrote heated polemics against the clearances and the Kirk's complicity, had migrated to Woodstock in the Hamilton Presbytery. See Douglas MacGowan, ed., *The Stonemason: Donald Macleod's Chronicle of Scotland's Highland Clearances* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001). On the northern Highlands, see Donald Sage, *Memorabilia Domestica; or Parish Life in the North of Scotland*, second Edition (Wick: William Rae, 1899); John Kennedy, *The Days of the Fathers in Ross-Shire* (Edinburgh: John Maclaren, 1867) and Kennedy, *The Apostle of the North: The Life and Labours of the Rev. Dr. M'Donald* (London: T. Nelson & Sons, 1867); Alexander Auld, *Ministers and Men in the Far North* (Wick: John Rae; Edinburgh: Menzies & Co., 1868); Donald Munro, *Records of Grace in Sutherland* (Edinburgh: Free Church of Scotland Publications Committee, 1953; reprint edition, Edinburgh: Scottish Reformation Society, 2015) and George Macdonald, *Men of Sutherland: Sketches of Some of Them* (Inverness: Northern Chronicle Office, 1937; reprint edition, Dornoch: William Murray, 2014). Helpful modern studies include Allan I. MacInnes, 'Evangelical Religion in the Nineteenth-Century Highlands', in *Sermons and Battle Hymns: Protestant Popular Culture in Modern Scotland*, ed. Graham Walker and Tom Gallagher (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990); George Robb, 'Popular Religion and the Christianization of the Scottish Highlands in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', *Journal of Religious History* 16 (June 1990), pp. 18-34; Donald E. Meek, 'Protestant Missions and the Evangelization of the Scottish Highlands, 1700-1850', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 21 (April 1997), pp. 67-72;

In April, 1833, the Synod of Ross, noting that 'our countrymen in that region labour under a lamentable want of the means of religious instruction,' resolved to send out annually a Gaelic speaking missionary to meet the need of these kinsmen.[34] Although this plan proved overly-ambitious, the Synod did send out missionaries in 1833 and 1836, both ordained by the Presbytery of Dingwall and disciples of John Macdonald of Ferintosh, the so-called 'Apostle of the North.' Year after year Donald McKenzie and Daniel Allan spent months itinerating throughout the southwestern townships of Upper Canada, holding Gaelic worship services, attending weekly prayer fellowships, organizing congregations, and holding annual 'Long Communions' that regularly attracted thousands of Gaels to what many witnesses described as exact replications of a Highland 'Holy Fair.' McKenzie settled over the congregation in Zorra Township, which became renowned in Presbyterian circles as a 'school of the prophets' that produced more Free Church ministers than any other single congregation in all Canada.[35]

There was never any doubt that these Highland evangelicals would reject 'bona fide attachment' to the Scottish Kirk after 1843. Sutherland folk in Zorra, and those scattered across the province to Kincardine on the Huron shore, had resisted theological 'moderatism' to the point of separatism long before the Disruption. They closely followed events back home through letters, and a fresh supply of newcomers from Sutherland arrived yearly, carrying the latest news. They could also read accounts of the Scottish Disruption which appeared in Canadian newspapers and religious periodicals. They knew well how the common people of Sutherland had turned against the Kirk in 1843, as well as the despised Duke of Sutherland's initial refusal to grant them land for new churches, a highly publicized scandal highlighted in evangelical journals around the globe. Such colonists hardly needed outside agent provocateurs like Robert Burns to tell them where their sympathies lay. Burns appeared

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and David M. M. Paton, 'The Myth and Reality of the 'Men': Leadership and Spirituality in the Northern Highlands, 1800-1850', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society* 31 (2001), pp. 97-144.

34 *Inverness Courier*, 12 June 1833, p. 3.

35 For missionary narratives by McKenzie and Allan, see *Inverness Courier*, 4 March 1835, p. 2; and *The Canadian Christian Examiner and Presbyterian Review* 1:8 (October, 1837), pp. 286-94. On Zorra Township and Highland religion in the region, see Anna Ross, *The Man with the Book;* W. A. Mackay, *Pioneer Life in Zorra* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1899); W. A. Ross, *History of Zorra and Embro: Pioneer Sketches of Sixty Years Ago* (Embro: Embro Courier Office, 1909); and W. D. McIntosh, *One Hundred Years in the Zorra Church (Knox United, Embro)* (Toronto: The United Church Publishing House, 1930).

only briefly in Hamilton and then headed east, never once visiting the western settlements of Highland dominance during his Canadian tour. Yet contributions for the Scottish Free Church flowed in from settlers throughout the region. A congregational bazaar held in Zorra in April 1844 raised $170 for the Free Church Building Fund, a considerable sum for an impoverished bush settlement that underscored the community's continued devotion to their beloved kinfolk who 'were obliged to assemble in barns or in the open air to worship their Creator.'[36]

A majority of those who withdrew from the Synod of 1844 came from the western Hamilton Presbytery, where so many clergy had deep roots in Highland evangelicalism or else had come to Canada as missionaries to labour among mostly Highland settlers. John Bayne of Galt, for example, the first minister to sign the Protest of the Free Church in 1844, was the son of a Gaelic minister in Greenock who later went north as a probationer to the Dingwall Presbytery, his father's homeland, where he was ordained in 1834. Though not fully proficient in Gaelic, Bayne had enough command to receive an almost unanimous call from a parish in Orkney but was rejected by the heritor. He then went out to Canada through the Glasgow Colonial Society as a missionary, and fell in love with the people of Galt, a mostly Highland community that appreciated his evangelical convictions and his ability to understand their Gaelic.[37] Mark Young Stark of Dundas, a village near Hamilton, also came from a Lowland background and spoke not a word of Gaelic. Like Bayne he had come to Canada through the Glasgow Colonial Society after failing to secure a patron in Scotland. As a missionary in the heavily Gaelic speaking West and a member of the Hamilton Presbytery, he came to appreciate the deep-seated ties that connected the local people to their Highland traditions. When the choice between adhesion or independence had to be made, Stark reluctantly embraced independence and became the first Moderator of the Canadian Free Church.[38]

CONCLUSION

Ministers like Bayne, Stark, McKenzie, and Allan understood a crucial truth that too many of the 'Adhering' party failed to appreciate fully:

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36 *Woodstock Herald*, 20 April, 27 April, 4 May, 1844.

37 Alexander C. Geekie, 'A Colonial Sketch: Dr. John Bayne of Galt', *British and Foreign Evangelical Review* 24:18 (July, 1875), pp. 488-504.

38 Allan L. Farris, 'Mark Young Stark: Pioneer Missionary Statesman', in John S. Moir, ed. *The Tide of Time: Historical Essays by the Late Allan L. Farris, Professor of Church History and Principal of Knox College, Toronto* (Toronto: Knox College, 1978), pp. 75-85.

The 'Church of the Fathers' loved by many Canadian Presbyterians had become the Scottish Free Church in 1843. Henry Esson insisted that the vital missionary heart of the Church of Scotland had always been those evangelicals who had gone out from the Kirk in the preceding year; to break communion with them now, he believed, would fatally cripple the prospects of the Synod in Canada. Reflecting especially upon the efforts of the Glasgow Colonial Society, by which so many ministers had reached North America, Esson emphasized 'that to this section of the Church we owe nearly all that we now are—all that we have won in this land.' Considering this history, he reflected, to pledge 'an exclusive connection' to the Church of Scotland constituted a stunning failure to recognize that Canadian Presbyterianism had always been intimately linked to the champions of the Free Church cause:

> They planted, watered, and nourished us, and taking us up, when we were helpless and neglected—have watched over us with paternal and fostering care […]. Our best missionaries and ministers have come forth from them […]. If we separate our cause from that of the Free Church, we take away our vital influence and commit a suicidal act.[39]

Esson was confident that countless lay Presbyterians, if not their ministers, did understand this truth, and that the Synod needed to heed the voice of those people who were disaffected from the Kirk. It was almost inconceivable to him that faithful ministers would choose to retain a nominal tie to the Scottish Establishment if it meant the widespread alienation of the laity, a far more catastrophic disruption of the Canadian Church than the loss of clergy reserves could ever accomplish: 'Are they […] earnest in saying that the connection which they advocate is only nominal, implies no jurisdiction in itself, when they would not sacrifice it to prevent the separation of twenty congregations in Canada West, and the certainty […] of as many more over all the land to follow?' After the schism, Esson sadly observed that the Adhering majority had willingly sacrificed many of their most faithful people rather than risk losing their paltry temporalities, thereby selling 'the jewel of the church for an empty bubble.'[40] Far from authoring a division without cause, Esson and his Free Church colleagues had carefully weighed the options and reached the painful conclusion that faithfulness to Christ as well as the future welfare of Canadian Presbyterians required their complete separation from the Scottish Kirk.

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39 Esson, *An Appeal*, p. 35.

40 Esson, *An Address*, p. 11.

The Demonic in Mark and its Eschatological Significance

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The purpose of this essay is to consider the demonic in the Gospel of Mark and to reflect on the eschatological significance of Jesus' authority over the demonic. Despite being the shortest Gospel, Mark has more references to the demonic realm than the other Gospels. So it is clear that 'one of the most significant ways that Mark portrays Jesus is as an exorcist.'[1] What requires greater elucidation, however, is the significance of this emphasis on the demonic for Mark's portrayal of the eschatological import of Jesus' coming. Specifically, this essay will suggest that Mark's focus on the demonic is part of Mark's broader focus on Jesus as the bringer of the eschatological *new creation*.

We will set the stage by surveying the Greek terms that denote the demonic in Mark. We will then reflect on the eschatological significance of the demonic in Mark in three steps. First, we will explore two early references in Mark to Satan. Second, we will reflect more broadly on the demonic with four observations. All this will lead, third, into an extended conclusion to this study regarding the demonic in Mark and its eschatological significance.

The thesis this essay explores is the way the demonic motif in Mark uniquely portrays Jesus as the bringer of the latter-day new creation longed for in the Old Testament and especially the prophets. In this way, Mark quietly presents Jesus not simply as the object of eschatological hope but the one through whom God begins creation over again with a second Adam. While Markan scholarship has identified the eschatological significance of the demonic in Mark, the more fundamental new creation dimension has not been adequately explored.

1. SURVEY OF REFERENCES TO THE DEMONIC IN MARK

Four terms are associated with the demonic in Mark: σατανᾶς, δαιμόνιον, δαιμονίζομαι, and πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον. We take them briefly in this order for the sake of general orientation.

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[1] Adam Winn, *The Purpose of Mark's Gospel: An Early Christian Response to Roman Imperial Propaganda* (WUNT 2/245; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), p. 111.

Mark is the only Gospel account that does not use the word διάβολος, which Matthew uses six times, Luke five times, and John three times. The majority of these instances in Matthew and Luke come in the pericope narrating the temptation of Jesus. In Matthew, Luke, and John διάβολος normally refers to the devil, though at one point the word is used in a more general way when Jesus refers to Judas being 'a devil' (John 6:70).[2] Mark's preferred term for the devil is σατάν, which he uses six times (Mark 1:13; 3:23 [2x], 26; 4:15; 8:33), more than Matthew (four), Luke (five), and John (one).

Demons are referenced by the noun δαιμόνιον and the verb δαιμονίζομαι. In Mark we find a total of fifteen uses of these two words. Of these eleven are δαιμόνιον (Mark 1:34 [2x], 39; 3:15; 3:22 [2x]; 6:13; 7:26, 29, 30; 9:38), four are δαιμονίζομαι (1:32; 5:15, 16, 18).[3] Matthew has a total of nineteen references to demons/demon-possession (one of which is the *hapax legomenon* δαίμων in Matt. 8:31), Luke has twenty-four, and John has seven. Mark evidently uses δαιμονίζομαι to designate the state of those under the control of a demon or demons, due to the way he interleaves the two terms in Mark 1:32 (τοὺς δαιμονιζομένους) and 1:34 (δαιμόνια). Thus δαιμονίζομαι and δαιμόνιον function in parallel and can be considered together as the verbal and nominal expressions of the same notion (of demon possession).

The Gospels speak not only of demons but also 'unclean spirits.' We will consider the relationship between a δαιμόνιον and a πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον below. Here we note that Mark uses the language of 'unclean spirit' fourteen times (1:23, 26, 27; 3:11, 30; 5:2, 8, 13; 6:7; 7:25; 9:17, 20, 25 [2x]), including references simply to 'spirit' where 'unclean spirit' is clearly implied. Matthew has four such references, Luke twelve, and John none. Of all the references to πνεῦμα in each Gospel, Mark has a much higher proportion of references to an *unclean* spirit. The word πνεῦμα is used nineteen times total in Matthew, thirty-six times in Luke, and twenty-four times in John. Thus 61% of Markan uses of πνεῦμα refer to an unclean spirit, as opposed to 21% for Matthew, 33% for Luke, and 0% for John.

Taking the references to unclean spirits together with the references to demons/demon-possession would signify that Mark has proportionately a greater emphasis on the demonic than any other Gospel. But before considering this point and its significance, we must clarify the relationship between demons and unclean spirits in Mark. They are used with approx-

[2] Quotations of the Bible are from the ESV unless otherwise noted.

[3] I exclude Mark 16:9–20 from this data, where two more references to demons exist.

imately equal frequency (fifteen references to the demonic, fourteen references to unclean spirits). Do these all refer to the same reality? If not, how are they different? A comparison of Mark's references to demons with those of unclean spirits indicates that he speaks of demons and unclean spirits interchangeably. Demons and unclean spirits are both referred to singularly (7:26; 3:30) and in the plural (1:34; 1:27); demons and unclean spirits are both cast out of people (1:39; 5:13); demons and unclean spirits both afflict young and old alike (7:26; 1:39; 9:25; 1:26); Jesus has authority over both demons (1:34) and unclean spirits (5:13). Most important of all, at times the two terms are used interchangeably *within the same pericope* and refer to the same spirit. For example, in the episode of the Syrophoenician woman and her afflicted daughter, we are initially told that the daughter has a πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον (7:25), but the next two times the spirit is called a δαιμόνιον (7:26, 29). This interchangeability happens also in the episode of the man among the tombs and the drowned pigs, using πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον (5:8, 13) and δαιμόνιον (5:15, 16, 18) to refer to the same group of demons. Moreover, both Jesus and other characters in the Gospel refer to both 'demons' and 'unclean spirits' so one cannot consistently posit preference for one term over the other based on who is speaking or on Mark's own narrative preferences.

2. ESCHATOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

What is the significance of the many episodes involving the demonic in Mark? They could be approached from various angles. We see, for instance, the compassion of Jesus at play as he mercifully frees the oppressed from the demons that afflict them (cf. Mark 9:22). One could also draw the conclusion from Jesus' exorcisms that he was a man of unusual power.[4] Another way to approach the exorcisms would be to consider their political significance against the backdrop of Jewish leadership and the Roman empire.[5]

What this essay explores, however, is the Markan significance of Jesus' interactions with Satan and the demonic for understanding Jesus as launching the latter-day new creation. This aspect of Jesus' work is anticipated throughout the Old Testament while given its fundamental categories in Genesis 1 to 3. Thus we are considering the demonic from an eschatological perspective. Others have considered the eschatological dimension of the exorcisms, but not in terms of Jesus launching *the*

[4] This is the emphasis of Winn, *Purpose of Mark's Gospel*, pp. 111–12.

[5] This is the approach of Amanda Witmer, *Jesus, The Galilean Exorcist: His Exorcisms in Social and Political Context* (LNTS 459; London: T&T Clark, 2012).

eschatological new creation. Morna Hooker explores various OT connections with the demonic in Mark but does not develop these in terms of the eschatological significance of the demonic in Mark.[6] Adela Yarbro Collins mentions at times the last days being inaugurated by Jesus in Mark and the significance of the demonic to that end but her focus is Mark's apocalyptic perspective on history—that 'earthly events are controlled by heavenly powers.'[7] Richard Hays has applied his approach for detecting OT allusions to Mark and the other Gospels, though again a specifically new creational aspect to his exegesis is not apparent.[8]

Joel Marcus more than anyone is notable for his focus on the eschatological significance of Jesus' interactions with the demonic.[9] At times, moreover, he refers to the new creational aspect of this subject. His focus, however, is the apocalypticism of Mark, by which he means that Mark's Gospel 'is from start to finish set within the context of the approaching end of the world.'[10] This approach informs Marcus's understanding of what people are saved from in Mark. 'For Mark as for other Jewish apocalypticists, this salvation is above all a liberation of humanity from the cosmic powers that oppress it; Jesus' main mission is to clear the earth of demons.'[11] Marcus maintains this salutary focus on the demonic throughout Mark and our study will at times intersect with his work. The key difference, however, is that Marcus' apocalyptic approach focuses on what is coming to an end, while our study suggests that the focus on the demonic is a matter primarily of what is beginning—namely, the final eschatological new creation.[12]

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6 Morna Hooker, *The Gospel according to Saint Mark* (BNTC; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1991).

7 A. Y. Collins, *The Beginning of the Gospel: Probings of Mark in Context* (Eugene, Ore.: Wipf & Stock, 2001), 34; idem., *Mark: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), *passim*.

8 Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016), pp. 15–103. While Hays is strong on OT backgrounds to Mark 1:9–15, he says nothing about the eschatological import of 1:12–13 in particular.

9 Joel Marcus, *Mark 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 27; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000); idem., *Mark 8–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 27A; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

10 Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, p. 71.

11 Ibid., p. 72.

12 Other differences between Marcus' approach and mine could be mentioned, such as his more skeptical stance toward what can be received as historically reliable (ibid., *passim*), or his dating of Mark in the early 70s (ibid., pp. 37–39)

We will focus on two texts toward the beginning of Mark's Gospel to explore this before making some summative statements about the rest of the episodes involving the demonic. The two texts come in the first three chapters of Mark's Gospel, a section that sets the stage in a prospective way for the rest of the narrative.

Mark 1:13

We begin with Mark 1:13, where we are told that Jesus was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan. What we must recognize is that this text is part of an opening to Mark's Gospel rich in biblical-theological significance. Mark opens his Gospel, as Rikki Watts has shown at length, by drawing together several Old Testament texts to introduce Jesus as the one who brings the new and final exodus as prophesied especially in Isaiah.[13] Just as Jesus appears on the scene to launch the new age, John appears on the scene to draw to a close the old age (Mark 1:4–8; cf. Matt. 11:10–11).

In verse 9 Jesus is baptized by John and the accompanying phenomena signal to the reader the eschatological significance of Jesus' entrance into history. Mark tells us that as Jesus comes up out of the water—perhaps itself a quiet allusion to the exodus and Israel, God's 'son' (Exod. 4:22), coming up out of the waters—the heavens are 'torn open' (v. 10). This draws on Isaiah 64:1, which speaks of Yahweh himself splitting the heavens and coming down.[14] The verb Mark uses here (σχίζω) is, strikingly, the same one he uses just one other place in his Gospel, at the very end as Jesus is crucified, when he describes the tearing open of the temple curtain (15:38). (Other elements supporting an *inclusio* to Mark's Gospel could be mentioned, such as the only two non-demonic assertions that Jesus is 'Son of God' at 1:1 and 15:39). In Mark 1, the heavens are torn open as the bringer of the new age launches his ministry; in Mark 15, the temple curtain is torn open and the final temple of the new age is inaugurated, access to God having broken open through the death of Jesus.[15]

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and the associated suggested influence of Paul on Mark (ibid., pp. 73–75); but these matters are less directly germane to the present study.

13 Rikki E. Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), pp. 53–90.

14 See the discussion of Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, pp. 17–18.

15 G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God* (NSBT 17; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2004), pp. 188–92; Marcus, Mark 8–16, pp. 1067–68, mentions the new age dawning in Mark 15:38–39, but focuses on the centurion being the first to confess Jesus' true identity and thus the inclusion of the Gentiles.

And what happens as Jesus rises out of the water and sees the heavens being torn open? As in Isaiah 64:1, God is coming down—though it is the Holy Spirit specifically. This is noteworthy as the Spirit is one of the key marks of the new age having dawned (cf. Ezek. 36:26–27; 37:14; Joel 2:28–29; Luke 11:20; Acts 2:17).[16] The Spirit descends 'like a dove'—perhaps recalling the role of the dove throughout the Noah account as God brings a new creation out of the primordial chaos of the flood. In both Genesis 8 and Mark 1, the dove goes forth to signal a new day and a new start as God begins anew and brings his chosen servant through the waters to launch a new creation. We might note further that just as this is Jesus' baptism event specifically, Peter connects baptism with the Noahic floodwaters (1 Pet. 3:20–21). And just as God called Israel his own son (Ex. 4:22–23), so God now calls Jesus his Son (Mark 1:11).

In all these ways we are meant to understand Jesus as the launcher of the latter days. This literary undercurrent continues as we come to the text that speaks of Satan,[17] whom Hooker views as the focus of Mark's temptation narrative.[18] The Spirit drives Jesus out (τό πνεῦμα αὐτὸν ἐκβάλλει) into the wilderness (v. 12). The wilderness appears to be important to Mark, as he repeats in rapid succession the fact that Jesus is in the wilderness, once in verse 12 and again in verse 13—a point that R. T. France calls 'the most striking feature' of this passage.[19] The use of ἐκβάλλω here is especially striking, not only as it denotes the compulsory force with which Jesus is driven into the wilderness but also because this is the very verb used throughout the rest of Mark to denote the driving out of demons.[20]

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16 See also Geerhardus Vos, 'The Eschatological Aspect of the Pauline Conception of the Spirit', in Richard B. Gaffin Jr., ed., *Redemptive History and Biblical Interpretation: The Shorter Writings of Geerhardus Vos* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R, 1980), pp. 91–125. Vos's essay is a treatment of the Pauline literature, but much of his argument is transposable more broadly onto the rest of the NT.

17 'The brevity of the prologue (1:1–13) fixes the reader's attention on Mark's characterization of Jesus as God's Spirit-empowered Son who fights against Satan'; Elizabeth E. Shively, *Apocalyptic Imagination in the Gospel of Mark: The Literary and Theological Role of Mark 3:22–30* (BZNW 189; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012), p. 154. Cuvillier calls Mark 1:12–13 'un chef-d'oeuvre de concision'; Élian Cuvillier, *L'évangile de Marc* (Bible en face; Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2002), p. 30.

18 Hooker, *Saint Mark*, p. 49.

19 R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), p. 83. Gnilka notes the presence of the wilderness theme starting as early as verse 3 in Mark 1; Joachim Gnilka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus* (Mk 1–8,26) (EKK 2/1; 5 aufl.; Zürich: Benziger, 1998), p. 57.

20 Noted by Étienne Trocmé, *L'Évangile selon Saint Marc* (CNT 2; Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2000), p. 37; Gudrun Guttenberger, *Die Gottesvorstellung im Marku-*

Mark likely is welcoming an association by alert readers between these uses of ἐκβάλλω. Jesus was 'cast out' by the Spirit, and triumphed over Satan—so that he himself was subsequently able to 'cast out' Satan's own forces.[21] But Rudolf Pesch points out an even more ancient connection Mark may wish us to see.[22] In Genesis 3:24 *Adam and Eve* are driven out (LXX ἐκβάλλω) of Eden after failing Satan's temptation. In Mark 1:12–13 Jesus is driven out (ἐκβάλλω) into the wilderness where he too is tested by Satan but succeeds. Adam and Eve were sent out in disgrace; Jesus was sent out to reverse this disgrace.

Jesus is in the wilderness being tested by Satan for a period of forty days (v. 13). A reader attuned to the Old Testament cannot but associate this testing with the forty years wilderness wandering of the Israelites, the forty days Moses was on Mount Sinai, and the forty days Elijah took to travel to Horeb.[23] The difference with Jesus is that he emerges the victor in this period of testing, triumphant over Satan.[24] This is explicit in the longer recountings of Jesus' temptation in Matthew and Luke, but will become equally clear in Mark as this Gospel unfolds. (We will see this in particular when we turn to Mark 3.) While Jesus will appear to be conquered by Satan on the cross, the note that is struck here and throughout the early chapters of Mark is that Jesus is obedient to the Father—with him God is 'well pleased' (1:11). He is not subject to Satan the way others are throughout Mark's Gospel.

Finally, we note that Jesus was 'with the wild animals' in the wilderness (1:13)—an intriguing remark that is not replicated in the other Gospel accounts and stands out in light of Mark's terse, crisp writing style that wastes no words. It is possible that Mark has in mind the Roman context to which he writes and is alluding to the beasts of the Roman theatre; however, the reference to the wild beasts is cryptic enough that we

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sevangelium (BZNW 123; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004), p. 237.

21 Simon Légasse, *L'évangile de Marc* (LD 5; Paris: Cerf, 1997), p. 96 n. 3. It need not worry us that the text does not explicitly say that Jesus prevailed in this period of testing, as what has preceded (God being 'well-pleased' with his Son) and what follows (conquest over the demonic throughout Mark) require that he did indeed prevail.

22 Rudolf Pesch, 'Anfang des Evangeliums Jesu Christi: Eine Studie zum Prolog des Markusevangeliums (Mk 1,1–15)', in Günther Bornkamm and Karl Rahner, eds., *Die Zeit Jesu: Festschrift für Heinrich Schlier* (Freiburg: Herder, 1970), p. 131.

23 See Gnilka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus*, p. 57.

24 Trocmé, *L'Évangile selon Saint Marc*, p. 138.

should not be dogmatic as to its meaning.[25] But in light of the surrounding context, rife with intercanonical connections and bristling with eschatological import,[26] it seems most natural to take this as an Edenic reference to the beasts among whom the first Adam dwelt.[27] Now the bringer of the new age, the last Adam likewise is among the beasts. And like the first Adam whose time with the beasts concluded with the presence of angels (Gen. 3:24), the last Adam likewise concludes with the presence of angels—though instead of blocking the way into Eden from God's servant, these angels minister to God's servant.[28]

It would not be out of order to bear in mind subsequent Old Testament references to wild beasts in the wilderness. For example, Moses speaks of the 'fiery serpents and scorpions' that the Israelites faced in the wilderness (Deut. 8:15–16).[29] Psalm 91 says that the one who trusts in God 'will tread on the lion and the adder; the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot' (Ps. 91:13).[30] Intriguingly, this Psalm also speaks of God commanding his angels to protect the psalmist—a text that Satan himself quotes to Jesus in the temptation narratives of Matthew and Luke (Matt. 4:6; Luke 4:10), and is thus likely in the background of Mark's statement that 'the angels were ministering to' Jesus in Mark 1:13. The broader context of Deuteronomy 8, too, is quoted in the temptation narratives of Matthew and Luke (Deut. 6:16). We should also bear in mind Isaiah 43, an eschatologically charged passage that brings together the notions of the wilderness (ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ [Isa. 43:19, identical to Mark 1:13]) and the wild beasts (τά θηρία [Isa. 43:20, the same word used in Mark 1:13]) in speaking of God 'doing a new thing' (Isa. 43:19).[31] And elsewhere in Isaiah harmonious relations among the animals is a sign of the dawning eschaton (e.g.,

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25 Edwards inclines toward this interpretation; James Edwards, *The Gospel according to Mark* (PNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001) pp. 40–42.

26 On which see esp. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, pp. 15–103.

27 William L. Lane, *The Gospel of Mark* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 61; Légasse, *L'Évangile de Marc*, p. 98.

28 Marcus sees Adam as the primary OT background figure to Mark 1:12–13 (*Mark 1–8*, pp. 169–70).

29 Jan Willem van Henten sees Deut. 8:15 as a key text forming the background of Mark 1:13; 'The First Testing of Jesus: A Rereading of Mark 1:12–13', *NTS* 45 (1999), pp. 352–56.

30 Caneday notes the significance of Psalm 91 as forming the background to Mark 1:13; Ardel B. Caneday, 'Mark's Provocative Use of Scripture in Narration: He Was with the Wild Animals and Angels Ministered to Him', *BBR* 9 (1999), pp. 34–36.

31 G. K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), p. 419.

Isa. 11:6–9; 65:25). But it would probably be artificial to seek to identify any one of these OT texts as backgrounding Mark 1:13 over against the others.[32] More likely, Mark is drawing on a constellation of OT texts that all find their roots in Genesis 1–3 to depict Jesus as the last Adam, among the beasts—whether the prelapsarian harmonious relationship humanity shared with the beasts, or the postlapsarian hostile relationship humanity has shared with the beasts.

One text from Second Temple Judaism is especially striking in considering the eschatological import of the appearance of Satan in Mark 1:13. In *Testament of Naphtali*, likely an early post-apostolic Christian document, we read, 'Lo! My children, I have shown unto you the last times, however things shall come to pass in Israel' (*Test. Naph.* 8:1). The author then goes on to speak of what will happen to those who 'work that which is good' (8:4): 'The devil shall flee from you, and the wild beasts shall fear you, and the Lord shall love you, and the angels shall cleave to you' (8:4). The three elements of the devil (and his being vanquished), the wild beasts, and the ministry of angels provide a striking threefold parallel with Mark 1:13, and all in an explicitly eschatological context.[33] And the fourth element, 'and the Lord shall love you,' finds a parallel in Mark 1:11: 'You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.'[34] This early Christian text provides evidence that Jesus' temptation was understood eschatologically in the early church.

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[32] John Paul Heil ('Jesus with the Wild Animals in Mark 1:13', *CBQ* 68 [2006] pp. 63–78) engages Richard Bauckham ('Jesus and the Wild Animals (Mark 1:13): A Christological Image for an Ecological Age', in *Jesus of Nazareth: Lord and Christ: Essays on the Historical Jesus and New Testament Christology* [ed. Joel B. Green and Max Turner; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994], pp. 3–21) on Mark 1:13, arguing that instead of Bauckham's focus on the Adamic background to Mark 1:13, this text should be read with Israel's wilderness testing in the background. But Israel's wilderness testing was itself a recapitulation of Adam's testing; both Adam and Israel were 'the son of God' who failed when tested (cf. Ex. 4:22–23; Luke 3:38). It is not necessary to pit these two backgrounds against each other.

[33] Gnilka notes the 'eschatologische Tierfriede' indicated in *Test. Naph.* 8:4; Gnilka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus*, p. 57.

[34] Hooker notes two other texts from the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs which speak of the subjugation of wild beasts (Test. Iss. 7:7; Test. Ben. 5:2), but neither of these contains the additional Markan elements that *Test. Naph.* 8 does; Hooker, *Saint Mark*, p. 50. We also read in 2 Maccabees of Judas Maccabeaus withdrawing εἰς τὴν ἔρημον θηρίων (2 Macc. 5:27 LXX), though there is no mention of angels there. Noted by P. M.-J. Lagrange, *Évangile selon Saint Marc* (Études Bibliques; Paris: Gabalda, 1947), p. 15.

All this underscores the thick eschatological significance of the immediate context of the first reference to Satan, setting the stage for Jesus' victory in the wilderness over Satan to be viewed as of eschatological and new creational import.[35] This point will be made more explicit in our survey of Mark 3. But we must see here at the outset of Mark's Gospel that as Jesus is tempted by Satan, with the beasts, and then ministered to by angels, this proleptic triumph over Satan[36] paves the way for eschatological conquest over the demonic throughout the rest of Mark. 'Back of the casting out of demons,' wrote Vos, 'lies the spiritual conquest of Satan by Jesus Himself in the temptation.'[37] To put the point in Pauline terms, this initial triumph over Satan is the 'firstfruits'—the initial reality linked to a broader fulfilment—of Christ's ministry.[38]

Mark 3:22–30

Paradigmatic for understanding Mark's connection between Satan/the demonic and inaugurated eschatology is this pericope in Mark 3 as Jesus interacts with the Jerusalem scribes who have accused him of being possessed by Beelzebul.[39] This is the second reference to Satan and follows naturally from the first, and probably is meant to be read in tandem with the first.[40] Both accounts involve Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Satan, the verb ἐκβάλλω, and either implied or explicit triumph of Jesus over Satan.[41] As we move to Mark 3 we are careful to read it in concert with Mark 1 and honour the author's efforts to craft a coherent and mutually illuminating narrative—as distinct from Marcus, who suggests that Jesus' thought

35 Cuvillier is particularly confident of the Adamic/eschatological background to Mark 1:12–13; *L'évangile de Marc*, p. 30.

36 Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology*, p. 421.

37 Geerhardus Vos, 'The Kingdom of God', in *Redemptive History and Biblical Interpretation*, p. 313.

38 Cf. Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, pp. 170–71.

39 Shively (*Apocalyptic Imagination*) argues that Mark 3:22–30 is programmatic for understanding the whole of Mark's Gospel, a thesis with which the present essay would be in significant sympathy. Shively, however, reads this text as providing a symbolic world in which Mark uses figurative language to portray a world of cosmic conflict. This is not an illegitimate approach but this apocalyptic approach focuses on the spatial and cosmic dimensions of Mark's worldview whereas the present essay and its eschatological approach focuses on the temporal dimension of Mark's worldview.

40 Hooker, *Saint Mark*, p. 116.

41 Trocmé, *L'Évangile selon Saint Marc*, p. 38.

developed throughout Mark and that in Mark 1 he was simply an exorcist and healer who did not yet view himself as the final opponent of Satan.[42]

Before considering this passage itself, it is instructive to bear in mind the preceding context. After a few references to demons (1:34, 39) and unclean spirits (1:23, 26, 27) the next reference to the demonic is not until 3:11. Great crowds persist in thronging around Jesus in light of his many healings, and we are told the general statement that 'whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God"'. The unclean spirits thus clearly acknowledge Jesus' authority and power, ascribing him to be what Mark 1:1 has told us at the outset: 'the Son of God.' In the very next verses Jesus appoints the twelve apostles (3:13–19). Their stated purpose is 'to preach and have authority to cast out demons' (3:15). As these are the two activities that to this point in Mark's Gospel Jesus himself has been executing, this twofold calling is naturally taken as an extension of Jesus' own ministry through the twelve. Going home, Jesus is once again thronged about by the crowds, so that he and his disciples are not even able to eat—but his family believes him to be 'out of his mind' (3:20–21), an accusation that will be more openly picked up by his opponents.[43]

Immediately, then, after reading that whenever demons saw Jesus they fell down before him and that Jesus has delegated this authority over the demons to the twelve, we are given the ground for this authority:

> [22] And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, 'He is possessed by Beelzebul,' and 'by the prince of demons he casts out the demons.' [23] And he called them to him and said to them in parables, 'How can Satan cast out Satan? [24] If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. [25] And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. [26] And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end. [27] But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house.
>
> [28] 'Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, [29] but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin'—[30] for they were saying, 'He has an unclean spirit.'

I take this to be the most significant text on the relationship between the demonic and inaugurated eschatology in Mark. Not only do we find all three referents to the demonic in this short passage (Satan, demons,

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42 Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, p. 282.

43 Gnilka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus*, pp. 148–49.

unclean spirit) but, most importantly, we hear Jesus pronouncing his own binding of Satan (v. 27). Upon being accused by the scribes of casting out demons by Satan's own power, Jesus exposes the illogical reasoning behind such an accusation—why would Satan cast out Satan? Then, intriguingly, Jesus uses the category of *kingdom* (βασιλεία) to drive his point home. 'If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand' (v. 24). The reader's mind is immediately brought back to the only previous instance of βασιλεία thus far in Mark's Gospel, in the programmatic statement of Jesus' as he launches his public ministry that 'The time is at hand, and the kingdom [βασιλεία] of God is at hand' (1:15).[44]

And what is Jesus saying more fundamentally as he uses kingdom-language to expose the fallacious reasoning of the scribes? He is declaring that the kingdom has come: the longed for time of climactic fulfilment of all God's promises is unfolding there and then in Jesus' ministry. Immediately after saying that a kingdom cannot be divided against itself, Jesus says the same thing using the image of a house (οἰκία). 'And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand' (v. 25). Jesus is thus using the images of kingdom and house in parallel. This is significant because Jesus then goes on to speak of entering a strong man's house and binding him. Satan is the strong man who is bound by the yet stronger Jesus as Jesus enters Satan's house. Then, having bound him, Jesus is able to plunder Satan's house. Given the parallel between kingdom and house we could say that Jesus has entered Satan's kingdom, bound him, and is plundering his kingdom.[45]

The association between kingdom and house in Mark 3 is natural given Old Testament precedents.[46] This is especially notable in 2 Samuel 7. At the pinnacle of God's promise to David of a perennial throne and heir and thus in an eschatologically charged context, God says to David, 'Your house [οἶκος] and your kingdom [βασιλεία] are firm forever before me' (2 Sam. 7:16). Whether Jesus may have this text in mind when he speaks of a kingdom and a house not standing is a matter for further consideration beyond the bounds of this study. What is immediately pertinent for our purposes is the close connection between the two notions in the Old Testament, a connection that at times comes in richly eschatological and promissory contexts such as 2 Samuel 7.[47]

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44 France, *Mark*, p. 172.

45 Vos, 'Kingdom of God', p. 312.

46 Contra Marcus, who views the Hellenistic world as the primary background for understanding the association between βασιλεία and οἶκος in Mark 3 (*Mark 1–8*, p. 281).

47 Gnilka sees Isa. 49:23–26 as the background for Jesus' statement, which is intriguing given the eschatological atmosphere of Isaiah 49 and its promise

Jesus is saying that he has arrived on the scene to bring to an end the power of Satan's kingdom. Jesus is inaugurating the final kingdom.[48] This note of inaugurated eschatology is more clearly seen when we pay close attention to the closing phrase of verse 26: 'if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, *but is coming to an end* [ἀλλὰ τέλος ἔχει].' The diversity of English translations reflects the difficulty of capturing the precise sense of the terse two-word Greek phrase τέλος ἔχει. A sampling of translations is given below in Table 1.

Table 1. Translations of τέλος ἔχει in Mark 3:26

NASB	he is finished!
KJV	hath an end
NKJV	has an end
NIV/NRSV	his end has come
NJB	it is the end of him
RSV/ESV	is coming to an end
CSB	is finished

The succinctness of the Greek makes it challenging to cleanly translate this phrase but the basic point comes through clearly: in the midst of speaking of why Satan cannot oppose his own demonic forces, Jesus speaks of the great end of demonic authority. While it is true that this comes in the context of saying why Satan cannot stand against himself, and thus is speaking in hypothetical terms, it is likely (given the context) that Jesus intends here a veiled indication that Satan's end has come. His power has been decisively undermined. This is reinforced by the fact that Jesus goes on immediately to speak of binding Satan. The τέλος here, then, is probably an eschatologically-oriented instance of this word, which would comport with the only other two uses of τέλος in Mark, which are used in eschatologically loaded contexts (13:7, 13).[49] The one whom Paul calls 'the prince of the power of the air' (Eph. 2:2) has had his power emptied.

Finally, Jesus goes on to speak of the so-called 'unpardonable sin': '"Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, but whoever blasphemes against the

of the end-time restoration of God's people; *Das Evangelium nach Markus*, p. 150.

48 Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology*, pp. 435–36. Cf. Vern S. Poythress, *The Miracles of Jesus: How the Savior's Mighty Acts Serve as Signs of Redemption* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2016), p. 140.

49 See Marcus, *Mark 8–16*, pp. 880, 888.

Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"—for they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit"' (Mark 3:28–30). From the perspective of this paper, the reason blasphemy against the Holy Spirit cannot be forgiven is not because God's mercy is limited in some way but because to blaspheme against the Spirit *is to reject the presence of the new age*. The presence of αἰών language here underscores this (twice in v. 29). Blasphemy against the Spirit is of aeonic significance, because one is saying no to the key identifier of the dawning eschaton: the gift of the Spirit. One is insisting on staying rooted in the old age, the age of death, identifying the Davidic heir on whom the Spirit rests (Mark 1:10) as instead being possessed by an unclean spirit (3:30).

These reflections on Mark 3:20–27 fit neatly into a hermeneutical lens that reads the New Testament as announcing the inauguration of the eschaton. Inaugurated eschatology is the notion that Christ launched the new age decisively. The old age continues to exist until Christ comes again and brings it to an end. Thus Satan's authority has been bound decisively but continues to exist until Christ comes again to put a final end to him.

Synthesizing Reflections

Though we do not have space to treat each demonic episode independently, four overarching remarks can be made in light of what we have seen regarding Satan and the demonic in Mark 1 and Mark 3.

First, of the four canonical Gospels Mark is particularly interested in emphasizing Jesus' conquest over the demonic. Summarizing information presented above, Table 2 provides the relevant data, identifying the number of references to the various words associated with the demonic in the Gospels.

Table 2. Summary of Demonic Language in Each Gospel

Data	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
διάβολος	6	0	5	3
σατάν	4	6	5	1
δαιμόνιον / δαίμων / δαιμονίζομαι	19	15	24	7
πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον	4	14	12	0
Total	33	35	46	11
Total Words	18,345	10,971	19,482	15,468
% of Words	0.18%	0.32%	0.24%	0.07%

Thus while the shortest Gospel, Mark has thirty-five references to Satan and the demonic throughout the 10,971 Greek words of this Gospel, which means that 0.32% of the words in Mark are one of the words associated with the demonic.[50] While these are small percentages it is notable that Mark has one-third more references to the demonic than any other gospel and over four times more than John's Gospel.

Second, this binding of Satan and the reclaiming of supreme power over him is not for Jesus alone to wield. His twelve disciples, most immediately, are positioned by Mark to be seen as extending this authority. This is clear from the way that the binding of Satan pericope (3:22–27) is immediately preceded by Jesus' ascribing authority to his disciples to cast out demons (3:15). This authority does not belong intrinsically to the twelve, but it is extended through the twelve. This is reinforced when Jesus sent the disciples out in pairs, 'and gave them authority over the unclean spirits' (Mark 6:7).

Third, the binding of Satan should be seen as organically linked with the binding of demons or unclean spirits. We have looked above at two key and closely related episodes about Satan, which Mark likely frontloads in his Gospel to help the reader make sense of the many subsequent exorcisms. Indeed, with the exception of Mark 8:33, where Jesus refers to Peter as 'Satan,' all other references to Satan occur in Mark 1–4. Satan is bound toward the beginning of Mark to pave the way for the casting out of many demons and unclean spirits throughout the rest of Mark. Perhaps we could say, putting together this point with the immediately preceding one, that just as Jesus in the new age has authority over Satan, his disciples in the new age have derivative authority over the demons.

And yet, fourth, Mark's Gospel does not evenly distribute the episodes involving the demonic. Not a single reference to Satan, demons, or unclean spirits occurs after chapter 9. This observation intersects meaningfully with the literary structure of Mark. The entire Gospel account swivels around 180 degrees in chapters 8–10 from embrace of Jesus to looming rejection of Jesus as he suddenly begins to announce (and announce repeatedly) his impending death and resurrection (8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34). The key turning point is Peter's confession of Jesus as the Christ (8:27–30). This is immediately preceded by the two-staged healing of the blind man (8:22–26) as a way of depicting that the disciples only see half of what Jesus has come to do. He has come as the Davidic heir to triumph over God's enemies and restore God's people (the first half of Mark, which the disciples see), but the way in which this will finally be

[50] I am considering πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον one word for the sake of ease of computing.

accomplished is through the ignominy of suffering, rejection, and death (the second half of Mark, which the disciples do not yet see, as evidenced in Peter's wrongheaded rebuke of Jesus in 8:31–33). Thus Peter's confession is immediately followed by the first of three announcements of his coming death and resurrection (8:31–34).

What is the significance of this structure of Mark for understanding the demonic in Mark? This binary structure in Mark, beginning with the gradual ascent up to Peter's confession and then turning to a gradual descent down to the cross, highlights the triumphs over the demonic in Mark 1–9 as part of the eschatological restoration of the people of God and the coming of the kingdom. In the second half of Mark, interactions between Jesus and the demonic fall from view because Jesus is now focused on his coming suffering and death. Mark must want the reader to see this given his inescapably deliberate placing of all thirty-five references to the demonic (σατάν, δαιμόνιον, δαιμονίζομαι, πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον) in the first nine chapters of his account.

At the same time, there is one final conflict between Jesus and the demonic in Mark. Though Satan is not mentioned explicitly, it is impossible to make sense of earlier statements in the Gospel, such as the binding of Satan by Jesus, without recourse to the cross and resurrection.[51] Later apostolic witness (e.g., Col. 2:14–15) will make clear what must be implicit in Mark: through the cross, though appearing to be defeated, Jesus was himself triumphing over the demonic, reclaiming authority over them.[52] In John's Gospel Jesus declares that 'now will the ruler of this world be cast out' (John 12:31) and then immediately speaks of his own impending death (12:32–33). Jesus' exorcisms earlier in the Gospel are proleptic signs that he is reclaiming this authority, but he only effectually secures it through the cross and resurrection.[53] Thus the one figure from the spiritual realm to appear in the wake of Jesus' resurrection is not a demon but an angel (Mark 16:5–7),[54] and on this note the Gospel ends.

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51 Cf. Poythress, *Miracles*, p. 160.

52 Cf. Laura C. Sweat, *The Theological Role of Paradox in the Gospel of Mark* (LNTS 492; London: T&T Clark, 2013), pp. 133–58.

53 Marcus (*Mark 1–8*, 73) proposes a 'demonic interpretation of Jesus' death' in light of the crucifixion darkness at 15:33, since 'darkness suggests demonic powers elsewhere in the NT (e.g., Eph. 6:12)' but the most obvious and immediate explanatory literature for this darkness is the OT, where descending darkness represents most immediately judgment and de-creation, not the demonic. See G. K. Beale and Dane C. Ortlund, '"Darkness Over the Whole Land": A Biblical-Theological Reflection on Mark 15:33', *WTJ* 75 (2013), pp. 221–38.

54 See Marcus, *Mark 8–16*, p. 1080.

3. CONCLUSION

The conquest over Satan and casting out of demons/unclean spirits in Mark is fundamentally a signal that the new age is dawning. We have seen the eschatological connotations of some early Markan episodes involving Satan, and the connection between Satan and the demons. All this leads us to the key point of this essay. It is not primarily compassion that leads Jesus to exercise power over the demonic, nor a strategy to demonstrate his power, nor a desire to publicize his identity (quite the reverse: Mark 1:34). His authority over the demonic is essentially the announcement-by-deed that through Jesus God is bringing about the longed-for latter days, under the rule of the final Davidic heir, resulting in the restoration of God's people. The new creation is being quietly launched. Men and women are being given back their humanity. They are becoming more truly who they were created to be. When a demon possesses someone and renders them mute, they have taken away part of what it means to be human: the ability to speak. The same goes for blindness, sickness, lameness, and so on. The fact that Mark has a higher proportion of references to the demonic than any of the other Gospels thus underscores the latent eschatological atmosphere of Mark, despite the paucity of reflection in academic literature on the eschatological significance of Mark.

Jesus' authority over the demonic is clarified as eschatologically significant when its Old Testament background—which we have touched on throughout this essay—is remembered. Though not as explicitly as Luke 4:16–22, Mark's Gospel does see Jesus as implicitly fulfilling the prophetic hope of a coming Davidic heir who would restore God's people.[55] Mark's Gospel opens with a cluster of Old Testament texts to make the point that through Jesus God is securing their final exodus-like deliverance, and Isaiah figures most prominently throughout Mark as the background for this.[56] Thus when a reader familiar with the Old Testament is presented with the Markan Jesus and his authority over the demonic and his liberating of those oppressed by demons, such a reader would inescapably conclude that this Jesus is the longed-for one of Isaianic prophecy. As Isaiah has it:

> The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,

55 Thielman is especially attuned to this redemptive-historical undercurrent in Mark, though without reflection on the demonic element; Frank S. Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament: A Canonical and Synthetic Approach* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), pp. 57–83.

56 Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark*.

> to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God (Isa. 61:1–2).

Earlier in Isaiah we read a promise that God himself 'will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy' (Isa. 35:4–6).[57] Any reader familiar with such lavish promises of God's coming and restoring of the blind, lame, mute, and so on would be compelled to read Mark's account of Jesus' authority over the demonic as the decisive inaugural fulfilment of these promises.

This is especially the case when we remember just who it was who was promised to be restored in Isaiah. It was 'the brokenhearted,' 'the captives,' the 'bound.' It is the downtrodden of the world, those whom Matthew identifies as the forgotten recipients of divine blessing (Matt. 5:2–12). It is the outsiders, the neglected, the socially and religiously overlooked, who—both in Isaiah *and in Mark*—receive this blessed visitation from God. Consider what kinds of people were given back their humanity through gracious exorcism of demons: the daughter of a Gentile Syrophoenician woman (Mark 7:24–30), a man living among the tombs (Mark 5:1–13), a young boy (Mark 9:14–29). It was not the elite that Jesus healed and restored. It was the derelict. As Jesus says in Mark 2, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick' (v. 17).

Oppression remains. The demonic has not been exhaustively abolished. But its back has been broken. The strong man has been bound. The beginning of the end has dawned. Jesus' engagement with and authority over the demonic in Mark underscores this new-creational reality in this Gospel.

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[57] This passage also refers to 'the burning sand' which is 'the haunt jackals' (Isa. 35:7) and promises that 'no lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast [τῶν θηρίων]' (35:9)—intriguing, in light of what we have observed above regarding Jesus being with 'the wild animals [τῶν θηρίων]' in Mark 1:13.

Reviews

An Anomalous Jew: Paul among Jews, Greeks and Romans. By Michael F. Bird. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016. ISBN 978-0-8028-6797-8. xii + 310pp. £19.99.

He is one of the most influential and controversial figures in history so it is little wonder that there is a wide proliferation of material on the apostle Paul. In the midst of this milieu it can be difficult to pinpoint where to start in engaging with Pauline thought. *An Anomalous Jew* by Michael Bird is a collection of essays which will certainly help in this task. Three of these essays have been published previously (Chapters 1, 4 & 5) but they have been updated for this book to bring them into line with the main argument; Paul was a Jew, of sorts.

It begins with a detailed introduction, mapping out the direction that Bird wishes to take in exploring Paul's relationship with Judaism. He presents a variety of concepts which have been employed by scholars to describe this relationship such as Paul the former Jew, the transformed Jew, the faithful Jew, the radical Jew and the anomalous Jew. It is this final idea which Bird chooses as a lens for getting to grips with Paul's relationship to Judaism. He argues, 'the anomalous nature of Paul's thought consists of his apocalyptic interpretation of the Messiah's death and resurrection' (p. 28). For Bird, the revelation of Jesus Christ is the key factor in producing the anomaly which radically alters not only Paul's worldview but his understanding of the signs and symbols of Judaism in his day. This is the main thesis which is explored in a variety of ways throughout the remainder of this book.

The opening chapter reviews Paul's understanding of Jewish soteriology of the Second Temple period. After a survey of this debate Bird concludes that Paul's reason for differing with his Jewish contemporaries came down to the revelation of Christ taking a position above Torah observance. Chapter two is a wonderful overview of Paul's missionary journeys, investigating how he was perceived by others in the world around him as well as what he understood as his mission as an apostle of Christ. Bird rightly calls into question the popular perspective of Paul being the apostle to the Gentiles. This is something which has great practical implications when considering the role of the believer in a globalised world. We are not simply sent to a particular people or place; we are the ambassadors of the gospel of Christ wherever we are located, whatever the circumstances.

Moving on Bird, takes up the task of exploring different themes relating to the Book of Galatians. Chapter three deals with reading Galatians apocalyptically, yet remaining grounded in salvation history. With the coming of the kingdom of God in Christ there are a variety of tensions which rise to the surface regarding his relationship with Judaism which profoundly influence the early Christian communities which he helps shape. Taking this a step further in chapter four is a discussion of Paul's heated disagreement with Peter regarding Jew and Gentile relations in Christ's church. For Bird, this moment in Antioch is where Paulinism begins.

Rounding off this exploration of Paul's anomalous identity in the world of the first century is a study of his relationship with the Roman Empire with focus on the Book of Romans. Bird suggests that the book could have been a direct challenge to the Roman emperors' totalitarian claim for worship and devotion from all citizens. This continues the theme of Paul's anomalous identity for he neither advocates that Christ's followers should embrace this worship nor should they become a confrontational resistance movement.

Although this book does not venture into uncharted territory it is a great compilation of thought on Paul the man, his message and his mission. Michael Bird is to be commended for not only drawing these essays together but also for compiling a great bibliographic resource which will lead the reader into various avenues of further reading. He writes with a delightful style which makes it easy to read and follow with him. It would be a great tool for students engaging with Pauline thought and pastors seeking some background on the anomalous nature of the apostle Paul.

Martin Paterson, OMF International, Glasgow

Crossing Cultures in Scripture: Biblical Principles for Mission Practice. By Marvin J. Newell. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2016. ISBN: 978-0-830-84473-9. 298pp. £15.47.

We all live and work cross-culturally, but like fish in water, we often can't see what's all around us. It turns out that some of the water is inside ourselves and our churches – and that a lot of what we need to navigate is right under our noses.

Here's how Newell puts it: 'People are immersed in [culture] but they don't think a lot about it. They live their lives feeling that things are the way they are because that's the way they ought to be. Every "ethnic group" or community of individuals possesses something in common that's invisible but manifests itself in a group culture we call culture' (p. 17).

With scripture as the point of reference, an amazing journey begins as Newell explores three dimensions. First, he shows how scripture *portrays cultures*, describing how beliefs, values and customs are lived out, often depicting cultures without commending them. Second, as a *sculptor of cultures*, scripture shapes life for the better. 'Where scripture is regarded as authoritative, many social evils embedded in the customs of communities have been either discontinued or adjusted to reflect standards of morality and social well-being God always intended for humans to enjoy' (p. 14). Finally, and most tellingly, scripture *appraises cultures*. 'Its supracultural values are meant to be the accepted moral standard for all cultures found everywhere through all time […]. The objective norms and standards of Scripture trump the subjective and selective opinions of humans' (p. 14).

Newell offers sixteen Old and eleven New Testament insights. From the Tower of Babel ('Your cross-cultural sojourn means you will never feel at home again in a monocultural environment' p. 29), to Sarah and Hagar (understanding honour and shame), Rahab (the informed prostitute, aka 'everyone's watching you'), Daniel the cross-cultural student, the contrasting worldviews of Jesus and the Samaritan woman, Paul engaging across the cultures in Athens, this book will equip you well for the journey.

Newell leaves us with Luke's 'Last Word' ringing in our ears. Acts 28:31 assures us that, whatever the traps, the gospel goes out 'unhindered.' No-one can stop what God is doing. From where I stand, working with an agency whose stated aim is to overcome barriers and present Christ's good news wherever we find ourselves, and with churches longing to make sense of what's going on around them and reach people who seem far away, this book should be part of everyone's training.

Mike Parker, Edinburgh

Preaching Christ from Psalms: Foundations for Expository Sermons in the Christian Year. By Sidney Greidanus. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016. ISBN: 978-0-8028-7366-8. 595pp. £30.99.

This book is a gold mine for preachers who wish to expound the Book of Psalms. The potential of twenty-two of the one hundred and fifty psalms is closely and helpfully explored as key texts for preaching Christ in the 21st Century. The author, who is professor emeritus of preaching at Calvin Theological Seminary, draws upon his own extensive experience in preaching, as well as pressing into service many valuable insights culled from a range of contemporary Psalm scholars. Each of the twenty-two psalms has been selected in terms of its capacity to provide an appropriate biblical text for one season in the Christian Year. Additionally, the

author believes that preaching these psalms reinforces the foundational theological theme: Creation – Fall – Redemption – New Creation.

The heart of this large volume is found in the first forty-five pages which cover the key steps from text to sermon. These steps include both interpretation and preaching. Helpful pointers are offered to interpreting psalms from a literary, historical, theocentric and Christocentric perspective. On preaching the author offers very useful guidance on preaching poetry, selecting the preaching text, generating questions about the psalm in view, determining the psalm's theme and goal, formulating the sermon's theme, goal and need addressed, producing the sermon outline and applying the psalm. More broadly, there is also advice on reading the psalm in public worship, using verses from the psalm in the liturgy, and preaching series of sermons on psalms.

While the author strongly believes that each psalm ought to be expounded as whole, he is not against preaching through one psalm in consecutive sermons. But cherry picking is frowned on. Identifying and understanding the genre of a psalm is important, as also is recognising its poetic devices (such as imagery and parallelism), its rhetorical structures and its literary contexts. The theocentric revelation of each psalm is to be explored in the context of both the Book of Psalms and the Old Testament, while its Christocentric focus should be determined in the context of the New Testament. Greidanus contends that we can legitimately preach Christ from every psalm, but eisegesis is to be avoided. Rather, we are to be guided in general by the New Testament appropriation of the psalm. After all, the Book of Psalms is quoted or alluded to in the New Testament more than any other book. In particular we are to interpret the witness of the psalms to Christ in the light of the redemptive-historical progression of divine revelation, the promise-fulfilment motif, typology, analogy with the teaching of Christ, and longitudinal themes running through several biblical books.

Each of the twenty-two psalms under review in the book are helpfully engaged in some detail through this hermeneutical process, which is followed by a 'Sermon Exposition' expounding the text of the psalm verse by verse. The latter contains many valuable expositional insights, but is light on application, and is more a sermon resource than a sample sermon. On the other hand, the three sermons and the meditation in the appendix are good examples of preaching the text into the lived experience of hearers.

This is an excellent book. It would have been even better had the sermon expositions demonstrated how the theology of a psalm contributes to dogmatic theology. For example, the treatments of Psalms 130 and 22 could have been enriched by specifying, at least to some extent, their contribution to the development of the doctrine of sin, on the one

hand, and of the atonement on the other. This quibble apart, preachers will find this book to be an invaluable compendium containing multiple fascinating insights into the psalms which provide exciting grist for the interpretive-homiletical mill.

Fergus Macdonald, Edinburgh

Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes: Removing Cultural Blinders to Better Understand the Bible. By E. Randolph Richards & Brandon J. O'Brien. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2012. ISBN 978-0-83083-7823. 240pp. £11.99.

One of my colleagues says of Egypt, 'I live in a country that could wake up Christian on Tuesday.' He says it to explain to Western friends, so immersed in personal priorities and individual decision-making, what it means to live in a communal culture.

Richards & O'Brien are two Americans who have worked cross-culturally in Indonesia. *Misreading Scripture* is a brilliant introduction to the joys and perils of reading the Bible in different contexts. You'll chuckle and you'll wince in equal proportions, and you'll discover insights you never saw before.

Along the way you'll discover unexamined assumptions about race, language, shame, time, relationships, morality, and discerning God's will. You'll never read about David and Bathsheba or Jeremiah 29:11 the same again, nor think of Jesus' return in the same terms. You'll learn about you and *yous*. You'll rethink how you balance wisdom and timing, and review how you see rules and relationships.

Between West and East, North and South, and with my group's focus on the Middle East, we may feel we're somewhere in between the two extremes. Not so. The Middle East is definitely more East than West, as the sections about what people say and what they mean reveal. 'Several Eastern languages have no word for *privacy*' (p. 76). To be alone is a shame in the Middle East, and our friends do all they can to make sure it doesn't happen to you.

In their final chapter, the authors recognise that Westerners always want to finish with three quick keys to being a more culturally sensitive reader of Scripture. 'That's a sort of Western thing to want, isn't it?' (p. 211) asks their Syrian friend married to a Canadian brought up in Ecuador and who has worked cross-culturally in Africa. After enjoying the joke, Richards & O'Brien summarise what they're doing: 'We're trying to help you become […] the kind of reader who is increasingly aware of his or her cultural assumptions. And that takes time, self-reflection and hard work' (p. 212). They conclude by giving us five pieces of advice: embrace

complexity, beware of overcorrection, be teachable, don't be afraid of making mistakes, and above all read God's Word together. That's good advice, wherever we are, as we submit to the text of God's Word together.

Mike Parker, Edinburgh

Aquinas Among the Protestants. Edited by Manfred Svensson and David VanDrunen. Chichester, UK: Wiley Blackwell, 2018. ISBN: 978-1-119-26589-4. xii + 314pp. £60.

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) is perhaps the best-known theologian from the medieval period. His massive writing output remains an impressive feat in its breadth and depth. Roman Catholics appropriated his most comprehensive work, the *Summa Theologica*, in their response to the Reformation as a way to show they also had powerhouse theologians, and there is a seemingly endless amount of literature on Thomas and subsequent versions of 'Thomism.' Yet, almost all of that literature has focused on the legacy of Thomas in the Catholic tradition.

Past treatments of the relationship between Thomas, Thomism, and Protestantism essentially viewed Thomas as the villain that Protestants rejected. *Aquinas Among the Protestants*, however, has sought to revise that narrative of Protestant reception of Thomist thought. There have been a few recent studies that have noted the positive role Thomas had in the thought of some Protestant theologians, but the volume under review seems to be the first attempt to explore Thomas's Protestant legacy from multiple and more comprehensive angles.

The contributors to this work know that the thesis of this book is controversial. Many in the Protestant tradition – historians and theologians – will not be amiable to the claim that elements of Thomism were well received in the Protestant tradition. Their case, however, is not overstated, which is a great strength of each essay.

For an edited volume, there is remarkable consensus and agreement between the contributors, and each essay really does contribute to the same thesis that Protestantism has and still can positively draw on Thomas' theology. The argument, however, is not that Thomist thought was wholesale adopted by any Protestants. Instead, they argue that the reception of Thomas was eclectic, and selective.

Although some will not be happy even with this restrained thesis, historically it seems hard that it could (or now should be) otherwise. When the Reformers had to choose between various metaphysics, the options were essentially Bonaventure's equivocation, Scotus' univocity, or Thomas' view of analogy. The Reformed tradition in particular has leaned heavily on an analogical understanding of the Creator-creature distinction, and

its entailments for ontology and epistemology. This, among other doctrines, was adopted and modified in Protestant traditions.

The first part of the book comprises historical studies. Each essay examines the relationship between Thomas and various aspects or representative figures of Protestantism. All of these essays are helpful and thought provoking. Jordan Ballor's essay opens the discussion of the historical section by pointing out that the story of Aquinas among the Protestants cannot be reduced to Luther's or Calvin's reception of him. There were changing paradigms of thought as Reformation advanced in later generations, and there were new demands for answers from Protestantism in the apologetic task. Despite some early Reformers' stark rejection of Thomas, later Protestants were able to retrieve and appropriate aspects of his thought, even when they modified it.

Other essays of note in the first section are Stefan Lindholm's very insightful essay 'Jerome Zanchi's Use of Thomas Aquinas', which demonstrates that a fairly major Reformed theologian drew significantly from Thomist thought, and Torrance Kirby's provocative 'Richard Hooker and Thomas Aquinas on Defining Law', which draws connections between the Thomistic view of natural law and echoes of that view in the Reformed tradition. All of these historical essays will spark new discussion and reinvigorated investigation of Thomas and how his theology was received and used among Reformed, Anglican, and Lutheran thinkers.

The second part of the book collects essays on constructive theological engagement with Thomas' theology. Several of these essays are very strong, and provide helpful models for thinking through how to read Thomas, and make selective use of his thought while at the same time remaining true to Protestant distinctives.

There is an essay to demonstrate some interaction between Thomism and Protestant thought for nearly every major area of theology. Sebastian Rehnman writes on philosophy in conversation with a Thomistic theory of existence and human passion and action. This essay was the hardest to follow, and I thought least explicit about what Thomas said on the issues involved. It will be most difficult for those not familiar with Aquinas to understand in conjunction with the thesis of the book.

Paul Helm engages Thomas on the issue of nature and grace, and provides a very useful historical sketch of how Reformed thinkers interacted with Thomas on the issue of natural law, and the role of grace. One of the most helpful points drawn here is how, given the level at which Aquinas' thought circulated in the early modern period, Protestants need not have engaged him directly through his writings to have received and used aspects of his theology. There were reverberations of Thomas in some

Protestant theologians, even when it is not evident that they read him first hand.

J.V. Fesko interacts with Thomas' view of justification, and argues that although Protestants did not and cannot accept his doctrine of infused grace as it relates to justification, it does have fruitful potential in application to the Reformed understanding of sanctification. This essay in particular gives a useful example of how to identify doctrinal structures in Thomas's theology, and look for ways to re-appropriate them as part of the Protestant tradition.

These essays of theological engagement with Thomas are all thoughtful, and well-done efforts in constructive work and conversing with the past Christian tradition.

The only issue I have with this volume is not at all in what it argues, but what it does not include. Without wanting to question the editors' judgment and plan for this work, and granting that publishers often put strict length restraints on works like these, there were a few other essays that, if included, would have made a more roundly comprehensive introduction to Protestant Thomism.

It would have been helpful to have an introduction to various categories of what we mean by 'Thomism.' Having explanations of what Thomistic epistemology, ontology, soteriology, etc. look like would be highly useful for historians and theologians who do not have much experience with Aquinas or who want to have a set of categories for how to engage him historically or theologically moving forward.

Although the essays themselves, particularly in the historical section, provide case studies in the Protestant reception of Aquinas, it would have been useful to have also a taxonomy that surveyed various categories of Thomism and how they were appropriated in various Protestant traditions.

Lastly, although John Bolt's essay discussed the relationship between the Dutch Calvinist tradition and Thomism, this is perhaps the area that will cause the most controversy, in that Reformed readers who follow Cornelius Van Til's apologetic approach will want more answers concerning Van Til's critique of Thomas. Even though this is an issue that will be relevant only to a smaller portion of readers, the fact that it will most likely be the point for most debate seems to make it worth its own essay.

All that said, it is hardly a devastating criticism of a book to say I wish it had said more. The essays here will prove essential to everyone who wants to understand better the neglected relationship of Aquinas among the Protestants.

Harrison Perkins, London City Presbyterian Church

Calvin's Political Theology and the Public Engagement of the Church. By Matthew J. Tuininga. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. ISBN: 978-1-107-17143-5. xiv + 386pp. £69.99.

The five hundredth anniversary of John Calvin's birth in 2009 resulted in a massive amount of secondary literature devoted to the Genevan reformer, so much so that it seemed unlikely that anything could still usefully produced regarding him. Matthew J. Tuininga has proved that wrong by writing a thorough and incisive examination of Calvin's political theology and how the church relates to the civic culture.

Tuininga's main goal is to provide sources for Christians to think carefully in the twenty-first century about how to associate the role of the church and the role of the civil magistrates. His argument is that a distinction obtains between the role of the church as the agency to promote the cause of Christ and exercise discipline for its members and the role of the government to promote civic order, justice, and fairness. Tuininga argues that Calvin taught foundational principles of this view and that Christians today should take them to their logical entailment and apply them to how church and state should be organized.

This works centres on Calvin's understanding of the two kingdoms. This doctrine says that God rules the church and society in two distinct ways and that each 'kingdom' holds its own unique purpose and integrity within God's plan. The church is the redemptive kingdom that is responsible to do the work of the gospel. The elders of the church rule this kingdom. The civil magistrate, on the other hand, governs the political sphere and is not to interfere with the work of the church. The spiritual kingdom is eschatological in nature and has eternal value, but the political kingdom is temporary and governs this world. Whereas God made the world with a consummative goal in view and the church incorporates believers into that kingdom, the political structures of this world are meant to maintain civic righteousness and order in the interim period until Christ's return.

Tuininga argues that scholarship has significantly overlooked Calvin's use of this distinction between spiritual and political spheres but that it must be recovered to understand Calvin's political theology.

Most of this book, after situating Calvin within the medieval and early-Reformation explanations of the two kingdoms, is taken up exploring Calvin's foundational principles for this distinction between kingdoms. Calvin's eschatology remains central throughout, but it is clear that he also outlined differing principles that govern the spiritual and political kingdoms.

The detailed analysis of each distinct kingdom within Calvin's corpus reveals that he definitely explained the principles that guide the separate

kingdoms according to their specific ends. Calvin thought the natural law holds an important role in governing the political kingdom. This political kingdom, although it is supposed to promote civil order and godliness, is not to take the job of the church onto itself.

Despite these clear distinctions, Calvin's teaching on the two kingdoms did contain tensions. He thought that there was such a thing as a Christian society and that the civil magistrate was to uphold both tables of the Decalogue. Both points are somewhat at odds with how Tuininga argues Calvin's view should be appropriated. Calvin was not a social liberal, specifically in the sense that he did not see space for pluralism within civic life. Tuininga thought Calvin's principles, however, can undergird pluralism in the political sphere and support a free society as we know it today.

This book is a masterful study of Calvin's thought. Tuininga avoids the pitfall common to Calvin studies of focusing primarily upon the *Institutes* and takes account of a full range of sources including commentaries, treatises, and letters. Despite this broad grasp of sources, it was not clear that the author engaged them in their original languages. He did engage a still untranslated treatise in chapter eight, but otherwise seems to cite standard translations. Given the slightly revisionist cast of this volume, it would seem to the author's benefit to outshine his competitors by displaying his ability to engage the primary sources in a deeper way.

There could also have been more critical explanation of the tensions that exist within Calvin's two kingdoms doctrine and the way that Calvin did closely tie the church and state in a Christian society. Nonetheless, this study is an incredibly insightful work that pushes Calvin studies in new directions. It focuses on the broader political value Calvin had in sixteenth century Geneva, recognizing that Calvin was merely one theologian in his period, and thereby avoids the common approach of pedantic analysis of Calvin's teaching about an isolated doctrine. This is a truly useful book that represents what Calvin studies are supposed to be and should have been for the last ten years.

Harrison Perkins, London City Presbyterian Church

Phoebe. By Paula Gooder. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2018. ISBN 978-1-444-79175-4. 320pp. £14.99.

When I was at school, they changed the biology syllabus. The year before, we were cutting up dead animals to see how they worked, which was not good for the squeamish. After the change, we went outside to see how the animals lived, and we watched them run.

Paula Gooder's passion is 'to ignite people's enthusiasm for reading the Bible today, by presenting the best of biblical scholarship in an accessible and interesting way' (back matter). In Phoebe's story, she's given us a fabulous book, and the letter to the Romans and the characters involved live and run before us.

Gooder starts with Romans 16:2, as it was Phoebe who brought Paul's letter to the Romans. The novel assumes that the one who carried it would have to be the one to explain it. the story explores the themes of the letter as it impacts both those who receive it and the one who delivers it. As the Word does its work on them, Gooder draws you in to engage with each of the familiar characters from the letters to crowded Rome and spacious, free-thinking Corinth. The book is cleverly arranged, with the story told and 'Notes' offered separately, distilling a mix of thorough research, historical detail and engagement with scholarly debate. You might want to read the notes before the story.

Three big themes struck me. First, the business of and the struggle to receive and express forgiveness. It is the astonishingly powerful instinctive witness of contemporary Egyptian Christians under pressure, yet it's hard to deal with the anger and rage and resentment that has built up over so many years. Phoebe herself finds it the hardest journey.

Second, community, another journey made – from the initial joy of discovering Christ to squaring up to the cost of baptism, to the painful business of learning to get on, to accusation, arrest and martyrdom. Strikingly, all this is played out not in a religious space or a church building, but in working households and business premises as the focus of Christian learning and exploration and witness.

Thirdly, apostolicity. It's the best introduction to Pauline Christianity I've read. What was for the Apostles at the start is for the whole church now. As Paul's desire to go via Rome to Spain is picked up and facilitated by the Christian community, the character and focus of the Apostle Paul is the only place where I wondered if Gooder over-reads the evidence. (Spoiler alert): she suggests Paul is so focussed on reaching those who haven't heard that he almost shuns his fellow-Christian contemporaries and colleagues. Read, and see what you think.

One of my five 'Desert Island' books is *The Art of Biblical Narrative* by Robert Alter. It opened my eyes many years ago to the Bible's extraordinary story-telling, the crafted, gripping writing that makes Scripture such compelling reading. Which is why friends in the Middle East often use a story approach to passing on the good news. Maybe Paula Gooder read it too. It's called 'convergence', when years of study, discussion, debate, con

sideration and pastoral experience come together to celebrate and explore the bigger picture.

Start buying it in time for Christmas!

Mike Parker, Edinburgh

The Mission of God – unlocking the Bible's grand narrative. By Christopher J. H. Wright. Leicester: IVP, 2006. ISBN 978-0-8308-5213-0. 581pp. £21.99.

This book is twelve years old now, and continues to stand the test of time as a 'framework' for thinking and shaping church life. In 2006, it came just in time for me as a new and rather punchdrunk mission leader. Since then people have scattered, churches are making mixed responses to the pressure they're under, conflicts have erupted and the Middle East region is a whole lot more complex than ever.

We continue to work a two-way street, expressing support for Middle East churches on the one hand, and telling their story and drawing on their experience on the other. My role is to help colleagues and churches think about what they're doing. But it's slippery stuff. Where are the rocks in the mud, the footholds in the cliff?

They're here in this majestic book, and it turns out they've been there in scripture all along. How did we not see them? I don't know; but one thing is clear, once you begin to notice them, you wonder how you ever missed them.

Chris Wright's point is this: we've had things the wrong way round for too long. For generations we've talked about mission as our response to God, what we do, most dangerously how we do his work. Now its time for what he calls 'the great reversal,' time to turn things round. 'The driving will of the one true living God is to be known throughout his whole creation for who he truly is.' He has done, is doing and will do all in his power to ensure this happens.

Wright reaches an inspirational conclusion, patiently and steadily established: 'In *this* story, God is about the business of transforming the world to fit the shape of the gospel.' (p. 532) Astonishingly, he involves us: the question is therefore not where God fits in to my life but 'where does my little life fit into this great story of God's mission'? (p. 534) It makes me smaller and him bigger; and leads us into wonder and celebration at being allowed – desired – to be co-workers with God. The question is not how God fits into our mission, but 'What kind of church God expects, […] what kind of me God wants for *his* mission.' (p. 534).

Make no mistake, you'll need to take your time with this. Page by thorough page, he brings together what we've held apart for far too long.

His twin interests of Old Testament and mission combine with his striking personal translations of texts throughout as he traces God's activity through the whole of Scripture.

If you grasp what he's saying, you will not be allowed to say 'We don't do politics' because to say 'Jesus is Lord' is the most highly charged political statement in history. You will never again confuse evangelism and social action because you will understand that both God's words and works address the whole of human life and experience. You will be delivered from the twin errors of individualism and apathy about the environment for ever.

Since we worked abroad and now regularly travel, a friend repeatedly asks me, 'How is the experience of mission changing you?' Chris Wright has written this because he has begun to understand how God's mission is changing him and how it should be changing his church, even here, even now.

Mike Parker, Edinburgh

The Letter to the Colossians. By Scot McKnight. (NICNT). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-8028-6798-8. lx + 442pp. £31.27.

Scot McKnight brings the valuable experience of many years work and a thorough grasp on Pauline research to his commentary on Colossians. This commentary, being within the NICNT series, does not require the reader to understand the Greek text. However, for those who do, there are helpful comments and footnotes which provide a closer interaction with the Greek. The commentary is moderately technical, but McKnight tries not to get bogged down in details that are tangential to the letter of Colossians itself. It will be of most value to those with some grasp on the field of biblical studies.

The introductory comments feature 72 pages of discussion which cover authorship, opponents and setting, date and imprisonment, Paul's theology in Colossians, and finally the structure of the letter. The introductory section sets out McKnight's position on the letter with thorough (for a commentary) discussions on each aspect, interacting with the literature, and providing extensive references for further reading.

McKnight maintains a Pauline authorship of Colossians. However, he presents this in a nuanced form. Working from what can be known of letter-writing at the time, he counters common assumptions in the authorship debates and argues Paul (and Timothy) were among a team that authored the letter to the Colossians. He argues that the opponents of the letter were a group of Jewish 'halakic mystics' who '*were operating with a Jewish set of ideas and practices*' (p. 29; italics original). In his

sketch of the theology of Paul in the letter he maintains that the letter begins with Christology and has a pastoral intent. He covers the conversion/call of Paul, Christology, Soteriology, Ecclesiology, Ethics, Eschatology, and the suggestion that Colossians is Antiempire. On this last point he concludes that Colossians is not so much antiempire as supra-empire. His positions on these matters are informed by, and subsequently inform his interpretation of the letter.

At four points in the commentary he takes time for helpful excurses. In the first, the 'wisdom hymn', he discusses the likelihood that 1:15-20 may have formed an early Christian hymn. He also compares and contrasts its content to portions of the biblical and extra-biblical Jewish wisdom tradition. In the second, 'sharing in Christ's sufferings' (1:24), he discusses the often perplexing point of what it means for Paul to fill up what is lacking in Christ's sufferings. He reaches the conclusion that they 'benefit the church in its hearing of the gospel, the instruction in the faith, and in the way of life for the church' (p. 192). In the third, 'the powers as polluted structures' (1:16; 2:15), he discusses what Paul is referring to when he discusses the 'thrones or powers or authorities'. He argues for them being seen as 'supernatural *and* social structures then and can be so today' (p. 253). His final excursus concerns 'household regulations in search of order' (3:18-4:1), in which he discusses a variety of different suggestions concerning the household regulations of 3:18-4:1. He elaborates on his view that 'there is a new Pauline framing of ordinary relations on the basis of living under the lordship of King Jesus' (p. 340) in the commentary proper.

In our contemporary climate it may be of interest to note McKnight's discussion of verses 3:18-19 and husband-wife relations. McKnight refuses to be drawn in to a lengthy discussion of submission, preferring to emphasise instead how these commands differ from the prevailing social views of Paul's world. In essence, the submission is not because of the husband's status, but rather 'in the Lord'. The emphasis for the husband is to love sacrificially: 'Husbands who love like this, as 1 Cor 13 makes clear, do not make demands, do not overpower, and do not violate the integrity of a wife. Instead, the husband who loves like this encourages, empowers, and frees.' (p. 350).

I would recommend this commentary as providing an interpretation that demonstrates excellent interaction with the biblical text and a thorough knowledge of sources contemporary to Paul. In his interpretations McKnight works in insights from Paul's contemporary culture without letting them overwhelm his attention to biblical background. My only issue with this text was that it suffered for readability at times due to difficult sentences. Although McKnight did not come close to this in his

own words, he felt it helpful to quote a sentence-paragraph of Gorman's which was over 200 words. He did not go on to explain its content. For the majority of readers today, a sentence of such length is anything but clear and could do with some explanation. I end with McKnight's words 'My prayer is that you and I will read [Colossians] in order to love God and to love others more' (p. 75).

Philip D. Foster, University of Edinburgh

The Books of Haggai and Malachi. By Mignon R. Jacobs. (NICOT). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2017. ISBN: 978-0-8028-2625-1. xlv + 377pp. £39.99.

Mignon R. Jacobs has compiled a thorough commentary on the two small post-exilic prophetic books of Haggai (126 pages) and Malachi (209 pages). In her commentary she makes an effort to address the kinds of questions that, from her experience, church ministers and ministers in training bring to the biblical texts.

As part of her approach, Jacobs set out to provide access to the different interpretive options academics have pursued at different points. This means there is little time spent arguing for one particular interpretation. Being part of the NICOT commentary series means the reader does not need to be able to read the Hebrew language. However, Jacobs does interact extensively with the Hebrew text (using transliteration). Therefore, at least a cursory knowledge of Hebrew would be beneficial to the reader. This commentary will be of most value to those with some knowledge of Hebrew who want a moderately technical commentary and wish to judge interpretations for themselves.

In the introductory comments for Haggai, Jacobs focuses on issues of the prophet and date, historical context, text, intertextual indicators, structural analysis, and message. For both books, the text is based on the Masoretic Text and is Jacobs's translation, including thorough translation notes.

Jacobs dates Haggai to within the restoration period in the sixth century (520-516 BCE) during the reign of Darius I. She highlights the extensive connections between Haggai and other OT books, particularly Ezra, Chronicles, Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Leviticus. These provide a great depth of information to aid with understanding the book.

The message of the book centres around the need for obedience in building the temple. 'Fundamentally, the message of the book is one of hope that Yahweh is involved in the life of the community and has authority in the past, present, and future to safeguard the well-being of the community' (p. 29).

For Malachi, there is no discussion about the identity of the prophet because 'There is no biographical information about the prophet in the book and no consensus about whether the designation *mal'ākî* is the name of a person or a title' (p. 129). The dating of the book is also much more difficult because it lacks the date formulas present in other books. However, Jacobs argues for a dating between 515-458 BCE, that is, after Haggai and Zechariah, but before the times of Ezra and Nehemiah (p. 132).

For the intertextual links in Malachi, Jacobs discusses both OT links and NT links. OT links are clustered around the themes of: Priests and Levites; the tithe; marriage and divorce; and sacrifices. All of these issues 'point to issues of in/fidelity to the covenant and insist on acceptable behavior toward Yahweh' (p. 140).

The message of Malachi centres on the fractured relationship between God and the Israelites who have been involved in unacceptable behaviours. The major themes Jacobs highlights are: dishonouring God; stealing from God; divorce; and the Day of Yahweh (pp. 152-3).

There is great value to be found in Jacobs's presentation of the interpretive choices of different scholars. However, discussions of this kind come at a cost: it is easy to get bogged down in the broad range of possibilities and lose sight of the coherence of the message of the book. The value of this presentation may be even greater if either space was given for drawing out implications of interpretations for the coherence of Haggai and Malachi as a whole, or if a little more space was spent in demonstrating how the preferred interpretation maintained coherence. This would have been particularly helpful given the space spent in dealing with the Hebrew which also risks losing sight of the coherence of the message.

Overall I found the commentary on Haggai and Malachi to be well written and insightful. Jacobs's discussion of intertextual elements was helpful and she fulfilled her stated purpose well 'At various points in this book, I discuss intertextual variations on the various interpretive options and allow these options to coexist. Given the richness of the text, the juxtaposed options may invite discussion and further reflection or may jar readers who want a single decisive interpretation' (p. xiii). At different times both of these describe my experience with the commentary. It is, of course, best read when one is looking to consider the options.

Philip D. Foster, University of Edinburgh

Theology after Christendom: Forming Prophets for a Post-Christian World. By Joshua T. Searle. (After Christendom Series). Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2018. ISBN: 978-1-5326-1730-0. xxii + 211pp. £20.00.

Standing in the mould of the prophets of old, Joshua Searle seeks to open our eyes to the signs of the times: the global crises we are living through and the largely inept response of Christianity.

With rigour and perception, Searle describes how global trends have had a dehumanising effect upon society. Consumeristic materialism has replaced generosity and hospitality. The loss of ontological security has led to the rise of religious fundamentalism and nationalist politics. The 'post-truth' world of 'alternative facts' has arisen to buttress individual worldviews in a landscape of destabilising voices. Many, overwhelmed by the scale of the social issues we are surrounded with, have resorted to the numbing banality of reality television and the narcissism of social media. Searle describes the situation as a crisis of compassion and the moral fragmentation of our communities.

However, Searle's critique of the church's response to these crises is the fiercest of all. When faced by these challenges, he sees the church to have retreated into the 'stifling rationalism of systematic theology,' 'impoverished sacramentalism,' ecclesial bureaucracy, and the teaching of 'insipid curricula.' Searle sees the church trapped trying to maintain its own power and consequently it is increasingly deemed as irrelevant by society. Worst of all in Searle's eyes, the church is losing its connection with the victims of the dehumanising forces of the day; e.g. abuse sufferers, refugees, the homeless, the mentally ill, the lonely and elderly.

It is because of these shortcomings that Searle sees the arrival of Post-Christendom as an opportunity to be seized rather than a threat. He believes the age of Christian privilege to have fallen under the judgement of God. Now as society transitions into a new age, there is the opportunity for the radical change required to make the church once more fit for purpose. Searle seeks a church that can tackle the questions of the day with prophetic redress and integrity, but for this to happen, Searle knows theology is vital. Theology is the 'midwife bringing to birth a dynamic Christianity that is attuned to the signs of the times and orientated towards the kingdom of God' (p. xv).

After critiquing the delivery and content of theological education in both church and academy, Searle begins to elucidate the defining marks of the theology he believes is required. It is a theology of *compassion* that calls the 'crucified people' of God to stand in solidarity with the broken in the world. It is a theology of *creativity* that seeks the Spirit through the arts to communicate to a new generation. It is a theology of *freedom* that

defies dehumanisation wherever it finds it and seeks to liberate all. Searle pursues a kingdom theology focussed on transforming the world, rather than just building the church. A theology that destroys the gap between faith and life.

This call for a radical rethink was always going to be controversial, but there are areas of his argument so poignant they demand reflection. Searle calls for a shift away from viewing sacramentalism in terms of just the performance of the Eucharist, to seeing everyday life as a sacrament. If we expect to meet with God in the world, we will look for what the Spirit is already doing in his work and seek to join in. This leads to a concept of 'church without walls.' Searle calls for a shift away from doctrinal schemes solely labouring the substitutional propitiation of divine wrath, to focussing on the dynamic power of resurrection life. This will lead the church away from merely condemning the world to confidently seeking to transfigure it. Searle calls for a shift in how the church is perceived. It is no longer the destination but the vehicle. A school of pioneers and prophets. A training ground of *missionary professionals* rather than professional missionaries.

These shifts are something for all those interested in theology; ministers and academics, to reflect upon. Whether you end up agreeing or disagreeing with Searle, this book is essential reading. The weakness in the book is that there are few practical examples of what this new theology looks like in terms of local church life. The clearest illustration given is the new monasticism of the Northumbria Community of which Searle is a companion. But perhaps this omission is also a strength. Searle is calling his readers to discern what it means to be compassionate, creative, and a force for freedom in their own context. To stipulate, would be to constrict the potential. The Spirit must lead us, but at least after reading this book we will be aware of the challenge.

Andrew Burnham, Spurgeon's College and Bromley Baptist Church

Transcending Mission: The Eclipse of a Modern Tradition. By Michael Stroope. London: Apollos, 2017. ISBN 978-1-78359-552-5. 457pp. £24.99.

What constitutes mission within the life of the local church has gone through something of a renaissance over the last few years. Seeking to think about local and global spheres of ministry through the lens of mission has been helpful, but it has also brought some challenges. One example is this: just what do we mean when we talk about mission? This is the main thrust of what Stroope seeks to address in his provocative, yet well-reasoned assessment of the current situation in the discussion of mission.

The book follows a simple outline consisting of three main sections. Part one, 'Justifying Mission', sees Stroope tackling the inherent etymological challenges of the word itself. Mission does not find its origin in the Bible and it is arguably not a good piece of terminology to quantify the totality of what the Bible speaks about concerning God's work in the world. It is helpful to pause and consider why we use particular terminology and for this Stroope deserves our commendation.

From this platform Stroope then assesses how this language is employed by key exponents in the world of missiology. He identifies three groups; partisans, apologists and revisionists with each respective group using the mission language in different ways. As a result of this inconsistent usage, he argues that coherent thinking is often replaced with clouded miscommunication. Again, these are important things to consider as we seek to engage the people of God in the work of his growing kingdom.

Stroope shifts focus in the second section of the book, 'Innovating Mission,' to concentrate on how mission and missionary terminology became the language of common currency. To do this he highlights the spread of the Roman Catholic church across the world during the middle ages and suggests that it was with Ignatius Loyola that mission language began to rise to prominence. Previously common descriptors such as pilgrim and witness no longer existed on their own; they became subsumed into the rhetoric of Christendom's political and territorial advance.

In the book's final section, 'Revising Mission', Stroope argues that the Protestant mission movement simply adopts the language created in the Roman Catholic church and, along with it, similar structures. He rightly notes that this takes place at a much later time given the challenges which faced the reformers. Nonetheless, the language of mission is embraced, and in time is rejuvenated to provide a framework which would form the Protestant concept of global gospel proclamation during the period of colonialism.

As with many others, Stroope emphasises the importance of the 1910 Edinburgh World Mission Conference. He suggests that this is the place where we see most clearly the culmination of mission terminology in service to the structures and practices of the modern mission movement.

Drawing his thinking to a close, he suggests that change in our terminology needs to take place in order to better communicate what God is doing in the world and how the people of God participate in this divine initiative. Simply put, what we believe and the terms we employ to express those beliefs will mould our praxis. To that end he proposes recapturing the sense of being pilgrim witnesses of the kingdom of God.

There is much to commend in this book and Stroope has handled a difficult and emotive subject with great tact. One area which seems to

undermine the new way proposed by Stroope is his original argument. If mission is not to be used because it is being imposed on the biblical texts rather than flowing from them, then pilgrim language is not a solution as it also falls into this category. Alongside this, it is easy to caricature the masses during the modern mission movement with a broad brush. However, this does not do justice to those who strove to be contextually appropriate in their life and communication of the gospel in the midst of the colonial period.

Despite this flaw in the conclusion, *Transcending Mission* is an important book and will prove to make a lasting contribution to the discussion of mission practice and conceptualisation into the coming decades as the global church seeks to communicate the good news of Jesus in all its fullness.

Martin Paterson, OMF International, Glasgow

The Wiley Blackwell Companion to World Christianity. Edited by Lamin Sanneh and Michael J. McClymond. (Wiley Blackwell Companions to Religion). Oxford: Wiley, 2016. ISBN: 978-1-4051-5376-8. xxiii + 758pp. £140.00 [ebook £29.99].

This large volume is a welcome addition to recent literature on World Christianity. This discipline is now well-established and it is important that due account of the current features of World Christianity is taken by teachers, students, and general readers. This volume helps greatly in meeting the needs of such readers for a recent, fairly comprehensive resource that is accessible to as wide a readership as possible.

The book is composed of fifty-three chapters arranged in four sections. The opening 'Historical Section' covers the period 50-2000CE in twenty essays. These are grouped into two parts: 50-1750CE and 1750-2000CE.

In the first part, essays include the following: John J. Collins discusses 'Jewish and Hellenic Worlds and Christian Origins', Scott W. Sunquist writes on 'Ancient Eastern Christianity: Syria, Persia, Central Asia, and India', and Filipe Fernandez-Armesto writes on 'Early Modern Missions and Maritime Expansion'.

In the second part, Philip Jenkins considers 'The Legacy of Christendom', J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu writes on 'Conversion, Converts, and National Identity', and Brian Stanley discusses ''Church and State Relations in the Colonial Period'.

The second main section is entitled 'Thematic Section'. Essays include 'Bible Translation, Culture, and Religion' by Lamin Sanneh, 'Music in the

Newer Churches' by Brian Schrag, and 'Changing Uses of Old and New Media in World Christianity' by Jolyon Mitchell and Jeremy Kidwell.

The third main section is entitled 'Christianity Since 1800: An Analysis by Regions and Traditions'. Within this section, there are, for example, essays on 'African Christianity: Historical and Thematic Horizons' by Lamin Sanneh, 'China' by Daniel H. Bays, 'Protestantism' by Alister McGrath, and 'Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity' by Allan H. Anderson.

The fourth section on 'Expansion and Secularization: A Demographic and Statistical Analysis' is much briefer than the others, being composed of only three essays by Andrew Walls, Todd M. Johnson, and David Martin.

Those who are at all familiar with the fields of Mission Studies and World Christianity will recognise that many of the contributors are recognised as experts in the particular areas they write on in this book. These relatively short chapters provide an introduction to topics that can be followed up in the more detailed works of many of the authors. Each essay concludes with a bibliography, offering further avenues for research.

The essays are well presented and are generally clearly-written. Theologically, there is no single confessional perspective, but quite a number of the contributors are known for evangelical convictions. It is good to see discussions of Christianity in parts of the world that may be less familiar to many readers.

This is an essential reference work for any theological college or mission organisation. Whether many individuals will wish to pay the hefty price of the handsome hardback edition is debatable. In fact, while the list price of the hardback volume is indeed rather daunting (I have, however, seen it selling for a more modest price), this one book offers manageable summaries of a vast amount of scholarly work and so might be considered reasonable value for money.

Christian pastors, students and church members must not remain unaware of the remarkable changes taking place in World Christianity. This book offers an excellent opportunity to grow in awareness and understanding.

Alistair I. Wilson, Edinburgh Theological Seminary

Gently in a Violent World: The Prophetic Witness of Weakness. By Stanley Hauerwas and Jean Vanier. Expanded edition. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2018. £10.25.

Living Gently in a Violent World: The Prophetic Witness of Weakness is a passionate, though brief, investigation into the theology of gentleness.

Set up as an alternating conversation between Jean Vanier, founder of L'Arche, and Stanley Hauerwas, Duke University, the theology of gentleness is examined from both a practical and academic perspective.

The message of the book is summarised by Vanier's conviction that we are all wounded people and that 'this wound is inherent in the human condition and that what we have to do is walk with it instead of fleeing from it. We cannot accept it until we discover that we are loved by God just as we are, and that the Holy Spirit, in a mysterious way, is living at the centre of the wound' (p. 80).

L'Arche was born out of the work of Vanier, but not as a refuge, compound or home for those with disabilities. Rather it was born to be a community. A community like any other, but one that purposefully included those with disabilities. In chapters one and three, Vanier anecdotally describes the work of L'Arche. 'All I wanted,' Vanier writes, 'was to live with a few people and help them to discover where liberty is, what freedom means. I wanted to help them know the joy of living together.'

Underneath the umbrella of L'Arche, individuals both with and without disabilities learn to live in community. They learn work past the fear of not being loved. The fear of not succeeding. The fear of being weak. For Vanier and L'Arche, the way of moving past this fear is the simply stated, though difficult: to abide by belief that 'Faith in Jesus is to trust that we are loved' as we are, with our wounds.

Stanley Hauerwas joins the conversation with Vanier by offering a more academic grounding for L'Arche. In chapter two, Hauerwas oddly mentions that 'L'Arche doesn't pretend to be a solution.' This may seem like an odd way to come to the aid of an organisation, especially given that the feeling in the book is that L'Arche needs support to continue doing its work. However, Hauerwas sees Vanier and L'Arche as living out an essential reality to the life of a Christian. He writes that our role is to be reminders of peace, hope and non-violence, not because these are the solutions to the problems of the world, but because they are the ideals of Jesus. 'I believe L'Arche,' Hauerwas writes, 'is the place where God has made it possible for Christians to learn to be hope in a world where there is no solution.'

In chapter four, Hauerwas returns to show the tension between the politics of gentleness and the current liberal political theory. This theory holds that an individual has the freedom to choose the life they desire as long as it does not impede freedom of their neighbour to do the same. For Hauerwas, it boils down to the fact that each person has the right to choose their own story (life decisions) and cannot, nor should they, be held responsible for a story (life decisions) that was given to them. However, this theory is just a wall that has been constructed to protect our

wounds, specifically the wound of loneliness. By diminishing the role others have in our lives we also lose the 'significance found in sharing one's life with another person.' It is at this point that Hauerwas returns to L'Arche as an example of how to live in a community where gentleness breaks down the walls that both the disabled and non-disabled construct to protect themselves. It is through the work of those such as Vanier and L'Arche that we are able to find the way to live gently in this violent world.

This book represents a wonderful defence of both the specific organisation of L'Arche and, more broadly, the type of community they represent. Even though there are times where it can feel too much like a specific defence of L'Arche, it does help to introduce an organisation which I previously did not know existed, especially with the added weight of Stanley Hauerwas as a conversation partner. It also serves as a reminder of the wisdom that is possessed in gentleness for those of us outside of L'Arche's communities. In a time when walls are politically and physically being constructed, gentleness may provide the clearest path over.

Andrew Sherrod, Moody Bible Institute, USA

Love Thy Body: Answering Hard Questions About Life and Sexuality. By Nancy R. Pearcey. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-80107-572-8. 336pp. £14.99.

Over the past decade the issue of identity has been given a defining voice in the prevailing narrative of our culture. Some recent publications have engaged the important topics of sexuality and gender with clarity and compassion. In *Love Thy Body*, Nancy Pearcey explains how the 'secular moral revolution' (p. 9, introduction) has shaped our culture's understanding of issues relating to the body, and offers a response. *Love Thy Body* stands apart because it seeks to uncover and engage the competing worldviews, along with their respective roots, assumptions and implications. As in previous works such as *Total Truth*, *Finding Truth* and *Saving Leonardo*, Pearcey is adept at both making difficult concepts accessible to the lay reader whilst vividly outworking their implications.

Pearcey's starting point in chapter 1 is to diagnose and unpack the core problem: a dualistic understanding of the human. This view underpins contemporary Western culture's view of the human person, which assumes we are made up of two parts: a subjectively-defined personhood and a 'lesser' physical body. In this scheme the physical body is very much subservient to the part of us that thinks, feels and experiences because this is where the real 'you' or 'me' resides. The physical body is only useful insofar as it serves the real you and me.

From here Pearcey shows, chapter by chapter, the outcomes of this dualistic divide. Euthanasia is seen as the terminating of the body in order to help the real person (chapter 2), and babies are seen as 'pre-persons' that can be adapted, harvested, sold or discarded according to the needs of 'real' persons (chapter 3). Additionally, sex is seen as a merely physical act that celebrates and expresses our true selves (chapter 4), sexuality is seen as deriving solely from our subjective feelings and has nothing to do with our bodies (chapter 5), and consequently embracing our felt gender will liberate our true selves from our bodies (chapter 6). Finally, as essentially autonomous, subjectively-driven, decision-making entities we should be relieved from the responsibilities our bodies traditionally brought, such as family or parenthood. Instead we should enter voluntarily into contracts independent of biological baggage (chapter 7).

All of this shows that, when the Biblical view of humanity as an integrated body and soul is put asunder, the consequences are that people do not flourish. Instead as we devalue our bodies we experience disintegration: an experience of life that is less than human. Indeed, it will lead us to treat some as 'lesser' and still others as disposable.

Following the conclusion Pearcey includes a study guide and endnotes. While I did not use the study guide personally, the questions Pearcey asks would be a good tool for consolidating and processing the key teaching points from the book. Using the guide as she recommends would take greater commitment. She suggests paragraph-long answers that engage with the endnotes of the book. Pearcey also suggests engaging in role-play dialogue. This has potential to bear great fruit in preparing the reader to formulate the ideas of the book in conversation with real people, which is precisely the aim of Pearcey's work.

Love Thy Body is a remarkable book which argues powerfully for a reappraisal of the human as an integrated whole: a person inseparable from their body. Along the way Pearcey not only explains core worldview problems with clarity, but also illustrates them with real, and often poignant, stories. Not only this, she shows where a culture that builds its ethics on a dualistic view of humanity will eventually head. Meanwhile all this is done with a refreshing boldness and cultural sensitivity. It is a book that genuinely equips one to understand and engage the issues with a truly Biblical worldview, rather than clumsy proof-texting.

Those looking for rigorous academic or scholarly engagement with the issues will be a little disappointed. But *Love Thy Body* is pitched perfectly for the layperson who wants to understand and engage the issues as they live and work in contemporary Western Culture.

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Faith & Fossils: The Bible, Creation, and Evolution. By Lester L. Grabbe. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-8028-6910-4. xiii + 182pp. £19.99.

Lester Grabbe's name will be familiar to anyone who has had much cause to read thoroughly in Old Testament scholarship, notably the history and historiography of ancient Israel, with a focus on the exile and early second temple period. Two examples of his prolific output are *A History of the Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period* (Continuum/T&T Clark, 2004, 2008) and *Ancient Israel: What Do We Know and How Do We Know It?* (Continuum/T&T Clark, 2007).

Faith and Fossils therefore represents a branching-out into a side interest for Grabbe, rather than his core expertise. However, he determines to balance the scales in Bible and evolution discussions by approaching the topic with the backing of biblical scholarship in contrast to the scientific expertise that often motivates such writings (p. ix).

The book combines three primary themes, autobiography, biblical genre & backgrounds, and certain lines of scientific evidence into an argument for Christian openness to evolution as a practical reality about the world's origin that need not clash with the fundamentals of the faith or the relevant biblical texts when rightly understood. While the world does not lack books seeking to persuade the person in the pew for or against evolution, Grabbe's scholarly credentials and clarity win him a deserved place in the debate.

Grabbe's argument does not follow a linear progression, so let us use Part I, 'A Scholar's Story', as something of a case study. This title leads one to expect a primarily biographical tone in the four chapters contained therein. Yet this is only true of chapter 1, 'The Journey Begins', where Grabbe describes his early opposition to evolution, yet fascination with science. A parallel interest in the origins of the Bible itself prevailed and became his career direction.

Chapter 2, 'Creation in the Bible', begins therefore with an overview of Genesis 1, focusing on its genre as an ancient Near Eastern creation narrative. Acknowledging (correctly) that it consists of 'heightened prose' rather than actual poetry (p. 13), Grabbe sees in it an ancient, earth-centred cosmology that includes a solid, bowl-like 'firmament' that separates earthly and heavenly regions (pp. 9-10, 13). In contrast to the ANE analogues and to some of the Old Testament's more lyrical creation passages, 'God does not do battle with the forces of chaos' (p. 15), but instead 'we have an extended metaphor of God as a divine builder' who works week day by week day (p. 23). It is anachronistic to expect a scientific descrip-

tion of creation from a writer who could know nothing of such concerns (pp. 13, 16, 23-24).

A similar cosmology underlies 'The Flood Story' according to chapter 3, which narrates the disruption of a world where 'the earth [is] a disk […] floating on the primal waters' (p. 39).

Chapter 4 tackles the conservative interpretation of the phrase 'according to its/their kind' (Heb. *lĕmîn* + suffix) in Genesis 1:11-12, 21, 24-25 as implying fixity of species. Acknowledging that 'along with the creationists […] science agrees that creatures reproduce after their kind', Grabbe nevertheless insists, 'There is no comment on evolution as such in this scriptural language' (p. 48). He proceeds to sample proposed transitional forms between ancient land mammals and whales in the fossil record in an attempt to demonstrate that palaeontology bears witness to the transformation of species over time (pp. 56-66).

Part II, 'Evangelicals and Evolution', moves the discussion to a consideration of how creation-evolution issues play out in the evangelical Christian community, while Part III, 'Adam and Human Ancestry', justifiably proceeds to what is the virtual epicentre of more recent creation-evolution debates. Grabbe is thoroughly convinced of the primate ancestry of the human species and accepts the consensus that there can have been no single human pair that yielded the entire modern human population (pp. 122-27). Genesis 2-3 therefore relates a kind of 'morality tale' or 'allegory to illustrate the consequences of sin and the human condition' (pp. 133, 135), with Adam and Eve serving as 'archetypes' (p. 141).

Grabbe touches on many of the areas expected from a book on this topic, with a leaning toward biblical discussion, but maintaining an interest in theological and scientific questions. These areas are covered well but compactly, given the brevity of the book. It is clear that Grabbe, once stoutly opposed, supports evolution as beyond scientific debate but requiring further explanation for the evangelical Christian community.

The book's currency and clarity make it worthwhile reading, perhaps alongside a book making the counter-argument, for the Christian reader or leader seeking to make progress in his or her self-education on this endlessly troublesome, yet fascinating topic.

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