SETS (and SBET)

Where have we come from, and where to now?

After 60 years, the Scottish Evangelical Theology Society (SETS) is winding up. Last October's Annual Meeting was a poignant affair, yet we were unanimous that our time to disband had come. Thankfully we didn't rush it, and took time to express our regrets and our hopes to take our commitment to fostering 'theology in the service of academy and church' with us.

As former SETS members serve in these settings, SBET will lead the way for us. We're very thankful that Prof Mark Elliott is editing and leading as HTC take add preparing the Bulletin to their growing portfolio; his wide connections and broad sympathies will maintain a robust theological journal with a Scottish focus and an international reach. I know he'll be glad of our prayers, and eager to receive contributions as we move into Volume 42 this year.

When we met, Andrew McGowan read from Ezra 3:8-13 and Haggai 2:1-9 and spoke about the two contrasting attitudes we were feeling: grieving for the former temple at the dedication of the new, aware of what seems to have been lost; yet receiving the promise of a future in which the glory of the new house exceeds the former. Our decision was emotional because of our heritage; however, that was also a cause for thankfulness and we shared a sense of hope as we recognise other groups emerging with similar values, goals and ethos.

His words were a good guide. We have stood on strong shoulders: originally the Scottish equivalent of the Tyndale Fellowship, and shaped by Roderick A. Finlayson, I. Howard Marshall, Geoffrey Grogan, David F. Wright, Fergus Macdonald and numerous other significant players on the Scottish scene. With successive members, committees and presidents from churches and academic settings, we've been able to '*promote Scottish theology which serves the churches, is faithful to Scripture, grounded in scholarship, and catholic in scope.*' We trust these priorities will remain in play as we move out to share and model them in churches, groups and theological conversations.

While cultural changes stretch us, we are grateful there's always another story of God at work in and through his people. Hopeful signs are available: the Edinburgh Theological Reading Group has kept meeting, and is exploring Justin Brierley's '*The Surprising Rebirth of Belief in*

God'[1] and '*Coming to Faith through Dawkins*' edited by Denis Alexander and Alister McGrath.[2]

In theological conversation, we're seeing a growing desire for refreshment to keep structural change in perspective; and numerous learning opportunities to be equipped to serve, engage with culture and witness to the risen Christ.

Here are just a few examples, with apologies to the church groups and networks I fail to mention. Theological reflection is central to Gospel Partnerships and charismatic Network churches alike. The Scottish Bible Society now have two people full-time in Bible-based trauma healing training. A taster evening for Westminster Theology Centre combined inspiring music with a riveting journey through Ruth as Ali Blacklee Whittall connected us with allusions to similar Old Testament journeys to help us see the deep changes God was working through Ruth and Boaz. The Chalmers Institute's learning community and conferences aim to 'resource and equip (us) to exercise faithful Biblical leadership in church and society… educate and form servant leaders who will be disciples of Jesus and make disciples of Jesus'. Among the university theology faculties and study centres, lectures and conversations are often open to all. HTC offers access courses, BA's, and an MLitt in 'Theology, worldview & culture.'

Valuable input is available through the Crieff Fellowship to Cornhill to Forge and Cairn. Tyndale House is on the road, bringing 'World of the Bible' overview days to Scotland, adding to Tyndale Fellowship and biblical studies gatherings. The Kirby Laing Centre focuses on 'Christian scholarship and public theology'. And the newly-formed Scottish Church Planting Network held their first conference in April.

As SETS made its decision, so too did the Rutherford Centre for Reformed Theology (RCRT). Its resources are being transferred to HTC, keeping the name in play, with HTC hosting the next Edinburgh Dogmatics conference in 2025 on 'Creeds, Confessions and the Church'. The planning group includes me on our behalf; the Finlayson Lecture will be included as an evening event. Before then, we're pleased to commend the Scottish Dogmatics Conference, launching at King's College Aberdeen May 29-30.

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1 Tyndale House Publishers, 2023 £14.50, 272 pages. ISBN-10:1496466772; ISBN-13:978 1496466778

2 Kregel Publications, 2023 £13.75, 272 pages. ISBN-10:0825448220; ISBN-13:978-0825448225

Last October, we prayed for the glory of what is to come to be greater than what we lose in closing. We're thankful to God for these and other initiatives in Scotland.

Mike Parker, former chair of SETS

Editorial:Scottish Bulletin of Theology

Scottish: 'Scottish', as native to or making one's home in Scotland, plus Scots of the diaspora and friends of Scotland. Not every piece in the Bulletin has to be on the Reformed tradition in its north British Presbyterian garb. However the local and the particular can be overlooked too easily. To try out an analogy: Scotland isn't famous for its indigenous cuisine in the sense that it's more delicious eating-places tend to have a strong influence of Italy, South and South-East Asia, to mention just a few. Yet of course without Scotland there might never have been a tikka masala. Now, there are recipes of dubious antiquity, but which contribute to the dining experience in an unmistakeable way: haggis, for example is something everyone might want to try at least once. Likewise with Scottish theology, only more so because we do have a lot more recipes going back, which come out of the spiritualities and crises to the deposit of the Faith once delivered to the saints. Think 'haggis pakora'. This theological creativity has not ceased, it is not like some dormant let alone extinct volcano. But universities can sometimes homogenise theologies hand in hand with chasing intellectual and cultural trends, not least through internationalizing and having something to say to 'world issues': all this is not to be dismissed, but the context of living church and living theology in a particular living-place might well be salutary. Where Deuteronomy 6:11 has " drink from wells you did not dig', in other words benefitting from those who went before us, Bernard of Clairvaux (in *De Consideratione*) had: 'let him drink first of the sources of his own well' (*bibet de fonte putei sui primus ipse*) and then Gustavo Gutierrez adapted this to be the title of his 1983 *We Drink from Our Own Wells*, where he urged that 'drinking from our own wells' in terms of drawing from a native theology is essential. How much creative while faithful theology is happening in the Scottish context today? Let us find out!

Bulletin: I have to say l like the word 'bulletin', which means a summary, a bit like a newsletter. Of course in saying 'it's just a wee bulletin', we could by tempted by a sneaky false humility (2 Cor 4:2) while actually taking ourselves quite seriously indeed. Maybe it's less about 'bullet points' and more 'bullet on target'. (It's a metaphor, it's ok.) But does Scotland need this theological bulletin? *Theology in Scotland* in particular and the *Scottish Journal of Theology* (not as Scottish in flavour as it once was, but one can still smell the traces) both serve. Theology can be found also in the pages of the *Innes Review* and in the Records of the *Scottish Church History Society*. Although lacking any clue in the name, theology of a Scottish flavour can be sensed in *The Expository Times*. So

what has this particular theological journal to contribute? It's tempting to be somewhat ambivalent about the serious, heavy, 'peer-review' ethos of a journal when it plays into the totalising university research culture, but even so, critical rigour, comprehensive knowledge of the field, clarity of argument and analysis that feels creative ---all these are necessary and desirable. However this Bulletin will be a 'general practice' type of journal, written by experts (let it be hoped) but *for* non-experts, and for that reason attempting to connect rather than to silo. Here biblical specialist, expert in doctrine and philosophical discourse, practical theologian and preacher can play together, and a little child might lead them.

There will be a balance between between reviews of books written by professional academics and those written as 'Christian books' for the church bookstall. That is to be welcomed, I think.

Evangelical: This is key term in the name of this periodical, the word that will catch the eye, or cause both eyes to roll. Is that word 'evangelical' derivative of 'Evangelicalism' a sociologically perceptible movement or a set of ideals that would shape people, such that 'evangelical' is both a descriptive or a prescriptive term? Yet is Evangelicalism as a movement one whose shape and motion are more discernible with hindsight through considering the form that it became? In fact in Eighteenth-Century Scotland it was probably easier to say what a *Moderate* looked like (with help from John Witherspoon's *Ecclesiastical Characteristics*) rather than delineate the distinguishing features of his opposite number, who in any case was still at that point better known as a member of the Popular Party rather than an 'evangelical' (John McIntosh). Some decades ago now David Bebbington came to our aid with a four-fold descriptor, since then often disputed but seldom bettered, that was descriptive of a piety: a pietist believes the same things as any Orthodox Reformed (or Lutheran) but it is how she believes those things, viz with a fixation on the Cross, conversion, activism, and Scripture.

Shifts in meaning occur, so that Evangelicals today cannot with good conscience say that the term simply means 'people of the gospel', even if that is a core or seed, or component ingredient of the desriptor In any case even if we could define the term, we'd then have to recognise that there are open evangelicals, affirming evangelicals, conservative evangelicals (not necessarily the original flavour), political evangelicals, even cultural evangelicals. Now that is no reason for not attempting to retrieve the term as a noun. But perhaps all the smoother (albeit not quite 'plain sailing') if we use it an adjective, not a noun. And an adjective that precedes Theology as it does in the name of this journal.

"The qualifying attribute 'evangelical' recalls both the New Testament and at the same time the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century" (Karl

Barth, *Evangelical Theology* 1963, the first five chapters corresponding to the Warfield Lectures at Princeton); in German *Einführung in die evangelische Theologie*, Zürich: TVZ,). 'Evangelical' …'refers primarily and decisively to the bible, which is in some way respected by all confessions... Not all so-called Protestant theology is evangelical theology…Wherever he [God] becomes the object of human science, both its source and its norm, there is *evangelical* theology.' Barth rounds off this introduction to the lectures by claiming that evangelical theology majors in: (1) the self-revealing God, the God who proclaims himself in the Gospel; (2) the Faith of those confronted by the gospel; (3) God revealing himself in his deeds; (4) no lonely "absolute" God. 'By definition, the God of Schleiermacher cannot show mercy'. The free love of God that evokes free love and gratitude. This, Barth reminds us, is *Theanthroplogy* not *anthropotheology*. The Humanity of God does not mean that God is 'all-too-human.'

Hence the adjective qualifies the substantive, but the choice of noun affects what the qualifier means. Between (a) evangelical church and (b) evangelical theology the meaning of the term 'evangelical' will mean something different. Hence a theology that is evangelical could well be not totally identifiable with the theology for, or by, theologians who attend and even lead evangelical churches.

Also, there is the problem of how to define the Evangel, the Gospel. One could criticise Barth for his apparent avoidance of coming to terms with what the word from which 'evangelical' is derived, the *euaggelion* or gospel. It is a small step from receiving this evangel to evangelising ('telling others where to buy bread') and then to mission ('telling others what they need to think and become'). Creeds and confessions for doctrine are one thing, but how much are we called to proclaim and defend a 'evangelical-gospel' mindset for interpreting the world and living in it? Is that what it means to 'missionize': *kerygma* (Christ died for our sins and rose for new life) followed up with *didache*: instruction in what to do and think? Perhaps that moral and intellectual consequence of faith (along with the grace to make some progress with it) is part of the 'fuller gospel',

One should not try to re-pristinate. Would one want to be so evangelical, and not carefully Trinitarian, be more like Erasmus than Calvin, be so much desirous of getting so close to the source of faith that we burn up? In any case we cannot be very much like people from centuries ago because so much has changed. Scripture might be our channel of a foundational revelation, but that stream will reach us through tradition, experience and reason. Still, we think that Scripture, even if not immediate, can be direct and present, not only as an authority for our thinking the faith but also as something inspiring, a resource for living that faith out. Brevard Childs spoke of the Pastoral Epistles as a supplement where a

living Pauline voice helped Pauline churches interpret what it means to live out the Pauline gospel enunciated in his earlier epistles.

Scripture has to be interpreted of course. Literalism is a matter of degree: what is said is understood not simply in cognitive-linguistic terms, but also in terms of what is being opposed or briefed against, such as when 1 Timothy's Paul says: ' I do not permit a woman to teach' What needs to be said as a priority? We are impatient and want to see our non-negotiables sounded first and loud. It might not be about disagreeing but rather with remembering other things that also need said. Hard cases make bad law, or even the force of the law is not so much in what it rules out as what it sets up and marks out as spheres of blessing, although clearly there cannot be zones without any limits.

Theology: The church right now is both the same as and different from the churches of the 1980s. Theology has to be different, while building on the pre-millennial good stuff. There is today a diffident hesitancy towards writing great systems of theology, towards moving from exegesis to application of the bible, towards trusting movements and their spokespersons. The theological scene is paradoxically smaller, yet more is said about more things. *Quot homines tot sententiae*, as Calvin once put it. Caught between the need to hear a message that will illuminate and an experience-driven *prima facie* suspicion of those who claim to hear God, people vacillate and cling to what seems certain, even the moral certainties, like floating planks once parts of a great galleon called 'The Faith'. Negative theology and deconstruction can often combine. Well, if the result is one of fear and trembling and the silence of salvation being worked out deeply and non-verbally, then all well and good. However, for all the call for ignorance before the Mystery, there is still a fair amount of strident expressions of certainty and strong views with resultant 'theological antipathy' (*odium theologicum*.) Sometimes this (the social media spat, the 'Antiochian incidents' featuring modern-day apostles, the legion of podcasts) might all well be a bit of good fun, 'good for the ratings', and a good shop window for *Theology Inc*., and yet...

Practitioners might need to invite theologians to help think through things rather than engage in social media salvos on the non-negotiability of belief in penal substitutionary atonement versus the need to believe in salvation contingent on non-violence and the force of love and life. Both these positions can be asserted, often because there is a sense that this truth is in danger of being forgotten, of the ship lurching to one side. And a reluctance to countenance that truth is in the middle since while there can be unity despite the differences by the operation of love and the Spirit, there cannot be unity *in* the disagreement, as the respective underlying valuable points of each position gets to be considered at least.

With all that said, what follows are articles both learned, as engaging with theological thought, and relevant to some aspects of church life and ministry. Take, read, delight, profit!

Theologian of the Spirit: Re-Examining Warfield's Judgement on Calvin (Part 2)

Stephen N Williams, Queen's University, Belfast

INTRODUCTION

In the first part of this article, we explored aspects of Calvin's approach to ecclesiology in the *Institutes* in the light of Warfield's assessment that Calvin 'above everything…deserves…the great name of *the theologian of the Holy Spirit*', because he worked out in detail the whole experience of salvation in terms of the work of God the Holy Spirit on the individual soul.[1] Since Warfield stipulated the ecclesiological correlate of that enterprise, we considered the rubric under which Calvin discussed ecclesiology, its topical placement, and items in the substance of that ecclesiology in the *Institutes*. The purpose was to place a question mark against Warfield's judgement. It could be no more than a question-mark because of my self-imposed confinement to the *Institutes*, although there was occasional reference to other writings by Calvin. In essaying his judgement, Warfield had the *Institutes* particularly in mind. My purpose in this second part is to bolden the question mark by turning directly to the pneumatology, again concentrating on the *Institutes*, but also making occasional use of Calvin's commentaries, particularly his first volume on Acts.[2] As Warfield drew Kuyper into Calvin's orbit, I shall draw Kuyper's study of the Holy Spirit into our discussion.[3]

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1 'Theologian of the Spirit: Re-Examining Warfield's Judgement on Calvin', *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* (41.2) 2023, 137-53. For Warfield's words, see p. 137.

2 Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols, tr., Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia, Pa: Westminster, 1960); *The Acts of the Apostles*, 1-13, eds., David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1965). All editions of Calvin's commentaries from which I quote are edited by David and Thomas Torrance.

3 See Benjamin B. Warfield, 'Introductory Note', in *Abraham Kuyper, The Work of the Holy Spirit* (New York, NY/London: Funk & Wagnalls, 1900), xxv-xxxix. Warfield's essay was reprinted as 'On the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit' in his *Selected Shorter Writings* (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishers, 1970), pp. 203-19.

BAPTISM WITHOUT WATER: THE CASE OF ACTS 19

In remarking on the order of Calvin's topical treatment, I noted in the first part of this article what is in plain view, namely, that Calvin followed the order of the biblical narrative in the Christological exposition which closed book 2 of the *Institutes*, embracing cross, resurrection, ascension and heavenly session, but broke with it in book 3 by treating pneumatology in terms of the work of the Spirit in the believer, and not by proceeding to the theological significance of Pentecost, as would have accorded with the biblical narrative. Calvin never committed himself programmatically to following in the *Institutes* either biblical order or the order of the Apostles' Creed.[4] Nevertheless, what happens instead is instructive. The title of the first chapter of book 3 is: 'The Things Spoken Concerning Christ Profit Us By The Secret Working of the Spirit'. In the Synoptic accounts, the first things spoken of concerning Christ as he steps into public light is that he will baptize with (or in) the Spirit, where John baptizes with water. Pentecost was Spirit-baptism on a grand scale, a public work, whereas Calvin begins his exposition in book 3 with the 'secret energy of the Spirit' (3.1.1). Near the beginning of book 3, Calvin does tell us that, in order that we become partakers of salvation in Christ, ' "he baptizes us in the Holy Spirit and fire" [Luke 3:16], bringing us into the light of faith in his gospel and so regenerating us that we become new creatures…' (3.1.4). However, we have exited book 3 and are deep into book 4 before the Gospel language of baptism in the Spirit is given further attention.[5]

Its treatment in book 4 rather than in book 3 affects the theological profile of baptism in the Spirit in the *Institutes*. 'We experience sacraments', Calvin says at the beginning of book 4, as 'highly useful aids to foster and strengthen faith' (4.1.1). When Calvin eventually turns his attention to the question of the relation of John's baptism to that of Jesus, something exegetically unexpected happens.[6] After setting out the significance of baptism, Calvin impresses on us that 'John's ministry was exactly the same as that afterward committed to the apostles' (4.15.7). How could the apostles add to a baptism which was unto 'repentance…[and] forgive-

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4 With regard to Christology, Calvin observes that he is following the order of the Apostles' Creed, 2.16.18.

5 There is a fleeting reference to 1 Corinthians 12:13 in 4.14.7. Herman J. Seldenhuis is surprised by the paucity of references in the *Institutes* to the Spirit in relation to baptism (as he is by the absence of reference to the Spirit at the beginning of Calvin's exposition of creation), *The Calvin Handbook* (Grand Rapids, Mi/Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2009), pp. 308 and 302.

6 See also brief remarks in 2.9.5.

ness of sins', and 'into the name of Christ, from whom repentance and forgiveness of sins came'? That describes John's baptism, as well as theirs. Well, we might respond, they could add something rather large: after, but not with, John, you have baptism in the Spirit. Calvin will agree that they added something, but just how large was it? 'Richer graces of the Spirit have been poured out since Christ's resurrection' (15.8). That differentiates the two baptisms up to a point, but they signify the same thing. When John contrasted his baptism with that of Christ in terms of water as opposed to Spirit and fire baptism, he 'did not mean to distinguish one sort of baptism from another'. What John contrasted was persons, not ministries. The telos and significance of baptism remain one and the same across the board: repentance and forgiveness.

According to Calvin, in giving the Spirit, Christ did not give something fundamentally missing in the ministry of John the Baptist. The background to this claim is indicated in the title of book 2: 'The Knowledge Of God The Redeemer In Christ, First Disclosed To The Fathers Under The Law, And Then To Us In The Gospel'. The forgiveness which Christ came to bring was experienced by saints of old before he came. Just so, in Christ, the Spirit comes in a new form, a form in which John the Baptist cannot mediate the gift, but the Spirit comes with and through Christ in order to effect the same thing as the baptism of John effected. John administered a baptism of repentance and forgiveness; it is the Spirit who works repentance and forgiveness; where repentance and forgiveness are, there is the Spirit; the Spirit is the Spirit of regeneration, and this is the heart of his work; indeed, repentance is regeneration.[7] We are not forced to infer from this that John's baptism was unto regeneration by the Spirit: Calvin says it explicitly (4.15.6).[8] So what does Jesus Christ have to bring that John the Baptist had not?

Here, Calvin tells us, the Fathers stumbled (15.7). They erroneously 'said that the baptism of John was only a preparation for the baptism of Christ' (15.8). What accounts for this mistake? Calvin picks out faulty exegesis of Acts 19: 1-6. This is where we arrive at the exegetically unexpected. This passage describes Paul's encounter with disciples at Ephesus who, in response to his question: 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' aver that they have not heard of the Holy Spirit. A further query elicits from them the reason: they were baptised into John's

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7 'We have nothing of the Spirit…except through regeneration' (2.3.1). That the Spirit is the author of regeneration is established as early as book 1 (1.13.14). For repentance as regeneration, see 3.3.9.

8 See too the following passages, 4.15.7 and 8. For Abraham as regenerate and regeneration as spiritually foundational, see 4.16.3-4.

baptism. 'On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus', Paul laid hands on them, and tongues and prophesying ensued. Where, then, do the Fathers go exegetically and theologically astray? Is it not Calvin who will get into difficulties here? If, contrary to what the Fathers held, the baptisms of John and Christ are basically identical, then this passage strictly describes rebaptism. There is no way that Calvin will countenance this interpretation. Nor is there any way that he will thus get himself impaled on the horns of a dilemma. Woes beset him only if the baptism recorded in Acts 19 was baptism in water. It was not. The word 'baptise' does not in this instance denote water baptism when applied to what the Ephesian believers now undergo. It is the baptism of the Spirit (15.18). That is, the Ephesian believers now received 'the visible graces of the Spirit through the laying on of hands.' Calvin affirms in his commentary on Acts on this passage that the Spirit of regeneration is not involved; as subjects of John's baptism, the Ephesian disciples would both have known about and received that.[9] Obviously, he says there, 'Paul would not have passed over in silence such a gross, even a monstrous error' as complete ignorance of the Spirit, 'about whom the Prophets everywhere proclaim'. What the Jews in the story are ignorant of is certain *visible graces* of the Spirit of the Pentecostal kind; that is what the clipped reference in the text to the Spirit signifies.[10] '[T]here is metonymy in the word *Spirit*.' Hence, Acts 19 does not threaten Calvin's belief that there is no difference between the baptism of John and the baptism we receive, 'except [the difference] that Christ has been revealed, and in His death and resurrection all parts of our salvation have been completed'.[11]

This is impossible exegesis, 'a striking example', as Wendel wryly understates it, 'of how adventurous Calvin's exegesis could be when he was using it in the service of his dogmatic preconceptions'.[12] There are plenty of things to argue about in the interpretation of Acts 19. That water baptism took place is not one of them. Calvin was not alone in his day in denying that water baptism took place in Ephesus. The relationship between the baptisms of John and of Jesus was a matter of renewed controversy in the Reformation. Zwingli also denied that water baptism took place in Acts 19, though he interpreted differently from Calvin exactly

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9 *The Acts of the Apostles*, 14-28 (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1966), pp. 148-52.

10 See too, *Institutes*, 4.3.16.

11 *Acts 14-28*, p. 150.

12 François Wendel, *Calvin: the Origin and Development of his Religious Thought* (London: Fontana, 1965), p. 323.

what happened there.[13] Dispute over Acts 19 was no theological or ecclesiastical side-show when Anabaptists turned up in land already witness to conflict between Catholics and magisterial Reformers. Admitting that the Ephesian believers, already baptised with the baptism of John, were now baptised with water, entailed denying the unity of the covenant and the unity of the Testaments. Sacraments are signs of the covenant (4.14.6). A theologically fundamental question is at stake. Because my agenda is narrowly set by Warfield's judgement, and further pared down by the need to consider that judgement along rather narrow lines, we shall not pursue the question of entailment. Obviously, it is a question capable of penetrating the depths, even unsteadying planks of Reformed theology.[14]

The problem with Calvin's exegesis of Acts 19 is his refusal to admit water baptism, not the impossibility of making germane distinctions in the scope or meaning of 'Spirit' in the New Testament. The account of the apostolic mission in Samaria, when Peter and John came from Jerusalem, so that believers 'baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus' should receive the Holy Spirit, has proved fertile ground for controversy (Acts 8:14-17). Calvin insists that Peter and John did not mediate the Spirit of regeneration in this instance, but 'special gifts' appropriate to the occasion and the time; 'the Spirit of adoption' had been 'conferred' on the Samaritans before the two apostles turned up, but with their arrival 'the extraordinary graces of the Spirit are added as a culmination'.[15] Whether or not we agree with his interpretation, Calvin's exegesis of Acts 8 involved no flagrant disregard for what the text is actually saying. It is different with Acts 19.

What Calvin says about the relation of John and Jesus' baptisms in his commentaries is entirely in line with what he says in the *Institutes*, just as

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13 See David C. Steinmetz, *Calvin in Context* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), chapter 11.

14 Theologians in the Reformed tradition have affirmed that the Ephesian disciples were baptized with water, without covenant theology being remotely threatened. To take an easy and major example, Herman Bavinck adopted a position which Calvin rejected, and explained Paul's baptism of the Ephesian disciples in water on the supposition that the initial baptism received by these disciples had been wrongly administered. It was a plausible enough supposition for Bavinck, taking into account the fact that baptismal practices in the early church had not yet settled down into tidier order. See *Reformed Dogmatics: Holy Spirit, Church and New Creation*, volume 4 (Grand Rapids, Mi: Baker, 2008), 502; also a brief remark in volume 3, *Sin and Salvation in Christ* (Grand Rapids, Mi: Baker, 2006), 500. Whether or not we agree with Bavinck's interpretation, it involves no violation of the text.

15 *Acts 1-13*, p. 236.

is his interpretation of Acts 19. He maintains that the reasons standardly given for differentiating between John's baptism and Christian baptism exhibit arrant stupidity.[16] Calvin is wonderfully and consistently Christocentric in his account of what the Spirit ministers to us, but the explicitly known grace of Jesus Christ fills out or enhances rather than alters the substance of John's baptism. The contrast can certainly be stated more strongly: John had made but a beginning in the administration of what Jesus Christ fulfilled when he baptised with the Spirit. But it was no 'vain beginning', and, however we describe the contrast, we cannot posit a distinction in nature between the baptisms.[17] Formally, 'John stood between the law and the gospel, holding an intermediate office related to both'; he is 'numbered among the preachers of the gospel for', materially, 'he actually used the same baptism as was afterward entrusted to the apostles' (2.9.5). If John must decrease in his person, his baptism must not decrease in its significance.

My excuse for craven refusal to track Calvin to his lair in a theological investigation of the question of John and Jesus' baptisms, and to judge whether an attempt should be made to beard him there, is that this would be a long pursuit which would swallow up the space allocated to what is already just a *prima facie* examination of Warfield's claim. Suffice to say that if we believe that Calvin seriously plays down the pneumatological distinctiveness of Jesus' baptism, this potentially rebounds on Warfield's judgement. 'If' and 'potentially' are the watchwords of cravenness. Our discussion surely at the very least places us on alert. The terms of Warfield's judgement, as I have set them out, compel us to attend to further dimensions of our picture in the making. To these we turn.

THE SIGN OF PENTECOST

I have not pounced on a relatively inconsequential exegetical mistake in noting what Calvin says about Acts 19, still less specialised in the peripheral when noting what he believes about the relation of the two baptisms. If we are uneasy about what he is doing with baptism in the Spirit, then, given the connection between baptism in the Spirit and Pentecost, it is surely not a hyper-sensitive nose, trained to sniff out theological error, that scents the possibility that there is something amiss with Calvin's Pentecost as well. It is the topical absence of Pentecost at a prominent junc-

[16] See Calvin, *A Harmony of the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke*, volume 1 (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1972), p. 127. For similarly robust language, see *Calvin, The Gospel according to St John, 1-10* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1959), p. 30.

[17] *Acts 1-13*, p. 27.

ture which initially set us scurrying off on the trail of Calvin and the two baptisms – that is, the fact that the pneumatological account following the description of Christ's ascension and session in the *Institutes* is oriented to the 'secret energy' of the Spirit working within us, rather than to the public coming of the Spirit, as recorded in Acts. Of itself, this tells us nothing except about how Calvin orders his instruction in the *Institutes*, and only the buzzing of an unhistorically dogmatic bee in our bonnets about the structure of doctrinal exposition will draw much attention to it. However, does the orientation actually tell us something important about theological substance?

It turns out that Calvin's interpretation of Pentecost, if not as startling as is his interpretation of Acts 19, nonetheless (mildly?) startles. Peter proclaims the Pentecostal event as the eschatological fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel, the outpouring of the Spirit (2:17). In connection with the prophetic phrase cited by Peter - 'I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh' - Calvin says: 'It may be asked why God promises to His people, as though it were some novel and unheard of thing, what he was wont to bestow upon them through all ages from the beginning, for there was no age that did not have its share of the grace of the Spirit'.[18] The answer has to do with quantity. Qualitative matters obtain only in a restricted and minimal way. Any knowing participation in the Spirit was the lot of far fewer under the old than under the new covenant. '[A]ll godly men from the foundation of the world were endowed with the same Spirit of understanding, of righteousness, and of sanctification, with which the Lord today illuminates and regenerates us; but there were only a few who then had the light of knowledge given to them…'[19] God now gives understanding more abundantly than he did before, because the understanding of the Old Testament saints 'savoured…of the tutelage of the Law'. However, we shall not find here a radically new qualitative dimension more than we did in the case of the two baptisms. Calvin is consistent. Further, Calvin is consistent in his commentary on Joel with what he says elsewhere about there being a great difference between old and new covenants when we consider the number of those experiencing Spirit-blessing and the richness and depth of knowledge in the new covenant; but the covenants are one in substance, with no qualitative novelty.[20]

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18 *Acts 1-13*, p. 57.

19 *Acts 1-13*, pp. 57-58.

20 *Joel, Amos and Hosea* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1986), Lecture 45. Despite his acknowledgement of the importance of this passage from Joel in the *Institutes* (3.1.2), little is made of it over the course of its four books.

Reference to that commentary brings us to the question of what it is about Calvin's Pentecost that startles. A reductionist conclusion to discussion of the outpouring in the Spirit in the lecture preceding the one to which I have referred invites the question of whether or not he has purchased his covenant theology at the price of salvation-historical or eschatological deficiency in interpreting Joel's prophecy. This is the startling interpretation of Pentecost: '[T]he sending of the Holy Spirit in so spectacular a manner was a symbol of the hidden grace wherewith the Lord continuously inspires His elect…'[21] This is to get things backwards. If the language of symbol be deployed, we should be tempted to say that it is the other way around: hidden grace is the symbol of the manifest grace outpoured at Pentecost. The reason for resisting temptation is that talk of invisible symbol is odd, so we should abandon Calvin's terminology in order to oppose what it conveys, and say that, just as the cross of Christ is the ground and not the symbol of the forgiveness which marks hidden grace, so Pentecost is surely the event in salvation history to which hidden grace is related as foretaste or as effect, if we want to find some way of relating hidden grace and Pentecost. Together with the cross, resurrection, ascension and session of Christ, Pentecost is the new era, no more a symbol of what is going on all the time, continuously hidden, than they are. Tongues are most significant, but the outpouring of the Spirit which they manifest is not contained within this manifestation.

Calvin makes much of the signifying nature of Pentecost. The whole is a visible event because such is our spiritual dullness that 'unless He [God] first aroused all our senses His power would pass us by and vanish unrecognized'.[22] It is all for our benefit, not for that of the apostles, '[f]or God was able to have furnished them with the power necessary for preaching the Gospel without the addition of any sign'. There is certainly an abundant pouring out of the Spirit at Pentecost (2.16.14), and it is the inauguration of the Kingdom of Christ.[23] Yet, in old covenant times, that Kingdom could be experienced within, so inauguration is marked by outward manifestation of and a wider catchment for the Spirit, plus the demonstrable regulation of personal spiritual life, which is the goal of regeneration, and not by basic spiritual novelty.[24] When Peter concluded his Pentecostal address by calling his hearers to repentance, baptism, and

21 *Acts, 1-13*, p. 27.

22 *Acts 1-13*, p. 50.

23 *Acts 1-13*, p. 81.

24 Pentecost demonstrates that 'we are never rightly prepared to receive the grace of God unless the vain confidence of the flesh has been mastered', *Acts 1-13*, p. 50.

receipt of the gift of the Spirit, let us recall that the remission of sins, the heart of God's gift, possible only through the Spirit, was already available under the old covenant.

Just how far Calvin is willing to go in the service of consistency appears in his discussion of what has been described as the 'Pentecost of the Gentiles', the encounter of Peter with Cornelius, narrated in Acts 10. Calvin berates those who suppose that, with his 'prayers and alms', the 'words of Cornelius were acceptable to God before he had been enlightened by faith.'[25] Not only did Cornelius possess faith before he met Peter; 'his fear of God and his piety clearly demonstrate that he was born again of the Spirit'.[26] What Cornelius receives after hearing Peter's word is not faith and regeneration, but special, visible gifts. Commenting on Peter's report to the church in Jerusalem on this event (Acts 11:4-17), Calvin reminds his readers that the baptisms of John and Jesus, to which Peter alludes in his report, are one and the same baptism, the difference of persons being the salient difference.[27]

As in the case of Acts 19, though perhaps less dramatically, to interpret Cornelius' piety before meeting Peter as shaped by his being born of the Spirit, is impossible exegetical theology. In the history of theology, the position has been taken that, just as we distinguish between the conception of life in the womb and the birth of a child, so we should distinguish between spiritual regeneration and new birth, and the time lapse might be considerable. It is perfectly in order to speak of the Holy Spirit's work in Cornelius before he met Peter, preparing him for the new birth. However, Calvin has attributed *new birth* to Cornelius before meeting Peter. Calvin does no justice to the fulness of what Cornelius received through Peter's ministry. Something has gone wrong with the pneumatology, here.

Throughout his commentary on Acts, Calvin consistently focusses on the inward life of faith at the expense of God's outward works in history. In the time between resurrection and ascension, Jesus 'spoke the things concerning the Kingdom of God' (Acts 1.3). What were those things? According to Calvin, that '[t]he beginning of this Kingdom is regeneration, the end of it is blessed immortality'.[28] 'Christ spoke chiefly about the corruption of mankind, about the tyranny of sin, whose bondslaves we are, of the curse and condemnation of eternal death to which we are all subject: and also the means of regaining salvation, of the remission of sins, of the denying of the flesh, of spiritual righteousness, of the

[25] *Acts 1-13*, p. 288.
[26] See too *Institutes*, 3.17.4.
[27] *Acts 1-13*, p. 324.
[28] *Acts 1-13*, p. 24.

hope of eternal life, and other topics of that kind…'[29] What is missing is much thought of history on the move. Even if immortality is attained in a kingdom rich and wide, to which we are destined (2.16.19), a sense of our human immortality eclipses our sense of God's new earth in Calvin's 'Meditation on the Future Life'; the contrast between present life and immortality, rather than the present and eschatological world-orders, is focal for him (3.9).

Calvin's relative ordering of Pentecost and hidden grace drives us back to the question of individualism, which came up in the first part of this article. 'Individualism' is patient of different meanings, and we considered one form of it there. For Calvin, the Spirit works his hidden grace in the elect, considered not simply as individuals, but as the invisible church.[30] However, individualism may aptly name an outlook where there is a preoccupation with what happens within individuals at the expense of what happens without, and in the light of what we have encountered, we seem to sight the spectre of individualism in Calvin's thought. Calvin obscures the truth of the fact that Pentecost is a new era. Pentecost is situated in the history of salvation and eschatological order in a way that does not come to light in either the *Institutes* or the commentary on Acts. When Jesus, in the interim between resurrection and ascension, speaks to his apostles about the kingdom of God, what Calvin hears is principally talk of the eschatology of personal immortality. At the end of book 3 of the *Institutes*, after working through faith, the Christian life, justification, prayer and election – all prior to ecclesiology – Calvin concludes with 'The Final Resurrection'. It is a brief discussion, chiefly comprehending the resurrection of the body and the lot of the reprobate. Weber was surely right to observe, with respect to the *Institutes*, that '[w]e might wish that he [Calvin] would have had a clearer grasp of the Spirit as the eschatological Giver of the eschatological reality than he seems to have had.'[31] Thus, in his pneumatology, he does not satisfactorily harness the power with which he is capable of speaking of the Kingdom of God and of Christ in the *Institutes*.

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29 *Acts 1-13*, p. 25.

30 For some discussion of this in an earlier iteration of the first part of the present article, see my 'Calvin on the Church: Why is it in *Institutes*, Book 4', in A. T. B. Mc Gowan, ed., pp. 57-74.

31 Otto Weber, *Foundations of Dogmatics*, tr. Darrell L. Guder, volume 2 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983), p. 242. The second chapter of Neill Q. Hamilton's older work, *The Holy Spirit and Eschatology in Paul* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1957), swiftly summarises the evidence for the claim that 'the Spirit is primarily an eschatological entity', p. 37.

I must boldly underline that no judgement is intended on Calvin's theology overall. In the first part of this article, I indicated the danger of concentrating on the *Institutes* in an exposition of Calvin, and made clear that my article was *not* about Calvin's thought *per se*. Supplementary reference in this part to his commentary on Acts does not greatly modify this state of affairs. However, if we mull over Calvin pneumatology along the lines I have attempted, especially in connection with features of his ecclesiology, a re-examination of Warfield's verdict on Calvin is surely in order. My aim has been to do this in a preliminary way. Ultimately, a theologian's interest must be in the life of the church, and, as far as theological and ecclesiastical influence go, the *Institutes* eclipses that of Calvin's commentaries and sermons. So while I plead not guilty to the charge of sniping from the edges, I am not concluding anything about Calvin's eschatology in his thought and writing overall, more than I am doing in the case of his pneumatology (or ecclesiology). This must be doubly underlined.

A WORD ABOUT KUYPER

Warfield's judgement comes under further pressure if we reverse his procedure, and pull Kuyper into the discussion of Calvin where he pulled Calvin into an account of Kuyper. Introducing Kuyper's volume on the Holy Spirit, Warfield lauded both pneumatologies, positively connecting Kuyper with the Reformed tradition which Calvin scintillatingly inaugurated. A theological account, still more an assessment, of Kuyper's volume is beyond my remit. I confine myself simply to report and description of salient substance. In praise of the sophomore - whom, if foolish word-play be permitted, we might credit with more wisdom than we may be liable to do in following the method below - I proceed by picking my way like a scavenger through this and that in Kuyper's volume, Calvin perched unblinkingly on my frail shoulder.[32]

When Kuyper, following his 'Introduction', opens his account with the words: 'The work of the Holy Spirit that most concerns us is the *renewing of the elect after the image of God*', he seems to be on the same page as Calvin. Almost immediately, we shall suspend that judgement. He is simply informing us about what will take up most space. '[T]he work of the Holy Spirit consists in leading all creation *to its destiny*, the final purpose of which is the glory of God' (22) and by the time he has completed an early chapter on 'Creation and Recreation', Kuyper has put firmly in

[32] In what follows, page references to Kuyper's volume will usually be given in the text.

their place those who accord theological centrality to the regeneration of the elect at the price of the work of the Spirit in the world and in creation. As the word 'startle' was promiscuously flailed around in connection with Calvin, let it be equitably flailed: Kuyper could startingly describe Sabellianism, mistaken as it is, as 'more reverent and God-fearing than the crude superficialities of the current views that confine the Spirit's operations entirely to the elect, beginning only at their regeneration' (45).[33]

What about Pentecost? Kuyper prioritises the question: 'How shall we explain the fact that while the Holy Spirit was poured out only on Pentecost, the saints of the Old Covenant were already partakers of His gifts?' (112). What the Old Testament prophecies show is 'that the dispensation of the Holy Spirit in those days was exceedingly imperfect…' (113-14). The apostles, explaining the Pentecost miracle as fulfilment of the prophecies of Joel and Jesus, 'see[ing] in it something new and extraordinary… show us clearly that in their day it was considered that a man who stood outside the Pentecost miracle knew nothing of the Holy Ghost' (115). That explains the 'naïvete' of the Ephesian disciples in Acts 19 when they say that they haven't even heard whether there is a Holy Ghost. 'Wherefore it cannot be doubted that the Holy Scripture means to teach and convince us that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost was His first and real coming into the Church.'

Accordingly, the title of chapter 25 in Kuyper's first volume is: 'The Holy Spirit in the New Testament Other than in the Old'. In Old Testament days, the Spirit worked on individuals, but it all changes after Pentecost. 'For His particular operation, on and after that day, consists in the extending of His operation to a *company of men* organically united' (120). The implications are profound: '[U]nder the Old Covenant', the operation of the Holy Spirit 'came from *without*'; under the New, 'the body of the Church itself becomes the bearer of the Holy Spirit, who…works upon its members from *within*' (573). For Kuyper, Pentecost is most surely not a symbol of the hidden work of the Spirit. The human race is a single entity; correspondingly, this truth is reproduced in ecclesial form when the people of God are constituted at Pentecost as a holy priesthood 'organically one and partaking of the same spiritual blessing' (120). Such was not the case previously. The situation in Israel was different. There was union in Israel, but it was the union of love, not a spiritual and vital fel-

[33] It is not implied that Kuyper found Calvin guilty of this, but would Calvin would not have been outraged by this sentiment? Kuyper makes statements about the distinction between Christ and the Spirit which suggest that he would have made stronger distinctions between the persons than would Calvin in their shared opposition to Sabellianism (562).

lowship that sprang from the root of life and 'made possible only by the incarnation of the Son of God', who alone could 'unite the spirits of the elect into one body' (121). Even he could not do it during his earthly life, when he inhabits the aeon of John the Baptist and, thus, of the old covenant. Christ is only head of a body after his ascension, and thus the Spirit is imparted to the one body (122). Nor is love qualitatively the same across the covenants. 'The *newness* of holy Love lies *in the Church*' (575). 'The *newness* of the commandment, "Love one another", consists in the fact that, being freed from the bonds of the Jewish national character, love can effectually operate in the Church (576).' The significance of this lies in the fact that the '*cultivation of Love*' is the 'greatest work' of the Holy Spirit (579). The contrast of loves under old and new covenants is described in chapters 25 and 26 of Kuyper's third volume in a way that is *prima facie* foreign to Calvin, although a comprehensive examination of his thought might overturn that conclusion. The difference between an operation of the Spirit on individuals from without and the operation of the Spirit on the organism from within secures the contrast.

In sum: 'Formerly isolation, every man for himself; now organic union of all the members under their one Head: this is the difference between the days before and after Pentecost. The essential fact of Pentecost consisted in this, that on that day the Holy Spirit entered for the first time into the organic body of the Church, and individuals came to drink, not each by himself, but all together in organic union' (124). Saving grace is present before Pentecost, baptism with the Spirit only after it (125). For Kuyper, baptism with the Spirit is a richer *novum* than Calvin conceived of. To say that, at Pentecost, the Church 'became the *Church for the world*', hidden in Israel now manifest in world (179) is to say, if not the opposite of, at least, something in radical contrast to, saying that Pentecost is the symbol of hidden grace. Calvin's 'hidden in the heart' and visible publicly in the church is Kuyper's 'hidden in Israel' and visible publicly in the world. In the first part of this article, mention was made of Kuyper's emphasis on the organic in ecclesiology. In his volume on the Spirit, we encounter the pneumatological root of this talk. Kuyper regarded Pentecost as the '*third work* of God the Spirit', creation being the first, incarnation the second (519-520).

If Kuyper is right at those points where he stands in contrast to Calvin, the grounds on which Warfield lauds Calvin are not at all firm, although Warfield does not commit himself to wholehearted agreement with Calvin's pneumatology. To be sure, the fulness of Kuyper's pneumatological counsel cannot be derived from this volume, still less from my extracts from it, no more than can Calvin's from the *Institutes* and commentary on Acts, although we are well guided into that counsel. What goes for

Calvin goes for Kuyper: the contours and merits or otherwise of his pneumatology can be rightly limned only if we are prepared to adumbrate a systematic theology that orders covenant, ecclesiology, eschatology - just for a start – alongside it. I placed 'covenant' first in this list, because, in discussing his exegesis of Acts 19, I noted that an underlying worry for Calvin was that allowing water baptism there would sunder the covenants. We now turn very briefly to his comments in the *Institutes* on the unity of the covenants. They have a bearing on his pneumatology.

OF ISRAEL

Shortly after Luke tells us that, in the interim between his resurrection and ascension, Jesus spoke to the apostles about the kingdom of God (Acts 1:3), Luke records the apostles' question: 'Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?' (1:6). Calvin comes down hard on them:

> [T]heir blindness is remarkable, that when they had been so fully and carefully instructed over a period of three years, they betrayed no less ignorance than if they had never heard a word. There are as many errors in this question as words…they dream of an earthly kingdom, dependent upon wealth, luxury, outward peace and blessings of this nature…they desire to enjoy the triumph before fighting the battle. Before setting hands to the work for which they are ordained they desire their wages…'[34]

They fail to grasp that the reign of Christ is spiritual, and is instituted by the preaching of the gospel.

Arguably, what happens here is that because Calvin universalises inward spiritual states and projects these too readily onto the apostles' hearts, he misrepresents the hope of Israel. Even if we quarrel with this way of describing the cause of his misrepresentation, misrepresentation there surely is. Calvin gives an account of relevant matters in *Institutes* 2:10-11. He informs us that it is somewhat in the way of an appendix to what he has already established, namely, 'that all men adopted by God into the company of his people since the beginning of the world were covenanted to him by the same law and by the bond of the same doctrine as obtains among us' (2.10.1). John the Baptist features in the final section of the previous chapter, where he began what the apostles 'carried forward to fulfilment', but it was the same baptism (2.9.5). We recall that Calvin's whole book aims to adumbrate the 'knowledge of God the redeemer in Christ' disclosed in two forms: under the law and under in the Gospel,

[34] *Acts 1-13*, p. 29.

as the title has it. He keeps his eye steadily on the truth that it must be substantially the same knowledge.

It is not surprising, then, that although it is in book 3 that Calvin deals with 'The way in which we receive the grace of Christ', soteriological themes are treated in book 2 under the rubric of Christology. The work of the Holy Spirit is frequently referenced there. At one point, a range of the Spirit's work is touched on, all the way from inspiring the tabernacle craftsmen to regeneration (2.2.16-20), and the final chapter (27) demonstrates the centrality in Calvin's soteriology of the Holy Spirit as the agent of regeneration, which connects the end of book 2 and the beginning of book 3. 'Christ's Kingdom lies in the Spirit', in whom we can have victory (2.15.5). Like Kuyper, Calvin holds that '[i]f we seek any other gifts of the Spirit, they will be found in his [Christ's] anointing.' (2.16.19).

The benefits of Christ's kingdom are applied to the patriarchs. They sought a spiritual kingdom, a point that needs to be adumbrated because of the pernicious doctrinal error, sponsored by Servetus and a hoard of Anabaptists, consisting in the belief that Israelites had no hope of immortality, but merely earthly hopes. If that were so, what would it turn them into? 'Nothing but a herd of swine' (2.10.1). There is more in this vein. This is the context in which Calvin makes the celebrated and lapidary claim that the covenant with the patriarchs differs from the new covenant in 'mode of dispensation', not in 'substance' (10.2). '[T]he doctrine of the gospel is spiritual' (10.3). It was not intended only for the time of Christ. Are we really to suppose that the Israelites, the recipients of promise, were destined to seek 'fleshly pleasures like stupid beasts' (10.3)?

Calvin expounds the hope of Old Testament saints with a sustained purple passage, starting in 2.10.11, designed to show the sad and miserable futility of their experience if they really set their sights on an earthly future. One covenant; one hope. It is in the context of established unity that the differences between the testaments should be understood – the old includes Canaan as a proximate, though not the ultimate hope; the old sets forth promise in the form of image and shadow; the law has a distinctive Old Testament function; there is greater sense of spiritual freedom under the New; in the old covenant, the covenant of grace is confined to one nation. Augustine aptly says that 'the children of promise…reborn of God, who have obeyed the commands by faith working through love… have belonged to the New Covenant since the world began' (11.10).[35] This

[35] He is not directly quoting Augustine here. There are signs that Calvin struggles in his commentary on Hebrews, a book which, if read on its own, will not readily yield a theology of a substantial unity of covenants differing in administration. See, e.g., his comment on the difficulty with talk in Hebrews

could not be the case if their hope was directed to 'carnal, earthly, and temporal things', but only if they sought 'spiritual, heavenly, and eternal benefits'. What has happened pneumatologically is that 'God's call has gone forth more widely through all peoples, and the graces of the Spirit have been more abundantly poured out than before' (11.14).

I have been repetitious in order to bring out what is surely striking in this exposition, namely, the absence of any middle ground between sensuality and spirituality. As far as Calvin is concerned, the sensual, Israel's hope for the land, is only warranted as long as it is a form under which the spiritual, which is Christ, is temporarily apprehended. Otherwise, it is godless, sinful, directed at wealth, luxury and power. However, suppose that we grant both that land has the signifying function accorded to it by Calvin and that the hope of immortality was not absent in Israel. It remains important to explore how hope for land need not be as spiritually suspect as Calvin has it. While it may be too slick to detect immediately in Calvin shadows of Platonism and of Stoicism, the vehemence of his opposition to the proposition that the focus of Israel's hope was earthly suggests that something extraneous to biblical sensibility, if not these philosophies in particular, is affecting his reading of Scripture. Thus, pneumatology is affected because the tie between the kingdom and history is loosened, and Pentecost viewed more in relation to what must permanently constitute the spiritual connection between God and his own than to the history of Israel in the context of world history. Of course, Christology and soteriology more widely are implicated in Calvin's theology on this point. It is preoccupation with Warfield that has led me to test the fabric of Calvin's theology from a little pneumatological point of view. So let us return to Warfield.

CONCLUSION

Perhaps there is an elephant in the room. More than one, indeed, but it seems right to pick out the fact that Warfield's reference to Calvin on the work of the Holy Spirit in the individual and the church is impossible to explicate without reference to Calvin's doctrine of election. This elephant must remain undisturbed here. In a more innocent day, the height of childish daring was to ring a stranger's doorbell and run away. I confess to an uneasy sense that I belong – with apologies to Edith Wharton, whose name I should be the last to take in vain – to 'the age of innocence'. None-

8:6 of the covenant 'proclaimed on better promises': the faith of those who lived under the Law 'ought to have rested on the same promises', says Calvin. In the *Institutes*, Calvin insists that Hebrews cannot really be denying the efficacy of old covenant ceremonies (4.14.25).

theless, I trust that my ruminations verily ring a sonorous bell for readers. Questioning Warfield's judgement on Calvin is not just an exercise in historical or dogmatic theology. If generalisation be fair and the familiar be rehearsed, what is taught about the Spirit in many Reformed churches falls a very long way short of the fulness of what is said in Scripture, as Kuyper announced in his preface (xii). 'Pentecost (the feast of the Holy Spirit) appeals to the churches and animates them much less than Christmas or Easter…' (7). Yet, in opening his chapter on 'The Outpouring Of The Holy Spirit', Kuyper confesses that '[i]n the treatment of this subject it is not our aim to create a new interest in the celebration of Pentecost. We consider this almost impossible. Man's nature is too unspiritual for this' (112). I trust it is the way of wisdom to record this observation without comment, at such a late stage.

Although it is a characteristically, if not distinctively, Reformed failing to overestimate the life-changing power of the bare communication of theological truth from the pulpit, it is also true that the failure to communicate from the pulpit the fulness of biblical teaching on the Spirit – of which, of course, I have given no theological account whatsoever - contributes significantly to the absence or minimal degree of changed lives in our congregations. Self-evidently, we cannot conclude from my discussion whether or not a flaw in Calvin's pneumatology has anything to do with this. In fact, I lament the impression given of general negativity towards Calvin, whose intellectual and personal achievement is the more remarkable the more it is studied, and whose theology so richly edifies.[36] Yet, I trust that posting the need for a re-examination of Warfield's judgement on Calvin's pneumatology provokes reflection on the possibility that the pneumatology has had an adverse along with an unquestionably and eternally beneficial and positive effect on the church. Surely such reflection can only be of service to the concrete life of the Church.

[36] In this part of the article, I have had occasion to be critical of a portion of Calvin's writing which unforgettably ministered to me at an important moment in life, and I have had to reckon with the possibility of ungrateful disloyalty towards him personally.

The Resilience of Scottish Evangelical Theology 1900-1950: the Career of Daniel Lamont (1870-1950)

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In his time, Daniel Lamont (d. 1950) was a well-known Scottish theological professor and Christian leader, with admirers within and beyond the Presbyterian tradition. Three quarters of a century later, he is all but forgotten. Thus, the question deserves to be asked, "why consider Lamont as an evangelical theologian, other than for antiquarian reasons?" The argument of this paper is that Lamont's stance and career, shaped in the pre-1900 Free Church of Scotland, continued in the post-1900 United Free Church, and seen to its completion in the post-1929 reunited Church of Scotland, offers us an explanation of something which is otherwise an enigma. That 'something' is the hardiness of Scottish evangelicalism in the first half of the twentieth century, an era which by many accounts was one of theological confusion.

Brian Stanley, then-professor of World Christianity at New College, Edinburgh affirmed this hardiness in *The Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism: The Age of Billy Graham and John Stott* (IVP 2013). Comparing the relative state of evangelicalism in England to that of Scotland in 1950, (the time when both John Stott and Billy Graham were beginning to draw public attention at home and abroad), he judged that it was Scottish evangelicalism which stood in the stronger theological position. Does this comparison mean anything? In 1950 such a state of things meant something inasmuch as global evangelicalism still looked to the United Kingdom and to Scotland in a way not replicated today. Theology, biblical studies, world mission and Christian publishing for the English-speaking world were all more U.K-centred in 1950 than they are today; in 1950 Britain still had an extensive global Empire, an Empire that was only beginning to recede.[1] In spite of England's larger population, greater number of churches, and more numerous university faculties of theology, Stanley attributed Scotland's out-sized role in mid-twentieth century

[1] The academic leadership shown in the early twentieth century is illustrated by the fact that graduate programs in theology and other disciplines were created in the various U.K. universities in response to appeals from colleges and universities across the then-Empire. See Hugh Watt, ed. *New College, Edinburgh: A Centenary History* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1946), p. 110.

evangelicalism to "the combined influence of a dominant Reformed tradition and an unrivalled system of public education." Stanley's judgment was extensively anticipated by Alister McGrath in his 2006 biography of T.F. Torrance. [2]

For early twenty-first century Christians interested in the history and welfare of the Scottish churches, this favourable interpretation of Christianity in Scotland circa 1950 runs counter to an established narrative. So great has been the shift away from historic Christian conviction across twentieth century Scotland, that it has been easy for some writers to suggest that the fatal wound had already been inflicted, so far as the maintenance of evangelical conviction is concerned, in the turmoil which preceded and followed the formation of the United Free Church of Scotland in 1900.[3] As is well known, only a small minority of ministers and churches declined to enter this merger, the path towards which was prepared by relaxed subscription to the Westminster Confession and Catechisms in the two churches uniting. Especially for confessional evangelicals who continue to uphold those standards, Stanley's assessment of mid-century Scottish theology seems to have about it an air of unreality. Was it not the case that from 1900 onward the relationship of most branches of Scottish Presbyterianism to the Westminster Confession and Catechisms had been deliberately made vague? Did not a kind of theological anomie follow in consequence?[4] And did not the subsequent union of 1929, which brought together the vast majority of the United Free Church and the Church of Scotland employ terms of a studied ambiguity as regards the

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2 Brian Stanley, *The Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism: The Age of John Stott and Billy Graham* (Downers Grove, Inter-Varsity, 2013), 78. Alister McGrath had reached virtually the same conclusion in his *T.F. Torrance: An Intellectual Biography* (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 23. Describing the situation when, in the mid-1930's, Torrance undertook theological study in Edinburgh, he described the Scottish universities in the inter-war period as "the virtually undisputed masters of British theology, with Edinburgh being the jewel in the crown.".

3 See this emphasis, for instance, in the readable volume of Iain H. Murray, *A Scottish Christian Heritage* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2006), chap. 11 and John W. Keddie, *Preserving a Reformed Heritage: Aspects of the History of the Free Church of Scotland in the 20th Century* (Kirkhill: Scottish Reformed Heritage Publications, 2017), p. 39. A much more judicious appraisal of the landscape had been provided by Norman L. Walker, *Chapters in the History of the Free Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1895), chap. XIX.

4 The United Presbyterian Church in 1879 and the Free Church of Scotland in 1892 had modified the terms of their subscription to the Westminster Confession and Catechisms.

doctrines of the Confession?[5] How can this flow of events have lent itself to evangelical resilience?

While these concerns about theological integrity were warranted by the theological trends admittedly visible in both 1900 and 1929, they do not, when taken by themselves, supply an adequate understanding of the course taken by theology in Scotland during the first half of the twentieth century. It is the contention of this paper that there remained a vigorous evangelical theology not only in the ongoing Free Church of Scotland (the small party which declined to enter church union in 1900), but also in the United Free Church of Scotland and the post-1929 union of that body with the Church of Scotland. This evangelical stance still remained at mid-twentieth century in spite of the admittedly ambiguous relationship to historic doctrinal standards which had been adopted a half-century earlier. In making this assertion, it is important to acknowledge that evangelical theology was by no means the only, or the dominant emphasis observable in the Scottish churches of this period. This paper maintains only that there was an evangelicalism with ongoing trans-denominational influence in this period. Our methodology will entail first a survey of general theological trends observable in that half-century and second, a consideration of Daniel Lamont's own notable evangelical theological stance in that same period.

GENERAL TRENDS IN THE 1900-1950 PERIOD

The United Free Church of Scotland was a church known for its keen missionary interest, a commitment reflected pre-1900 in both of the churches which combined in that year.6 The most famous UFC missionary of the early part of the century was Mary Slessor of Calabar (1848-1915), while the missionary statesman of the denomination was David S. Cairns (1862-1947), who played a major role in the Edinburgh Missionary Convention of 1910 in his capacity of professor of theology and apologetics at the Aberdeen college of the United Free Church.[7]

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5 J. H. S. Burleigh, *A Church History of Scotland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960), pp. 384,385.

6 Walker, *Chapters in the History*, XIX, drew attention to the impressive number of medical missionaries sent out from Scotland, relative to the U.K. as a whole.

7 Brian Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference:1910* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans: 2009), pp. 245-247, associates Cairns with the advancing of the idea that the major religions of the world could find their proper fulfilment in the Christian message. Cairns' outlook might be termed 'liberal evangelical'.

While the United Free Church has been fairly characterized as "broadly evangelical" with an ethos of "liberal evangelicalism" on account of its accommodating attitude to biblical higher criticism and German theology[8] it remains true that it contained numerous theologians and ministers known for their clear evangelicalism. Two representatives of the UFC, James Orr and Thomas Whitelaw, had contributed to the American project of 1909, *the Fundamentals*.[9] And there were numerous scholars and preachers who both at the time and since have been considered to be exemplary preachers of the gospel. The Glasgow church historian, T.M. Lindsay (1843-1914) left memorable works such as *The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries* (1902) and the still-valuable *History of the Reformation* (2 vols. 1906-7). James Denney (1856-1917), successively professor of theology, New Testament, and principal of the Glasgow Free Church College, is still remembered for his *The Death of Christ* (1902, repr. 1951). Alexander Whyte (1836-1921) was a famous Edinburgh preacher, author (Bible Characters, Bunyan Characters, Commentary on the Shorter Catechism) and eventual principal of New College. James Stalker (1848-1927), professor of Church History in the Aberdeen College of the United Free Church, had a wide reputation as a preacher, producing noteworthy expositions on *Imago Dei: The Example of Jesus Christ* (1890), *The Trial and Death of Jesus Christ* (1894), and *The Atonement* (1908). John MacPherson (1847-1902), left a commentary on the Westminster Confession (1881), a published lecture series, *The Doctrine of the Church in Modern Theology* (1903), and a *Christian Dogmatics* (1898).

The United Free Church moderator of 1911-12, James Wells (1838-1924) gave a rousing and most welcomed address at the 1912 centenary

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8 N.R. Needham, "United Free Church" in the Nigel M. Cameron, ed. *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), p. 838. A.C. Cheyne did not hesitate to term the United Free Church as theologically liberal, in describing that church as providing an ecclesiastical home for future theologians, John and Donald M. Baillie. See Cheyne's essay, "The Baillie Brothers" in David Fergusson, ed. *Christ, Church, and Society: Essays on John Baillie and Donald M. Baillie*, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992), p. 10.

9 It is interesting to note that UFC chronicler, George M. Reith, spoke of Orr as "a sturdy, if somewhat conservative theologian" after his passing. *Reminiscences of the United Free Church General Assemblies: 1900-1929* (Edinburgh: Moray House, 1934), p. 153. The contributions of Orr and Whitelaw to the *Fundamentals* is analysed (with others) in Geoffrey Treloar, "The British Contribution to *The Fundamentals*", in David Bebbington and David Ceri Jones, eds. *Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism in the United Kingdom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), chap. 2.

of Princeton Theological Seminary.[10] Of the same generation was W.M. Clow (1853-1930), a notable evangelical preacher and eventual Principal and Professor of Ethics and Practical Theology at the Glasgow Free Church College; Clow took a deep interest in the challenges of urban ministry and social questions, an interest reflected in books such as *Christ and the Social Order* (1913), *The Quest for Industrial Peace* (1921) and articles published in the *Princeton Theological Review*.[11] One of the few Scottish ministers to have been educated at Princeton Theological Seminary in the era of the Hodges, Charles A. Salmond (1853-1932), left his own written appreciation of late 19th century Princeton in his *Princetoniana* (1888); like the others named above, Salmond had thrown in his lot with the United Free Church in 1900. The compiler of biblical and theological dictionaries and founder of the *Expository Times*, James Hastings (1852-1922), was of this same generation and outlook. A notable upholder of the centrality of Jesus Christ in the inter-war era was Patrick Carnegie Simpson (1865-1947), author of *The Fact of Christ* (1901) and Chalmers lectures published as *The Evangelical Church Catholic* (1935). Simpson was a New College graduate who went on to become Professor of Church History at Westminster College, Cambridge and biographer of Robert Rainy, late principal of New College). Another church historian of long-standing was Hugh Watt (1879-1968), professor at New College, Edinburgh (1919-1950). His interests in the Covenanting period and the preceding Reformation era found expression in *Recalling the Scottish Covenants* (1946) and *John Knox in Controversy* (1950).[12] An at-least liberal evangelical orientation was continued into a younger generation, which eventually furnished the Scottish Church with the evangelist D.P. Thomson (1896-1974) and preacher-theologians such as James S. Stewart (1896-1990), Thomas Torrance (1913-2007), and A.C. Cheyne (1924-2006). As a young man and young minister, a similar outlook was exhibited by William Barclay (1907-1978) who admittedly later, during his academic career, adopted clearly heterodox views.[13] All this is to speak of the United Free Church stream.

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[10] David B. Calhoun, *Princeton Seminary: the Majestic Testimony* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1996), p. 276, drawing on the observations of J. Gresham Machen provided in Ned B. Stonehouse, *J. Gresham Machen: A Biographical Memoir* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954), pp. 183-184.

[11] Clow published four articles in the *Princeton Theological Review*: "Elements of the Industrial Strife" 19.3 (1921), "Marxian Socialism" 19.4 (1921), "The Justification of Capitalism" 20.4 (1920) and "The Charge Against Capitalism" 21.1 (1923).

[12] Portions of these works appeared earlier in the *Evangelical Quarterly*.

[13] Clive Rawlins, *William Barclay: the Authorized Biography* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1984). J. D. Douglas, "Barclay, William" in the Nigel M. Cam-

The Church of Scotland prior to the reunion of 1929 did not have the same extensive associations with evangelical theology which had been such a prominent feature of the United Free Church heritage. Its world missionary force was very much smaller and Its role in the 1910 Edinburgh Missionary Conference was not so evident as that of the United Free Church. While some of its ministers had openly identified with the Keswick movement and sought to advance the practical holiness of their parishioners through conferences and devotional magazines, these emphases were far from characteristic.[14] Fewer of its theological scholars were looked to as clear defenders of the evangelical position. And yet there were exceptions to this general rule. A.C. Charteris, Edinburgh University professor of Biblical Criticism from 1868-1898 had been a steady defender of the integrity of the biblical record and a friend to foreign missionary effort.[15] G.D. Henderson, church historian at Aberdeen University between 1924 and 1957 though clearly not a conservative evangelical, was regularly ready to make common cause with others of a broadly evangelical conviction.[16] His colleague from 1940 onward, the New Testament scholar, A.M. Hunter (1906-1991) took generally conservative positions.[17] The professor of Christian Dogmatics, G. T. Thomson (1887-1958), initially at Aberdeen before relocating to Edinburgh in 1936, was known for his staunch defence of Protestant orthodoxy and was supportive of evangelical causes. He co-authored the *Romans* commentary in the *New Bible*

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eron, ed. *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), p. 63. A pointed assessment of Barclay is provided by Robert P. Carroll, "Hebrew, Heresy and Hot Air: Biblical Studies in Glasgow Since 1900"in Iain H. P. Hazlett, *Traditions of Theology in Glasgow: 1450-1990* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1993), pp. 94-97.

14 Andrew M. Jones, *The Revival of Evangelicalism: Mission and Piety in the Victorian Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022)

15 N.R. Needham, "Charteris, Archibald Hamilton" in the Nigel M. Cameron, ed. *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), p. 167. The biography of missionary C.T. Studd records that Charteris chaired an Edinburgh student rally in which the Student Volunteer Movement appealed for student world evangelization. Norman Grubb, *C.T. Studd: Cricketer and Pioneer* (Valley Forge: Christian Literature Crusade, 1933), p. 48.

16 Henderson was a frequent contributor to the *Evangelical Quarterly* in the 1930's and 40's.

17 I.H. Marshall, "Hunter, Archibald Macbride" in the Nigel M. Cameron, ed. *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), pp. 417-418.

Commentary (1953).[18] His colleague at Edinburgh, the church historian G. H. S. Burleigh (1894-1985), became the second editor of the *Evangelical Quarterly* and was a frequent contributor to the journal.[19]

Outside what could be called these 'mainstream' bodies, an evangelical theological position was being forthrightly maintained in the Free Church of Scotland (post-1900), by the Free Presbyterian Church (which had withdrawn from the Free Church in 1893 over concerns about doctrinal drift) and in the surviving remnants of still-older Presbyterian dissent: the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland and the Original Secession Church.[20] The Scottish Baptist and Congregationalist Unions contained broadly evangelical elements, while being doctrinally diverse. Each maintained a theological college.[21]

With a variety of assumptions about the post-1900 Scottish churches in relation to the cause of evangelicalism now freshly examined, we may now focus on the career and significance of one who in extensive pastoral ministry (1900-1927), a New College, Edinburgh academic chair entailing Ethics, Apologetics and Practical Theology (1927-1945) and as moderator of the Church of Scotland General Assembly (1936) was one of the outstanding evangelical leaders of his time, within and beyond the Church of Scotland. The individual was Daniel Lamont (1870-1950).

DANIEL LAMONT AS MINISTER, AS PROFESSOR AND EVANGELICAL LEADER

When Professor Daniel Lamont passed from this life in May, 1950, a significant chapter closed in the history of evangelical theology in Scotland. Born on the Isle of Bute in 1870, young Lamont was raised in the Fin-

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18 D. F. Wright, "Thomson, G.T." in the Nigel M. Cameron, ed. *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), p. 821. Thomson co-authored the Romans commentary in the 1953 *New Bible Commentary* (IVP).

19 A.C. Cheyne, "Burleigh, J. H. S." in Nigel M. Cameron, ed. *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), p. 111.

20 The continuing Reformed Presbyterian Church (existing also in Ulster) had declined to be absorbed into the post-1690 restored Church of Scotland. The dwindling Original Secession Church was absorbed into the Church of Scotland in 1956. On both, see the relevant articles in the *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*.

21 J. C. G Binfield, "Congregational Union of Scotland", in the *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*, p. 206; D. B. Murray, "Baptist Union of Scotland", in the *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*, pp. 59-60.

nieston area of Glasgow, where Andrew Bonar (1810-1892) was the family minister. Young Lamont seemed destined for a career as a mathematician; it was only after labouring as assistant to the professor of mathematics at the University of Glasgow for four years, that he, feeling called to the ministry, left mathematics and enrolled in the Free Church College, Glasgow in 1896. And what a time to enrol! T.M. Lindsay, A.B. Bruce, James Denney, and George Adam Smith were his distinguished and sometimes controversial teachers.[22] His theological course was just concluding in the year (1900) when the union between his own Free Church of Scotland and the United Presbyterian Church was being consummated. Following the example of his Glasgow professors, he entered the united body.

A star pupil in theology as he had already been in mathematics, Lamont graduated first in his class at the Glasgow Free Church College. In addition to the college diploma, Lamont also secured the Glasgow University B.D. by examination. Professor James Denney (professor in the Free Church College from 1897-1917) pronounced Lamont to be the best all-round man to have passed through his theology classes.[23] After a succession of four-year pastorates at Kilmarnock and Newington, Lamont was called back to Glasgow in 1909. At that occasion, Denney honoured Lamont by providing the formal introduction of the minister-designate at his induction at Hillhead in Glasgow's West End.[24]

There were early signs that an academic career could be in Lamont's future. From his 1909 return to Glasgow, he began to serve as his college's external examiner in Systematic Theology; he later performed similar service as external examiner for Glasgow University's B.D. degree. At the passing of James Orr in 1913, Lamont was among those nominated to fill Orr's theology chair. Though not selected, he nevertheless consented to teach the late Orr's classes for one academic year – while still serving in his pastorate. In the following year, he was nominated for a position in New Testament and Historical Theology in the Presbyterian Theological

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22 Both A.B. Bruce and George Adam Smith were made to defend themselves against charges of heresy in the pre-1900 Free Church of Scotland.

23 "Memoir", 55. Denney's initial role in the Glasgow college of the Free Church was professor of theology. After the union of 1900, the theology post devolved to James Orr (coming to Glasgow from the Edinburgh Divinity Hall of the former United Presbyterian Church). Denney spent the balance of his career in New Testament.

24 These biographical details are furnished in a memoir of Lamont composed by the one who succeeded him as minister in Helensburgh, George Logan, and appended to a volume of popular articles composed by Lamont for the evangelical magazine, *The Life of Faith*. The volume was published as *Studies in the Johannine Writings* (London: James Clarke, 1956).

Hall in Sydney, Australia.[25] Again, he was passed over. He was nominated a second time for the Glasgow theology post five years later; again; once more he was not successful.[26] The implication was that Lamont was at a disadvantage as a nominee, never having ventured into print. In that same year, 1919, he went to a new pastorate at Helensburgh, where he remained until 1927. Yet, in that year there came both the award of a Glasgow D.D. (*honoris causa*) and an election by the General Assembly to be the New College, Edinburgh professor of Apologetics, Christian Ethics and Practical Training. In gaining the post in 1927, Lamont was preferred over the younger Donald M. Baillie (later an important theologian in his own right at the University of St. Andrews).[27] Lamont, a lifelong bachelor, remained in the Edinburgh post until his retirement in 1945. [28]

What, beside his early demonstration of academic prowess (especially in theology) at Glasgow had at last fitted Lamont for this academic appointment? He had long been known as an exemplary preacher; he had done wartime service as a military chaplain in France. We have noted that in the first two decades of his ministry, he had as yet published no theological work.[29] What do we know about Lamont's theological trajectory?

LAMONT'S THEOLOGICAL TRAJECTORY

It is clear that Lamont was raised in an evangelical family under the ministry of the renowned Andrew Bonar (1810-1892) and that he determined to follow Christ from the age of seven.[30] With his father, Lamont was actively involved in the distribution of Christian tracts in poor neighbourhoods of his city. The Glasgow Free Church College in which he enrolled in 1896, was something of a hotbed, attracting attention for sometimes dubious reasons. The principal and resident church historian, T. M. Lindsay (1843-1914) in addition to being an authority on the Continental Refor-

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25 Stuart Bonnington, "The Religion About Jesus or the Religion of Jesus: the Theological Formation of Rev. Dr. Samuel Angus (1881-1943), dissertation. Australian College of Theology, 2023, p. 172.

26 Both nominations, as well as his eventual selection to be the professor of Ethics, Apologetics and Practical Theology in New College, Edinburgh are recorded in the *Memoir* as well as George M. Reith, *Reminiscences of the United Free Church General Assembly 1900-1929* (Edinburgh: The Moray Press, 1934), pp. 154, 211, 304.

27 Reith, *Reminiscences*, p. 304.

28 "Memoir", p. 16

29 This significant fact is noted in the "Memoir", p. 26. His unmarried sister long served as his housekeeper.

30 "Memoir", p. 12.

mation, and a friend of religious revival, had recently been outspoken in his denunciation of the view that the Bible was without error; this was a view which he mistakenly claimed to have originated in Princeton, New Jersey.[31] The professor of New Testament and Apologetics, A.B. Bruce (1831-99) had at an earlier stage of his career written the classic study of Jesus and his disciples, *The Training of the Twelve* (1871). But by the 1880's he defended the critical views of the Aberdeen Old Testament scholar, W. Robertson Smith (1846-1894); for himself he would not affirm more than a general reliability of the four Gospels. He faced a General Assembly inquiry into his own views in 1890, yet no formal charges were made against him. It was in Bruce's teaching of Apologetics that he made the greatest impression on his student, Lamont.

Old Testament theologian, George Adam Smith (1856-1942) made a deep impression on, and was a great encourager of young Lamont. Such was Lamont's prowess in Hebrew, the professor made Lamont his assistant for one academic year. But like A.B. Bruce, Smith's acceptance and employment of the higher critical method brought him under the scrutiny of the General Assembly. He had just released his Yale lectures on preaching, *Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament* (1901) which demonstrated how much he had conceded to modern criticism.[32] As in Bruce's case, matters went no further than an Assembly inquiry.

In theology, Lamont was the pupil of James Denney (1856-1917) who filled that chair 1897-1900 and subsequently the chair of New Testament. Sharing the liberal evangelical outlook of his colleagues, Denney could not, without qualification, be considered a theological conservative – a designation that did apply to his successor in theology, James Orr (1844-1913).[33] Orr, who joined the faculty of the Glasgow college in consequence of the United Presbyterian-Free Church union of 1900, was never Lamont's mentor. The stamp of Denney was definitely left on Lamont and their mutual admiration was easily observable. It was as the former pro-

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31 Lindsay had followed closely the doctrinal conflict in which Union Seminary, New York, professor, Charles Briggs, had been involved in the years 1892-1893.

32 The career of George Adam Smith is explored in Iain D. Campbell, *Fixing the Indemnity: The Life and Work of George Adam Smith* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2004).

33 The theological profile and contribution of Denney have been assessed by John Randolph Taylor, *God Loves Like That: The Life and Theology of James Denney* (London: SCM Press, 1962) and by I. Howard Marshall in the Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, ed. *Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), chap. 7.

tégé of Denney, the theologian, that Lamont would be repeatedly nominated for academic chairs in 1913, 1914, 1919 and 1927.

It is worth stressing that the Glasgow college of the Free Church was a fair representation of the theological complexion of the freshly-united denomination, which also had divinity colleges at Edinburgh and Aberdeen. The roots of them all lay in confessional evangelicalism; the direction taken by all by the 1880's was one of accommodation to the new critical methods. Some students, who were self-consciously conservative in theology recoiled at things they heard in the classroom.[34] In some cases, the Belfast theological faculty of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland was preferred over these Scottish colleges because of the Belfast college's conscious resistance to the higher critical approach.[35] In the case of Daniel Lamont, theological graduate of 1900, we see a combination of fervent evangelical upbringing and piety wedded to this rising liberal evangelical theological outlook. The outlook has been called 'Christocentric', because it certainly put Christ and the need for a personal response to Him, at the forefront. It was also 'crucicentric', in that it clearly emphasized the indispensability of trust in Christ's atoning sacrifice at the cross. But the embrace of historical criticism produced a qualified confidence in Scripture (especially the Old Testament) as it was subjected to an often-naturalistic critical approach; the historic creeds of the Church – from Patristic to Reformation times—were subjected to the same historical evaluation. We will see these tendencies at work as we give attention to Lamont's major writings in the order in which they were composed.

LAMONT'S EMERGENCE AS A THEOLOGICAL WRITER

Lamont clearly had well-placed friends who hoped to see him move into academic life. One of these was his former fellow-student, John McFadyen (1870-1933), now professor of Hebrew and Old Testament in their Glasgow alma mater.[36] McFadyen seems to have been the catalyst for securing for Lamont an invitation to give a lecture series (the A.B. Bruce lectureship) in the Glasgow UFC college. The lectures, published as *The Creative Work of Jesus* (1924) will have been written and delivered in exactly the same months as he was composing *The Church and the Creeds* (discussed below). Lamont, still a full-time minister at Helensburgh, was evidently

[34] G.N.M. Collins, *Donald Maclean D.D.* (Edinburgh: Lindsay, 1944), pp. 21-25.

[35] G. N. M. Collins, *John Macleod, D.D.* (Edinburgh: Free Church of Scotland, 1951), p. 47.

[36] G.W. Anderson, "McFadyen, John Edgar" in the Nigel M. Cameron, ed. *Scottish Dictionary of Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), p. 513.

burning the midnight oil. This lecture series aimed "to restate the organic connection between Christian experience and…the death and resurrection of our Lord, regarded as a single, indissoluble, historical fact." This aim is pregnant with meaning, for as he goes on to say:

> The God upon whom our minds ultimately rest is One who is experienced by us. He has chosen to be revealed in Jesus, of whom we must have an adequate experience if we are to have an adequate experience of God. Christian theology can be deduced from experience in the same sense in which the contents of salvation can be deduced from faith… As faith implies its appropriate object, experience implies its appropriate source.[37]

Here Lamont is "paying his dues" to the theological trend of his day, reflected in titles such as *The Christian Experience of Forgiveness* (H.R. MacIntosh) and *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit* (H. Wheeler Robinson).[38] Events and facts of the Gospel are not denied or belittled, but the role of the hearer of the gospel as interpreter and validator of these truths is exaggerated.

Yet this is not simply theological "haze". Lamont held that "the validity of Christian experience obviously depends upon the trustworthiness of the New Testament record concerning Jesus." "In the earthly life of Jesus of Nazareth God gave the one perfect revelation of Himself that He has given to men." "The death of Christ is the central theme of this book." "The resurrection of Jesus was the standard and measure of God's redemptive power." "The Christian hope for the life which is to come, as well as for that which now is, is built upon the resurrection of Jesus from the dead." "The Holy Spirit as known in Christian experience does the actual work of Christ in human lives. He ministers Christ to us and in so doing, He brings us to God." [39] Lamont's point is that robust Christian experience is the product of an encounter with these realities.

McFadyen was also editor of a series of semi-popular theological volumes, "The Living Church"; he invited Lamont to contribute a volume on the sensitive subject of *The Church and the Creeds*, a book released in 1925. The subject was timely, as by this point, the United Free Church had already commenced negotiations with the Church of Scotland that would result in a reunion of churches in 1929. This was a subject area in which Lamont – who had done theological teaching and examining—was quite at home. It would seem that it was while in the process of producing this

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37 *The Creative Work of Jesus* (London: James Clarke, 1924), p. 15.

38 (London: Nisbet, 1927), (London: Nisbet, 1928). Volumes in a sizeable series entitled "The Library of Constructive Theology.

39 *Creative Work*, pp. 44, 47, 59, 65, 67, 117

volume, that Lamont digressed to produce what seems to have been his first published theological writing, a short essay for the *Expository Times* in May, 1923, "The Role of Systematic Theology in Preaching." The notes sounded by Lamont were reassuring:

> The Church has suffered from many false assumptions and none more than this: that when a man has given his heart to Christ, his inward spiritual task has been completed. Life only begins for him at that turning-point and since life and growth cannot be dissociated, he must grow. The process of becoming a full-grown Christian man implies a growth in the truth, as the truth is in Jesus… Healthy growth in the Christian life presupposes growth in Christian knowledge. That fact provides the basal justification for doctrinal preaching.[40]

When, however *The Church and the Creeds* came from the press in 1925, an evangelical reader might have been frequently taken aback at Lamont's approach. This, while not irreverent or dismissive (he begins by affirming that it has been essential that the church formulate its faith to mark itself off from an unbelieving world) is still one that regularly emphasizes the limitations and historical situatedness of these documents. He employs a kind of higher critical method in viewing the creeds, a method required by the historical distance that separates us from the time of their composition. Accordingly, the 'Old Roman Creed' (circa 150 A.D.) is faulted for emphasizing the miraculous conception of Jesus; Lamont fully allows that this detail is recorded in two gospels, but presses the point that the Apostles did not give the miraculous conception any role in their public proclamation as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles.[41] By his reasoning, their reticence should have kept this detail (the reality of which he does not deny) out of a public creed. He faults the later creed, which we know as the Apostles, for its inclusion of the phrase "He descended into Hell" when the intended thought was in fact that Christ "continued under the power of death for a time". The phrase "the communion of saints" he takes to be a late addition to the creed, reflective of the growing practice of praying to the saints.[42] The creed of Nicea's value is compromised, Lamont believed, by the political manoeuvring of the emperor, acting through the sole western bishop present, Hosius; the unity imposed by this predominantly Eastern council was illusory and, as is well known, required that the issue of the relation of Christ to the Father would need to be revisited.

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40 "The Place of Systematic Theology in Preaching" *Expository Times* 34.8 (May 1923): 359-360.

41 *The Church and the Creeds* (London: James Clarke, 1925), p. 27.

42 *The Creeds and the Churches*, pp. 32-33.

He stresses that the Nicene formula was the first "framed of set purpose to be a test of orthodoxy".[43]

The creed of Chalcedon similarly "is not immune to criticism…The idea of two absolutely distinct natures in One Person is neither capable of being entertained by the human mind nor true to the Jesus of history".[44] The thoughtful reader will have found numerous reasons to feel unsettled by Lamont's approach.

Turning to the Westminster Confession of Faith, he took the view that this constituted "the most logical and uncompromising of all the credal statements of distinctly Reformed thought." He appears to mis-characterize the Confession's teaching about the Bible by attributing to it the view that "Scripture is authoritative only as it is borne home to man by the testimony of the Holy Spirit".[45] He argued that the framers of the Confession made it "complicit in a view of the Bible which is not the Bible's view of itself." "They were Aristotelian scholastics." An infallible Bible was substituted for an infallible Church. The "Westminster doctrine of Scripture…is not scriptural enough." The Confession's doctrine of election and predestination follows "remorseless logic" and a "paralyzing fatalism".[46] Lamont was here simply echoing many of the stock-in-trade criticisms of the Westminster Confession circulating as the nineteenth century gave way to the twentieth.

For all that, Lamont – who has been largely echoing the perspective of his late mentor, James Denney (d. 1917)[47]—insisted that creeds remain necessary. In a carefully-worded endorsement, he maintained "the Church has both the right and the duty to express the revealed truths of the faith in the thought-forms of each age." The best attitude is that of "enlightened freedom towards the creeds." "Creeds ought continually to be revised."[48] He closed out the volume by offering a simple creed assembled from what he considered to be the best elements of the various earlier statements he had surveyed. The Old Roman Creed was reflected most of all.[49] No one could call such a stance repressive or retrograde. The question was more that of whether, by retreating to the earliest possible standard, he

43 *The Creeds*, p. 44.

44 *The Creeds*, p. 58

45 WCF I. iv grounds the authority of Scripture in its divine origin. A human's appreciation of this authority comes by the attendant operation of the Spirit.

46 *The Creeds*, pp. 81-82, 84, 85, 88, 93.

47 See, for instance, the statements on Divine Inspiration in James Denney's *Studies in Theology* (1897), Lecture IX, "Holy Scripture".

48 *The Creeds*, pp. 133, 152, 155.

49 Chapter III "A Creed for Christendom".

had adequately taken into account positive advances made in the history of dogma across the Christian centuries.[50]

It bears remembering that these are the sentiments not of some "young buck" fresh from postgraduate study, but of a veteran minister in his mid-50's attempting to do theological writing for the first time. He clearly has not neglected his theological reading in a quarter-century of pastoral ministry. We are in fact hearing the voice of one who identified with a liberal evangelicalism. A comparison of *The Church and the Creeds* with its twin finds *The Creative Work of Jesus* to be the more constructive and less speculative of the two volumes.

By 1925, Lamont now had the publications, for lack of which, his earlier repeated nominations to theological chairs had faltered. With a Glasgow D.D. newly-awarded, he was now the successful nominee for the New College, Edinburgh chair in Ethics, Apologetics and Practical Theology, the role in which he served out his career.[51] In that career, extending from 1927 until 1945, he made his mark most of all through the 1934 release of *Christ and the World of Thought*.[52]

This volume was, in reality, a work of Apologetics, i.e. an attempt to show the relevance of a robust Christian faith to the whole range of human learning and exploration. Somewhat in the vein of his former teacher, Alexander Balmain Bruce's *Apologetics* (1882) and James Orr's *Christian View of God and the World* (1893), Lamont's work was intended to show Christianity's rightful place in a world of learning which was increasingly operating from agnostic and secular assumptions. Lamont's book showed a strong concern with epistemology, the question of how humans know anything and with how they find certainty.

His assessment of the then-current intellectual climate was very bleak; he believed that the inter-war years showed a revolution in thought. "The world of today oscillates between moral indifference on the one hand and moral fanaticism on the other." "There are more people in the world who are proud of their moral laxity than ever there were." Formerly, "an atheist was generally held to be an abnormality and a public danger. Now he

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50 Surely Lamont will have been familiar with the arguments of Principal Robert Rainy, set out in his *Delivery and Development of Christian Doctrine* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1874) and James Orr, in his *The Progress of Dogma* (London: James Clarke, 1901)

51 Reith, *Reminiscences of the United Free Church General Assembly* (1900-1929), (Edinburgh: Moray Press, 1934), p. 304, indicates that additional nominees were Donald M. Baillie and R.H. Strachan, both of whom went on to important academic careers. Baillie subsequently joined the faculty of St. Mary's College, St. Andrews.

52 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1934)

has emerged into respectability…"[53] How did Lamont, at age 64, propose to tackle this situation? By recommending a recovery of the lost transcendence of God – a loss which he traced back to Schleiermacher. "For our knowledge of God, we are inexorably cast upon the initiative of God himself."[54]

In the realm of psychology, it was necessary to recover the concept of the human soul: "civilization no longer has any guiding and sustaining principle to lead it to confident action and give it repose of soul." In the turbulent 1930's, he saw the rise of Hitlerism as a symptom of this vacuum: "Anything is better than chaos."[55] Demonstrating his strong background in mathematics (a field he had left in 1896 to take up theological study) he devoted a chapter to the question of time; this he understood to have undergone a complete revolution of thought in the preceding half-century on account of the relating of time to space. [56]

With considerable nimbleness, he showed both the utter dependency of modern man on divine revelation *and* that genuine revelation is recorded in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments in a way not true of the scriptures of other faiths.[57] The same uniqueness was boldly claimed by Lamont for Jesus Christ who is both described in the apostolic record and actively revealing himself to those who hear the Christian message.[58] The reception given to this most substantive of Lamont's writings was positive, but mixed.[59]

Christ and the World of Thought can be looked on as marking a kind of a re-orientation for Lamont. Though broadly orthodox, his transition in 1927 into Scotland's largest theological college which soon (post-1929) began the process of integration into the existing University of Edinburgh Faculty of Divinity meant that he now directly encountered the unsettling intellectual trends of the era as represented within the general university community as well as within the theological faculty. There, there

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53 *Christ and the World of Thought*, pp. 7, 9.

54 *Christ and the World of Thought*, p. 11.

55 *Christ and the World of Thought*, p. 27

56 McGrath, *T. F. Torrance*, p. 34, names Lamont as one of two key professors at New College contributing to his subject's theological formation. Lamont is credited with stimulating Torrance to consider the relationship between theology and science.

57 *Christ and the World of Thought*, chapter X.

58 *Christ and the World of Thought*, chapter XI.

59 The Christian philosopher at University College, Hull, G.C. Steward, praised some portions of the book, but found others unconvincing. Review in *Evangelical Quarterly* 7.2 (1935), 208-212. The book was re-issued in a more popular form as *The Anchorage of Life* (London: IVF, 1940)

were clashes of theological opinion.[60] The writing Lamont produced in this period began to display his more earnest side; there were published articles such as "Tests in the Final Judgment", "The Believer's Destiny" and the especially sobering "Evangelism in the Modern World."[61] This latter essay called for the re-evangelization of the Scottish church! He was made moderator of the now-united Church of Scotland in 1936.[62] By 1938, his mid-1920's objections to certain elements of Calvinism notwithstanding, he accepted the honorary presidency of the important Fourth International Calvinistic Congress which met at New College, Edinburgh in July of that year.[63] Preparations for this Congress showed Lamont working in close collaboration with faculty members at the neighbouring Free Church of Scotland College.

It was in this same period of his career that Lamont began a close association with the Inter-Varsity Fellowship which would continue into his retirement years. He was among those Christian academics and leaders who addressed a large international student gathering at Cambridge in July, 1939 which set the stage for the post-war creation of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. His subject in that conference was that of his book of 1934, "Christ and the World of Thought".[64] In the year of his retirement (1945) he served as the honorary president of the IVF within the United Kingdom, and gave a memorable presidential address which was published as *God's Word and Man's Response*. The address was an appeal for the primacy of divine revelation in a distracted world.[65]

During this same period, Lamont was also among a group of Scots collaborating with the Biblical Research Committee of the Inter Var-

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60 Interesting light is shed on the spectrum of theological opinion within the 1930's united Faculty of Divinity in the life of T.F. Torrance. Alister, McGrath, *Thomas F. Torrance: An Intellectual Biography* (London: T&T Clark, 1999), p. 29-38. The biographer singles out Lamont and the theologian, H.R. MacIntosh as two faculty members who especially influenced Torrance.

61 Published in the *Evangelical Quarterly* 7.4 (1935), 337-50; 9.1 (1937), 1-2; and 15.3 (1942), 206-215. In this same period, he supplied an essay to the recently-established *Australian Reformed Theological Review*, "The Church as the Body of Christ" 4.1 (1945), 3-11.

62 In 1938, Lamont delivered an address at the graduation ceremony of Princeton Theological Seminary. See *Princeton Seminary Bulletin* XXXII.1, 8-13.

63 *Proceedings of the Calvinistic Congress at Edinburgh*, 1938 (Edinburgh: 1938), p. 1.

64 Lamont's address, "Christ and the World of Thought" was printed, with others in the conference volume, *Christ our Freedom* (London: Inter Varsity Press, 1939)

65 London, Inter Varsity Press, 1945.

sity Fellowship in the launch of the residential research library, Tyndale House, at Cambridge and in the preparation for the post-war publication of various reference works including the *New Bible Commentary* (1953).[66] For the latter, Lamont provided the introductory article on "Revelation and Inspiration". In this, as in so many of Lamont's writings, the imprint of his teacher, James Denney, can be recognized.[67]

ASSESSMENT

This paper began with the dual acknowledgement that treatments of the history of Scottish evangelicalism, provided from a certain confessional perspective, have been quite uniformly glum in treating the period 1900-1950. On this reading, the circle of the faithful had been drastically reduced. On the other hand, two modern writers have drawn attention to the general strength and stability of Scottish theology in this same era, such that Scotland's position was in a certain sense superior to that of the larger nation to the south.

The theological trajectory followed by Donald Lamont during that half-century illustrates a much more complex story than does any of these narratives, taken singly. Lamont, though raised in a strictly confessional pre-1900 Free Church of Scotland setting, was among the very large throng who in 1900 trusted that the evangelical future was secure enough without strict confessional safeguards. He seems to have carried out a broadly evangelical ministry in a way consistent with those assumptions for at least a quarter century. The higher critical methods employed in biblical and theological study carried some admitted risks, but one did not want to fall into obscurantism. But whether it was the stock market crash of 1929 or the growing militaristic threat observable in 1930's Germany or the growing sense that irreparable harm had been

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66 T.A. Noble, *Tyndale House and Fellowship: The First Sixty Years* (Leicester: IVP, 2006), pp. 32, 40, 45, 72. Among the Scots associated with the I.V.F. Biblical Research Committee beyond Lamont were his New College colleagues, G.T. Thomson, and Norman Porteous as well as Donald Maclean of the adjacent Free Church of Scotland College. The out-sized role played in evangelical theological developments in the inter-war period by the diminutive Free Church of Scotland College, Edinburgh is highlighted in Kenneth J. Stewart, "In the Vanguard of the 1930's Reformed Resurgence: Edinburgh's Free Church College 1925-1945", *Evangelical Quarterly*, 95.1 (2024), 1-19.

67 In a second printing of the *Commentary*, a more consistently conservative essay authored by the young J.I. Packer was substituted. See Kenneth J. Stewart, "J.I. Packer as a New Warfield: a Chapter in the Post-1930 Revival of Reformed Theology", *Themelios* 47.3 (2022), 513-25 (520)

done to the global cause of the gospel by the world conflict of 1914-1918, Donald Lamont (and many others like him) entered the 1930's in a chastened frame of mind. They realized as they had not realized earlier that new efforts were needed to conserve the Christian faith, to uphold the Scriptures as authoritative, and to advance the proclamation of the gospel by making common cause with others who shared their supernaturalist convictions. Increasingly alliances were made across denominational boundaries in the interests of perpetuating the evangelical faith.[68]

These efforts did not involve any strict return to the confessional documents whose role had been diminished in the church unions of 1900 and 1929. But it certainly entailed a taking up of the doctrines of the Reformation with fresh vigour. That was the intended posture of the newly-founded *Evangelical Quarterly* (launched 1929). That underlay the conducting of the four 1930's International Calvinistic Congresses held at London, Amsterdam, Geneva and Edinburgh. And it most certainly entailed a deepening involvement in the pan-evangelical efforts like that of the Inter-Varsity movement, a movement which was rooted in a brief but sturdy statement of faith. It is significant that the aged Lamont's final writings were produced for the popular magazine associated with the Keswick movement, *The Life of Faith*.[69] In Daniel Lamont, we see represented the more elastic 'shape' in which a wider evangelicalism survived and thrived in Scotland in the 1900-1950 period.

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[68] Illustrations of these trans-denominational initiatives are not hard to locate. The young F.F. Bruce, in a term-limited appointment, lecturing in Greek in the University of Edinburgh, recalled attending two gatherings in the city in the 1936-1937 period. The Church of Scotland General Assembly Hall was the scene of a 1936 commemoration of the martyrdom of Bible translator, William Tyndale. The lecture was given by Daniel Lamont. In the same venue, a year later, meetings were held to commemorate the Edinburgh evangelistic ministry of the American evangelist, D.L. Moody (1837-1899). The guest speaker was Harry Ironsides, pastor of the Moody Church, Chicago. See Bruce's *In Retrospect: Remembrance of Things Past* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), p. 101,102.

[69] The already-cited "Memoir" of Lamont was circulated in a volume of his collected devotional writings (*The Johannine Writings*) originally produced for the *Life of Faith* (London: James Clarke, 1955).

Participatory and Perichoretic Doctrine of the Trinity: A Theological Account for Grounding the True Ministry of the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Local Church.

Alistair Cuthbert, Pastor at Falkirk Baptist Church

INTRODUCTION

In March 1978, a working group of the Ministry and Mission Committees of the Baptist Union of Great Britain published a report regarding what impact the so-called 'Charismatic Renewal Movement' ('CRM' hereafter) was having on Baptist churches in England and Wales. The report was broad, not particularly in-depth, and made succinct comments on a wide range of issues including diversity, worship, financial giving, and the devaluing of ordinary gifting. Once the national council of the Baptist Union of Great Britain examined the report, they invited baptist theologian Paul Fiddes, who at the time was a tutor of Christian doctrine at Regent's Park College, Oxford, to write a response commentary highlighting the theological and pastoral implications of the report.[1]

Fiddes' commentary responded to all the matters raised in the report, focussing primarily on two overlapping areas that became rubrics under which all the issues raised were housed. The first was the nature and practice of spiritual gifts, the definition of which fed into the second rubric, the understanding and culture of spiritual authority and temperament in baptist churches that embraced the CRM. With regard to the comments on the exercise of spiritual gifting, Fiddes noted that biblically, all gifts are acts of the grace of God and therefore there is no place for a hierarchy of gifting nor subjugation of natural gifts to the more supernatural ones. Moreover, in the name of 'body-ministry' the assumption that spiritual giftedness can and should confer ordained ministry is potentially harmful and sets a dangerous pattern that the office of church leadership is predicated on the exercising of gifting, instead of the need for consistent spiritual leadership in a local church.[2]

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1 The report and Fiddes' response was published together in Paul S. Fiddes, *Charismatic Renewal: A Baptist View* (London: Baptist Publications, 1980).

2 Fiddes, *Charismatic*, pp. 9-13, 18-24.

Forty-five years on from that report, written during the zenith of the CRM in the UK, there is an abundance of accounts, both recorded[3] and anecdotal,[4] of spiritual leadership hierarchy that leads to hubris and abuse which *inter alia* has precipitated a movement away from renewal language, nomenclature and charismata foci into what has been termed a 'post-charismatic' milieu governed by emphases on missional and trinitarian theology and praxis.[5] Therefore, in the rest of this paper I will propose a possible theological corrective to the perpetual abuse happenings within certain streams of the protestant church that have residual CRM elements present. What follows is a theology of the Holy Spirit within a certain Trinitarian account that will, I suggest, preserve the experiential power and love of the Holy Spirit without the often associated hierarchical structures of spiritual submission that can lead to pride and the commoditisation of people. This account will also maintain congruence with the positive aspects the CRM of the past and current realities in much of the church in the global south. In order to do this, the used account will be the 'persons-as-relations' trinitarian theology of the aforementioned Paul Fiddes, one which emphasises the necessary kenotic nature of the triune God and therefore frames all spiritual church leadership in terms of *diakonia* as illustrated by Jesus in John 13.

However, given Fiddes' self-acknowledged status as an outsider of the CRM,[6] it is important to appraise his account using an interlocutor from

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[3] For journalistic reporting on recent accusations of abuse see Meagan Gilmore, "At Canadian Megachurch, One Abuse Investigation Spurs Another and Another," accessed December 06, 2023 https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2022/june/bruxy-cavey-meeting-house-abuse-allegations-investigation.html For a UK-based accusation see Madeleine Davies, "Pilavachi investigation snowballs as new allegations come to light," accessed December 06, 2023 https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2023/5-may/news/uk/pilavachi-investigation-snowballs-as-new-allegations-come-to-light. For a historical typical case see Julia Duin, "Charismatic Communities Split by Controversy." *Christianity Today* 35.10 (September 1991): 55-57.

[4] Anecdotally, among other examples that could be cited, both the church I grew up in and the one I currently serve as pastor have histories of severe hurt and damage by previous pastors who had extra-marital affairs with female members of the churches during the 1980's, the decade when both churches were immersed in the CRM here in the Scotland.

[5] For a solid and convincing case that in the west we now inhabit a post-charismatic church context see Rob McAlpine, *Post Charismatic?* (Eastbourne: David C. Cook, 2008). His discussion on 'covering and authority' is particularly insightful, McAlpine, *Post*, p. 139-193.

[6] Paul S. Fiddes, "The Theology of the Charismatic Movement" in *Strange Gifts? A Guide to Charismatic Renewal*, eds. D. Martin and P. Mullen.

within the CRM, and so the British CRM theologian Thomas A. Smail will be used as an appropriate dialogist for Fiddes. Not only was he a contemporary of Fiddes, but he also produced a sizable corpus of theological writing specifically dealing with trinitarian theology as well as the CRM and its corollaries.[7] Moreover, his *oeuvre* is now recognised as having much saliency for today's charismatic and pentecostal academic theology.[8] Before delineating Fiddes' account in conversation with Smail, however, it is imperative to set the scene by offering a brief historical précis of the emergent theology of the CRM, which shall be done through the lens of Smail.

CHARISMATIC RENEWAL: A THEOLOGY FOUND?

In 1995 Smail, Andrew Walker and Nigel Wright together wrote and had published *Charismatic Renewal: The Search for a Theology*. As the title suggests, the purpose of the text was to explore whether or not the CRM - approximately twenty years old at the time of writing - was situated within a secure theological framework. After each author gave testimony of their experience and indebtedness to the CRM, they offered theological analysis and critique on a range of salient issues within the bourgeoning movement: from renewal and the atonement, to styles of worship, all the

(Oxford: Blackwell, 1984), p. 19.

7 A more personal and experiential reason to justify choosing Smail needs to be acknowledged as well. Not only was he a Scottish church minister at the time he encountered the CRM but, despite never meeting him, I am somewhat indebted to him for his involvement in the moment of the Rev David Black's baptism in the Holy Spirit in his Bishopbriggs, Glasgow manse in 1965. Black, whose ministry I sat under in Bishopbriggs and later in Lanark during my teenage and twenty-something years in the 1980s and 90s, was a Scottish baptist minister who became one of the central leaders of the Scottish CRM. Given the experiential and phenomenological nature of charismatic Christianity, these personal connections and similarities can be valuable source material for the tapestry of theological formation. For an in-depth account of the life and ministry of David Black after receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit through the prayers of Tom Smail and Douglas McBain, see Alasdair Black, "*Pour out Your Spirit*: Experiences of the Holy Spirit amongst Scottish Baptists in the Twentieth Century," in *A Distinctive People: A Thematic Study of Aspects of the Witness of Baptists in Scotland in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Brian R. Talbot. (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2014), pp. 151-177.

8 Mark J. Cartledge, "*Theological Renewal* (1975-1963): Listening to an Editor's Agenda for Church and Academy," *PNEUMA: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 30 (2008): 83-107.

way to the CRM and demonology.[9] Of the three authors, each of whom went on to have prolific academic writing careers, it was Smail who had already seriously engaged with CRM theology, especially pneumatology and trinitarian theology, and continued to write on it after 1995.[10]

Before 1995, Smail's trilogy on the Holy Spirit established him as a key theologian of the CRM in the UK. In *Reflected Glory* he juxtaposes his personal experience of the Holy Spirit with his theological worldview and produces a theological understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit in Christ and Christians. In *The Forgotten Father*, after moving from the Church of Scotland to the Anglican church, he offers a theological critique of the CRM while maintaining the claim that the only hope for the future of the church is to be renewed by the Holy Spirit. Thirdly, in *The Giving Gift* Smail desires to help charismatic Christians get anchored in good trinitarian theology and so he explores the personhood of the Holy Spirit and his place within the Trinity. Moreover, between 1975 and 1983 Smail was the editor of the *Theological Renewal* journal, and it was during this tenure as editor that, according to Cartledge, he wrote numerous editorials and articles, which clearly delineated a vision for a CRM theology, and cemented Smail's position as a key source for future academic theology from a charismatic and pentecostal perspective.

In his *PNEUMA* article, Cartledge claims that Smail successfully explicates a theology of renewal that has a trinitarian structure and christological focus, and therefore can potentially engage with both the academy and the church. Unfortunately, Smail stepped down as editor in 1983 due to his disillusionment that neither the church nor academy was willing to engage with the articulated renewal theology agenda. Indeed, notes Cartledge, such was the gulf that existed between academic theology and living faith in the church, that it was to the detriment of both if the chasm was not bridged, hence the *raison d'etre* of *Theological Renewal*.[11]

Cartledge concludes that notwithstanding the disappointment felt by Smail in 1983, the corpus of theological material produced by the *Theo-*

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[9] Tom Smail, Andrew Walker and Nigel Wright, *Charismatic Renewal: The Search for a Theology* (London: SPCK, 1995), pp. 47-130.

[10] His 'trilogy of pneumatology' books written before 1995 are Thomas A. Smail, *Reflected Glory: The Spirit in Christ and Christians* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1975); Thomas A. Smail, *The Forgotten Father* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1980); and Thomas A. Smail, *The Giving Gift: The Holy Spirit in Person* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1994). Then 10 years after the publishing of *Charismatic Renewal*, Tom Smail, *Like Father Like Son: The Trinity Imaged in our Humanity* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2005) was published, as well as other books.

[11] Cartledge, "*Theological Renewal*," pp. 84-86.

logical Renewal journal contains ideas and constructs that could easily be imbibed into today's charismatic and pentecostal academic theology and integrated into church discussions on the *Missio Dei*, especially the role of the Holy Spirit as, to use Taylor's well-used term, the Go-Between God who relates the living Christ to the people of God and vice versa.[12] This is especially the case when we narrow our attention to the previously mentioned pejorative subject matter, that of the abuse of leadership and authority historically associated with the CRM, especially since, as mentioned above, there is no shortage of proof that it continues to this day. As Cartledge notes, Smail prefers to refer to an experience of the Holy Spirit as the 'eventfulness of God' in order to stress the objective work of the Spirit instead of obsessing on the associated feelings and emotions. If the eventfulness of God in the work of the Holy Spirit is embedded within a church's ecclesiology then this will, so Smail argues, go a considerable way towards jettisoning any need to reduce church leadership to legalism, authoritarianism or structures of submission. Instead, spiritual authority within church life will not rest upon a charismatic, institutionalised office but on the action of the kenotic Holy Spirit of God as he seeks to impart various gifts and ministries to those who desire to serve as leaders in order to 'equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.' (Eph 4:12).[13]

One central way to frame the work of the Holy Spirit as the eventfulness of God, claims Smail, is to replace the often central pentecostal model of renewal with the paschal model, which in turn alters focus away from power associated with Pentecost towards the Spirit's role in the cross of Christ and the suffering involved.[14] As Smail asserts, quoting Mother Basileia Schlink, 'all the gifts of the Spirit are marked with the sign of the cross.'[15] Situating all works of the Spirit within a paschal model will ensure that any CRM church does not root itself immutably in Luther's *theologia gloriae* while burying and ignoring *theologia crucis*, and also serve as the ideal antidote against any monarchical triumphalism that can often emerge in church cultures that contain an unspoken belief in the

12 John V. Taylor, *The Go-Between God: The Holy Spirit & The Christian Mission* (London: SCM Press, 1972).

13 Cartledge, "*Theological Renewal*," pp. 91-92.

14 Tom Smail, Andrew Walker and Nigel Wright, *The Love of Power or the Power of Love: A Careful Assessment of the Problems Within the Charismatic and Word-of-Faith Movements* (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1994), pp. 20-26.

15 Smail, Walker and Wright, *The Love of Power*, p. 35.

superiority of those who have experienced the second stage 'filling of the Spirit.'[16]

Indeed, such has been the significant subordination of normal graces and gifting to the more extravagant and manifestation gifts of the Spirit, that there has been the need to create 'safe spaces' in CRM churches that are lead by appropriate charismatic church leaders who are solidly anchored in the Christian tradition. For it is when the exercising of the gifts of the Spirit are cut loose from the moorings of Christian tradition that too often language of power and submission materialise, and a culture of unquestioning obedience can thrive in which any challenging enquiry is rebutted with an erroneously overused biblical injunction, first Chronicles chapter 16, verse 22 that commands 'touch not mine anointed.'[17] However, with all that said, Smail reminds us the same Holy Spirit of the paschal model is still at work and so what is needed is a form of trinitarian renewal imbued with the Holy Spirit as humble intercessor.[18] To aid with that renewal, let us now turn to Fiddes in interlocution with Smail.

'PERSONS-AS-RELATIONS' TRINITARIAN DOCTRINE

Following his engagement with the working group report of the Baptist Union of Great Britain into the CRM, Fiddes picks up and develops his concern that in the 1980s there seems to be a moving away from charisms and spiritual renewal to matters of spiritual authority within the emerging theology of the CRM and this consequently raises questions about what view of the Holy Spirit is being advocated and is there a developing theology of submission to the Holy Spirit?[19] In a book chapter on the theology of the CRM, in which he often engages with Smail's 1975 text *Reflected Glory*, Fiddes notes that there is a strong mood of submission to leadership in the CRM which can lead to anti-intellectualism, political passivity and authoritarianism in church and family.[20] One reason for why this is the case, proffers Fiddes, is the popular concept of a God who

16 Smail, Walker and Wright, *The Love of Power*, pp. 26-33.

17 Smail, Walker and Wright, *The Love of Power*, p. 91.

18 Smail, Walker and Wright, *Charismatic Renewal*, pp. 114, 165.

19 Fiddes, "The Theology of," pp. 19-21.

20 Despite differences in the overall target, there is significant overlap of Fiddes' concerns about a hierarchy of submission with Smail's criticism of 'second blessing theology' of Pentecostalism which creates a league table of both spiritual gifts and those operating in them. Rather, claims Smail, the role of the Holy Spirit, as stated by Paul in 2 Cor 3:18, is to lead us to Christ and transform us into the image of Christ. See Smail, *Reflected Glory*, pp. 11-50.

operates as absolute ruler and dominates creation through his Spirit using a mode of command-control. However, argues Fiddes, any theology of submission to the divine has to be held up against the cross and the incarnation, both of which clearly demonstrate that God 'submits to the conditions of this world, and freely experiences suffering and limitation.'[21] Indeed, following some affirmative hints that exist within the emerging theology literature of the CRM that the Spirit of God has an unobtrusive and anonymous nature, what needs expounded is a theology of the kenosis of the Spirit - to use H. Wheeler Robinson's term - which accentuates the humility of the Spirit of God and draws on the loving persuasion of the Spirit, not his dominating power.[22]

Therefore, to develop and articulate a robust theology of the kenosis of the Holy Spirit - something Smail never does in his writings - it needs to be situated and undergirded by a contemporary doctrine of the Trinity, one which serves as the ideal antidote to any monarchical image of God who solely requires submission.[23] This account is best delineated, argues Fiddes, within a panentheistic framework in which God's triune nature and character is described in terms of personhood, relations, participation and a perichoretic inter-penetration both within God himself and between God and creation. While the early church theologians managed to find language that expressed the oneness and diversity of God, as well as the distinctness of persons in the Trinity and the freedom of both divine and human persons, there is still a need to go further.[24]

In contrast, however, Smail disagrees with this need to go further and also the insistence that the best corrective to assumed church hierarchies is found only within a panentheistic framework. He thinks that the early Church Fathers are sufficient enough. Following Moltmann, Smail advocates a more eastward move, arriving at the Cappadocian emphasis upon the personhood of the Holy Spirit from which the diversity in the unity of the triune God can be developed. Key to this development is a definition of divine unity as perichoresis, a self-giving love from and for each divine person of such intensity that one hypostasis mediates the immediate presence of the other. The influence of the Cappadocian Fathers creates a better platform from which to develop a definition of the Trinity as

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21 Fiddes, "The Theology of," p. 37.

22 Fiddes, "The Theology of," pp. 32-38.

23 Fretheim laments that the western Christian church has relied on monarchical images of dominance and masculine power for too long. Terence E. Fretheim, *The Suffering of God: An Old Testament Perspective* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), xiii-xvi.

24 Paul S. Fiddes, *Participating in God: A Pastoral Doctrine of the Trinity* (London: Darton, Longman, & Todd, 2000), pp. 13-16.

'persons *in* relations' (not persons *as* relations - see below) that could be used to theologically explore other inter-human relationships.[25]

Notwithstanding Smail's counter ideas, Fiddes avers that participation in the relations of the Trinity is the way forward since the idea of 'participation' treats the triune relationships very seriously,[26] and so he promulgates what he claims to be his *unique* contribution to trinitarian theology, which is to define the Trinity as 'persons-as-relations',[27] a definition that ungirds his panentheistic vision of God.[28] Subsequently, his panentheistic doctrine of participating in God using a persons-as-relations trinitarian definition permeates the entire substantial corpus of his work in systematic theology, as well as his theological insights from literature, and baptist and ecumenical ecclesiology.[29] In past debates while

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25 Smail, *Like Father*, pp. 66-107. From this, and at definite odds with Fiddes, Smail develops this perichoretic understanding of the triune God within functionally distinctive actions of the divine persons: The Father sovereignly initiates; the Son obediently executes; and the Holy Spirit creatively fulfils. Thomas A. Smail, "Tom Smail Meditates on Trinitarian Atonement," *Stimulus* 15.2 (May 2007): 44.

26 Fiddes, *Participating in God*, pp. 11-13.

27 Paul Fiddes, personal communication with the author, 15 & 16 March 2016. Of course, Fiddes is aware that this language comes from Augustine and Aquinas. His claim of uniqueness lies in taking an extra step beyond 'subsistent relations' and using radical language that talks about the "event of relationships," which is the best language of participation. Paul S. Fiddes, "Participating in the Trinity," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 33.3 (2006): 379-383.

28 Participation in the 'relations,' not persons, of the Trinity is arguably the unique, centripetal idea of Fiddes to which all his theology migrates. Paul S. Fiddes, "Creation Out of Love," in *The Work of Love: Creation as Kenosis*, ed. J. Polkinghorne. (London: SPCK, 2001), pp. 184-191; Paul S. Fiddes, "The quest for a place which is not-a-place: the hiddenness of God and the presence of God," in *Silence and the Word: Negative Theology and Incarnation*, eds. O. Davies and D. Turner. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 51-55; Fiddes, "Participating in," pp. 375-391.

29 A selection of his work in the three areas of research where this is the case includes Paul S. Fiddes, "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit": The Triune Creator in Hymn and Theology," in *Gathering Disciples. Essays in Honour of Christopher J. Ellis*, eds. Myra Blyth and Andy Goodliff. (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2017), pp. 207-210; Paul S. Fiddes, "Concept, Image and Story in Systematic Theology," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 11.1 (2009): 22-23; Paul S. Fiddes, "The Late-Modern Reversal of Spirit and Letter: Derrida, Augustine and Film," in *The Spirit and the Letter: A Tradition and a Reversal*, eds. Günter Badder and Paul S. Fiddes. (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp. 124-130; Paul S. Fiddes, "Not Anarchy but Covenant: A Nonconformist Response to Matthew

depicting his persons-as-relations doctrine, Fiddes claims that not only is this the most appropriate language that we have to speak of the persons of the Trinity, but it is also methodologically sound,[30] uses the majority of theological sources, and was the approach of the early Church Fathers who defined hypostasis relationally, not objectively.[31] Moreover, relations language offers the best analogy for God-speech and it also helps us understand Rahner's rule by finding a concept of the divine that expresses

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Arnold's view of Religion and Culture," in *Theology and Human Flourishing: Essays in Honor of Timothy J. Gorringe*, eds. Mike Higton, Jeremy Law and Christopher Rowland. (Eugene: Cascade, 2011), pp. 147-155; Paul S. Fiddes, "Attending to the Sublime and the Beautiful: Theological Reflection on Iris Murdoch and Emmanuel Levinas," in *Theology of Beauty*, eds. Alexei Bodrov and Michael Tolstoluzhenko. (Moscow: St Andrew's Press, 2013), pp. 83-85; Paul S. Fiddes, "The Church and Salvation: A Comparison of Orthodox and Baptist Thinking," in *Ecumenism and History: Studies in Honour of John H. Y. Briggs*, ed. Anthony R. Cross. (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2002), pp. 143-148; Paul S. Fiddes, "The Church Local and Universal: Catholic and Baptist Perspectives on *Koinonia* Ecclesiology," in *Revisioning, Renewing, Rediscovering the Triune Center: Essays in Honor of Stanley J. Grenz*, eds. Derek J. Tidball, Brian S. Harris and Jason S. Sexton. (Eugene: Cascade, 2014), pp. 97-108; Paul S. Fiddes, "Koinonia Ecclesiology among Roman Catholics and Baptists: Hermeneutics, Perichoresis and Personhood," *Pages* (The Journal of St. Andrew's Biblical Theological Institute) 18/2 (2014): 250-253, 262-265.

30 McCall is critical of Fiddes' notion of relationality without involving language of persons. It jettisons classic Christology and embraces degree Christology. Thomas H. McCall, "Response to Paul S. Fiddes," in *Two Views on the Doctrine of the Trinity*, ed. Jason Sexton. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), pp. 197-203. Fiddes' rejoinder is that all human language falls short and that our own human experiences of living in relations with others can be seen to reflect and participate in the relations in God. Paul S. Fiddes, "Rejoinder Comments and Clarification," in *Two Views on the Doctrine of the Trinity*, ed. Jason Sexton. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), pp. 205-206. On degree Christology, Fiddes remains ambiguous. See Paul S. Fiddes, review of *Christology in Conflict. The Identity of a Saviour in Rahner and Barth* by Bruce Marshall. *Journal of Theological Studies* 40/2 (1989): 700-703.

31 Holmes disagrees, claiming that the Eastern Fathers were committed to divine simplicity more than Fiddes acknowledges and that the concept of 'relations' does not connect to the idea of personhood, as claimed by Fiddes. Stephen R. Holmes, "Response to Paul S. Fiddes," in *Two Views on the Doctrine of the Trinity*, ed. Jason Sexton. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), pp. 188-190. For a sustained defence of his first rebuttal point, see Stephen R. Holmes, *The Holy Trinity: Understanding God's Life* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2012), pp. 97-120.

the relational experience of persons and helps us understand our participation in the triune God.[32]

Locating humanity's relational and participatory experiences within the relations of the triune God, means that, according to Fiddes, 'An "event of relationships" is a participatory concept that makes sense only in actual life events. This does not replace revelation with human experience, but locates the self-disclosure of God where God wants to be.'[33] Indeed, using personal language rooted in pastoral experience can significantly aid humanity to understand its relations both with God and with each other. Participative language is not subservient to analogic language proper, but rather an appropriate image for the personalness of God.[34]

Yet, Smail's understanding of the Trinity as a participatory idea suggests that moving the focus away from the triune persons by defining the Trinity as an event of relationships is a step too far and not needed in order to preserve triune unity in diversity and offer antidote options that oppose any default theology of submission necessarily developing in churches. All believers participate through the Holy Spirit in the relationship between the Father and Son within the context of divine purpose for the whole of creation,[35] and this is especially realised participating in the Spirit of God as he creates *koinonia*, vertically with the Father and horizontally with each other. This *koinonia* is nothing less than the participation of human persons in the life of the incarnate Son by which we grow in Christ's image,[36] an image of service and kenosis.

Despite Smail's plausible counter-proposal, Fiddes also insists that if we view God as an event of relationships grounded in the language of participation, then this can, enable us to retain the Thomistic language of 'subsistent relations' so long as we raise our gaze to a 'third level of meaning': that God's relations are as ontic and real as that which is either created or uncreated and their ground of existence lies within themselves.[37] This understanding is what sets the foundation for a so-called 'radical'

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32 Fiddes, *Participating in God*, pp. 34-46, cf. Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, trans. Joseph Donceel (Tunbridge Wells: Burns & Oats, 1970), p. 22.

33 Paul S. Fiddes, "Relational Trinity: Radical Perspective," in *Two Views on the Doctrine of the Trinity*, ed. Jason Sexton. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), p. 185.

34 Fiddes, *Participating in God*, pp. 28-33.

35 Smail, *The Forgotten*, pp. 174-184.

36 Smail, *The Giving Gift*, pp. 182-198.

37 Fiddes, *Participating in God*, pp. 34-46.

trinitarian model,[38] one that consists of genuine perichoresis thereby mirroring Jesus' high priestly prayer in John 17:21.[39]

Proffering this social, perichoretic, panentheistic understanding of the Trinity that *actually* places human beings in participation with the relations of the Godhead also has, so argues Fiddes, a number of significant advantages that offer solutions to the above-mentioned problems of authoritarianism, submission, hubris, and abuse connected with the CRM in recent times. To begin, as already briefly mentioned, it strongly counters images of dominance, power and monarchical superiority that have lead to subordination and abuse.[40] The divine dance that emphasises interpenetration and focus on the movements, not the dancers, removes the domination of the Father, which has so often been used to justify oppression.[41] It throws open relational language allowing us to talk about a motherly father or fatherly mother which, without undermining, brings equality to our understanding of the Trinity.[42] Crucially, this egalitarian dance flattens out authority structures within the church and redefines authority in terms of kenotic, humble service as modelled by Jesus in John 13. Vicious cycles of domination, power-plays and scapegoating cease when we focus on our participation in the Trinity and the completeness of fellowship we have with the triune God.[43]

Smail, on the other hand, argues conversely that egalitarian trinitarian theology will not deliver us from human authoritarianism and hubris but rather a rediscovery and knowledge of the Father, along with the associated divine authority, is needed to spare us from the spiritual domination and arrogance as sometimes found in the CRM.[44] Indeed, the best antidote to the tendency to project fallen human fatherhood onto the Father is to view God's fatherhood in connection to his Son, as this will

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38 A model that has come in for significant criticism in recent years. Holmes, "Response," 186-190; Paul D. Molnar, "Response to Paul S. Fiddes," in *Two Views on the Doctrine of the Trinity*, ed. Jason Sexton. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), pp. 191-196; McCall, "Response," pp. 197-203.

39 Fiddes, *Participating in God*, pp. 46-56.

40 Fiddes, *Participating in God*, pp. 62-71.

41 While on the surface this comment seems very similar to Moltmann, Fiddes arrives at it via a different route. Moltmann's account relies heavily on the German writer Erik Peterson, and this reliance has in recent times been fairly comprehensively discredited. See Randall Otto, "Moltmann and the Anti-Monotheism Movement," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 3.3 (2001): 293-308.

42 Fiddes, *Participating in God*, pp. 71-96.

43 Fiddes, *Participating in God*, pp. 96-108.

44 Smail, *The Forgotten*, pp. 11-29.

remove any sexism in the picture and prevent any development of a patriarchal, authoritarian image.[45] Moreover, in contradistinction to Fiddes' emphasis upon relations, Smail presents the Spirit as 'differently personal' to the Father and the Son in that everything the Spirit does points away from himself to the Father and Son thereby reinforcing the functional hierarchy within the Trinity. By maintaining this distinction, especially between the Son and the Spirit, the separation of grace and freedom is perpetuated and this, so argues Smail, goes a long way to prevent two common extremes in the church that lead to a mis-grounding of authority: christological heteronomy and autonomous subjectivism. The former, which is common in evangelicalism, sees Christ as the questioner and the answer imposes upon humans an external imposition that can lead to authoritarianism. The latter places the source of authority in ourselves, not in God. Both displace the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of God and Christ and through whom we gain freedom when the Spirit frees us to confess the Son.[46]

However, in returning to Fiddes, when it comes to hurts and brokenness caused by church leadership hubris and spiritual abuse, *actual* participating in God's relational movements of love radically potentiates the practise of forgiveness and possible reconciliation. Forgiveness is, attests Fiddes, a two-stage journey: a journey of discovery and a journey of endurance and anguish, both of which are journeys into God himself since Christ modelled them in his declaration of forgiveness from the cross (Luke 23:34) and subsequent death.[47] Forgiveness defined this way seeks to win the offender back into relationship and in the process overcome hostility, anxiety and self-indulgence.[48]

Further, locating the journey of forgiveness and reconciliation in the participatory relations of the triune God means that when we forgive, we are actually partaking in the divine rhythms of the forgiveness of God. Also, notwithstanding the probable criticism by those working in abuse counselling, movements of forgiving which participate in the divine dance of forgiveness enable us, like Jesus, to pronounce and release unconditional forgiveness on people *before* they repent or even when there is no intention to apologise or repent, in order to unlock hatred and hopefully bring them back into full relationship through reconciliation.[49] If this does not work, suggests Fiddes following Derrida and Ricoeur, then

45 Smail, *The Forgotten*, pp. 48-66.
46 Smail, *The Giving Gift*, pp. 56-88.
47 Fiddes, *Participating in God*, pp. 191-210.
48 Fiddes, *Participating in God*, pp. 192-197.
49 Fiddes, *Participating in God*, pp. 215-220.

with God's enabling grace, radical forgetting or memory locking will be appropriate.[50]

In terms of a trinitarian pneumatology, Fiddes argues that when articulating divine perichoresis, that divine dance within God himself and between God and creation, the Holy Spirit of God should receive greater recognition than historically has been the case. While acknowledging some ambiguity as to the anonymity and self-effacing nature of the Spirit, it is imperative to see the Spirit as a distinct mover within the triune God whose movement is represented through Old Testament images of fire, water, oil and wings.[51] Juxtaposing East and West Spirit traditions also creates the understanding of the Spirit as a *disturber*, disturbing the relationship and common life between the Father and Son, resulting in life and love constantly being renewed. Pertinently, a creation-ward movement of the Spirit also creates spiritual gifts; gifts that should be fundamentally viewed as coming from the being of God, kenotic in nature, and therefore not to be used as spiritual collateral in order to dominate while subordinating other gifts and persons.[52]

Smail, of course, agrees with Fiddes' main point of not using spiritual gifts for subordination but reaches this same conclusion via a different route. Instead of viewing the Holy Spirit as a disturber, Smail proposes framing the Spirit as the ultimate life giver who gives life to humans through responsiveness, purposefulness and, most crucially, creativity.[53] He is the Spirit of the new thing, the future of renewal and creativity, and his triune distinctiveness lies in perfecting creativity that, as noted above,[54]

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50 Paul S. Fiddes, "Memory, Forgetting and the Problem of Forgiveness: Reflecting on Volf, Derrida and Ricoeur," in *Forgiving and Forgetting. At the Margins of Soteriology*. Series: *Religion in Philosophy and Theology*, eds. Johannes Zacchuber and Hartmut Von Sass. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), pp. 130-133. Fiddes has embarked upon further original work locating the Mennonite practise of 'restorative justice,' which is currently sometimes used in the British criminal justice system, within the panentheistic movements of participation in the divine. See Paul S. Fiddes, "Restorative Justice and the Theological Dynamic of Forgiveness," *Oxford Journal of Law and Religion* (2015): 1-12.

51 Fiddes, *Participating in God*, pp. 251-264. Elsewhere Fiddes claims that through the same images we understand the relations of eternal generation and movements of self-giving. Fiddes, "The quest for a place," pp. 51-55.

52 Fiddes, *Participating in God*, pp. 264-274; Fiddes, "The Theology of," pp. 32-38; Fiddes' focus on the presence of the Spirit in the world and his kenotic reality may have come from Moltmann. Paul S. Fiddes, "A Review of 'God in Creation. An Ecological Doctrine of Creation' by Jürgen Moltmann," *Journal of Theological Studies* 38/1 (1987): 262-265.

53 Smail, *The Giving Gift*, pp. 166-181.

54 See above, p. 7 fn.25.

flows from the Father's sovereign, initiating love and the Son's freely obedient love. Human life is genuinely possible 'when it is free to be initiating in the image of the Father, when it is free to be responsive to claims of others in the image of the Son, and when it works on what it inherits with a dynamic creativity that reflects the Holy Spirit.'[55] This perfecting creativity of the Spirit that disseminates gifts (both *charismata* and *doma*) to christian believers will best protect against any threatening authoritarianism and subordination when situated, as already mentioned,[56] within the vertical and horizontal koinonia with the Father and each other, since this koinonia is nothing less than participation in the triune God and the centring of relationships which counters any emerging individualistic independence that could give rise to spiritual hierarchy and domination.[57]

CONCLUSION

In this paper what has been proffered is a participatory and perichoretic doctrine of the Trinity which is a suitable to ground what Smail has labelled a 'trinitarian renewal,' a renewal in which the experienced power and love of the Holy Spirit remains integral to the local church's ministry and mission, but without the often-associated realities of submission and authoritarianism. By presenting Fiddes' 'persons-as-relations' account with interlocution from Smail, two slightly variant versions of the doctrine have emerged. For those comfortable with the 'radical' approach of Fiddes which accentuates the panentheistic ontology of God, the kenotic nature of the Holy Spirit (not just the Son), and focusses more upon the relations within the Trinity than the three hypostases, then Fiddes' account should be applied to the theology, life and ministry of the local church. For the healing and life-giving properties of the divine relations will undermine and repair past relational abuses of former CRM pentecostal models while enabling a local church to preserve the presence, power and ministry of the Holy Spirit in and through all pastoral work and mission in its local context.

However, for those like other interlocutors of Fiddes who think that his labelled 'radical' model goes too far and deviates from the tradition,[58] Smail's variant account could be adopted for church ecclesiology and theology. Without the undergirding of Fiddes' somewhat inimitable commitments, Smail presents a doctrine of the Trinity that consists of a participa-

55 Smail, *Like Father*, p. 200.

56 See above, p. 10.

57 Smail, *The Giving Gift*, pp. 182-198; Smail, *Like Father*, pp. 270-295.

58 Holmes, "Response," pp. 186-190; Molnar, "Response," pp. 191-196; McCall, "Response," pp. 197-203.

tion of creation as well as a perichoretic, interpenetrative movements of the persons of the Trinity. Adhering to the functional hierarchy between the three hypostases outlined by Jesus in John chapters 14-16, Smail articulates a model that undermines projection of fallen, human fatherhood onto the Father and replaces pneumatology based on power with a paschal model of the Holy Spirit which is rooted in the suffering of Christ. Both these account accents negate pejorative trinitarian elements that can be used to forge a context and culture of submission and subjugation in church life and ministry.

Overall, that which unites Fiddes and Smail's accounts is greater than that which divides them, for both ultimately explore the Father and the Spirit in relation to the Son. For Fiddes, his trinitarian doctrine's starting point of extrapolation is the kenotic, crucified Christ at the moment of his dereliction cry (Matt 27:46) whereas for Smail it is the obedient Christ into whose image all believers are to grow. The end point of both approaches is believers who are rooted in and in union with Christ, the Son whose nature and character is intrinsically *kenotic* with absolutely no desire to procure equality with God for the sake of self-aggrandisement. To ground all spiritual leadership and expressions of the Holy Spirit in either version would create a church culture and sociology into which hierarchy, submission and domination would be hard pressed to take root and grow.

The Return of the Kingdom: A Biblical Theology of God's Reign. By Stephen G. Dempster. Downer's Grove: IVP Academic, 2024. Pp. 220. $34.95.

In his latest book, Stephen Dempster, now emeritus professor of religious studies at Crandall University, has sought to provide an essential component on the nature of the Kingdom of God for IVP Academic's 'Essential Studies in Biblical Theology' series. As the series' aim is to provide 'an accessible introduction to core biblical-theological themes of the Bible' (p. x), Dempster assumes the unenviable task of tracing the concept of the Kingdom of God in just over two hundred pages. He pursues this task by focussing on humanity's role as viceregents in God's creation, set apart as 'royal representatives, called as God's image bearers to extend the divine rule in his vast creation, to have dominion over it for the glory of God.' (p. 2)

The book's structure is largely canonical, tracing the theme of humanity's role in the unfolding Kingdom of God throughout the biblical narrative. Given Dempster's core argument, the Genesis account looms large, indeed the first nine chapters cover the Pentateuch alone. The depth of enquiry provides space for interesting observations. For instance, he highlights the kingly role evident in Adam's charge to care for the garden of Eden as indicative of the responsibility of kings, arguing that 'not only were kings to exercise their power by military conquest but also by farming and cultivation near their palaces.' (p. 23) From the Garden of Eden narrative, Dempster sets in motion an almost Augustinian contrast between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of the Serpent, demonstrating Israel's continual inability to consistently model the Kingdom of God as a nation. The final chapters, including one dedicated solely to Matthew's Gospel, show just how the return of the King ushers in *The Return of the Kingdom*. Dempster makes good use of Scripture in this text, exploring obvious connections while also including more obscure passages. He makes reference to many expected scholars, including Graeme Goldsworthy, Walter Moberly and T. Desmond Alexander, while also including the occasional reference to more popular fare such as a sermon by the late Tim Keller.

To my mind, the book's key strengths are often evident in some of the more peripheral sections, such as his purposeful inclusion of Old Testament women in the Kingdom narrative. These sections sometimes feel like asides, trimmings from a more academic volume, but they serve to deepen and enliven the text. As for potential shortcomings, Dempster—a Hebrew Bible scholar—understandably spends nearly seventy-five per

cent of the text in the Old Testament. It would have been preferable to have seen a bit more engagement with the New Testament. Further, while this text is certainly in the genre of biblical theology, it would have benefitted from some interaction with (or even mention of) broader studies on the Kingdom of God from the wider world of systematic theology or philosophy. Readers unaware of, say, Jürgen Moltmann, Wolfhart Pannenberg, or James K. A. Smith will not find reference to their works here, and that seems like a missed opportunity.

In all, however, these are minor quibbles in what is paradoxically an expansive but concise book about an equally expansive but concise subject. Dempster's choice to include study questions at the end of each chapter suggests that the book may be intended for a more lay audience, though I suspect it will find its natural home as an introductory text for undergraduate theology students. In *The Return of the Kingdom* we don't have a ground-breaking, novel approach to the subject, but instead a well-versed introduction to an important subject, and to that end Dempster serves as a helpful guide.

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The Historical Depth of the Tiberian Reading Tradition of Biblical Hebrew. By Aaron D. Hornkohl. Cambridge Semitic Languages and Cultures 17. Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2023. 539pp. £33.95.

Hornkohl teaches ancient and modern Hebrew at the University of Cambridge researching broadly aspects of ancient Hebrew philology and linguistics with a focus on diachronic analysis of ancient Hebrew (e.g., see Hornkohl, *Ancient Hebrew Periodization and the Language of the Book of Jeremiah: The Case for a Sixth-century Date of Composition*. Leiden: Brill, 2013). This book is intended for the advanced student as it assumes knowledge of Hebrew and often discusses the earliest versions and translations of the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Greek, Aramaic *Targumim*, Syriac, and Latin). Those interested in ancient Hebrew philology and linguistics, Tiberian Hebrew phonology, textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible, the Qumran scrolls, Masoretic studies, and manuscript studies of the Hebrew Bible will find much of value.

In this monograph, Hornkohl examines incongruities between the Tiberian written and oral traditions that are not specifically noted as a *kethiv/qere* variant by the Masoretes nor is it discussed in medieval masoretic treaties. The written biblical text often assumes a pronunciation that differs from the oral tradition actually placed over the consonantal text. Hornkohl demonstrates that the differences between the written and reading traditions are each an ancient linguistic relic. The oral tradition

does not spring from the minds of the Masoretes, but usually has a linguistic predecessor in ancient Hebrew though it is only rarely attested. He seeks to illustrate the discrepancy between the written and oral Tiberian tradition as well as the historical depth of each tradition. Both traditions are ancient and composed of multiple linguistic layers (pp. 15-16, 478). The oral tradition represents Hebrew which cannot be later than the Second Temple period and its developments are already reflected in epigraphic Hebrew and Classical Biblical Hebrew (CBH). Thus, Hornkohl demonstrates that the differences between the oral and written Tiberian tradition embody a significant linguistic artefact.

Hornkohl divides his material into two parts. The first section deals with conscious, often theologically motivated, replacement of material by those active in the text (e.g., the tradition of reading *ʾădōnāy* "my Lord" or *ʾĕlōhîm* "God" instead of the divine name *yāhwĕh*). While the changes are secondary, he convincingly demonstrates that there is often historical precedence for such a reading. For example, the practice of not reading *yāhwĕh* appears to have a precursor in the Dead Sea Scrolls where *yāhwĕh* is replaced by dots (4Q196 f 18.15 on p. 47). He entertains the possibility that this practice of substituting a lexeme for *yāhwĕh* might even be present in the so-called Elohistic Psalter (Pss 42-83) or the Elohist source of the Pentateuch (p. 52). By implication, a conscious variation in the oral tradition is not necessarily a creation of the medieval scribal mind but has roots in the written and oral textual tradition of other stages of Hebrew. The second part of the volume deals with linguistic developments in phonology, morphology, and morphosyntax within Hebrew which results in different linguistic layers in the biblical text. For example, the 2ms ending *-āk* appears most commonly in the MT while *-kâ* also appears. These are different phonetic realisations instead of both reflecting a pronunciation of *-kɑ̄* . The Tiberian pronunciation implies a vowel final rendering which is significantly attested in the Second Temple period and to a much lesser extent in the First Temple period, while the Masoretic consonantal text probably represents a consonantal final form (pp. 101-144).

The nature of other divergent linguistic aspects in the text is not as easily ascertained. For example, the syntagm *ṭerem* + *yiṭqôl* appears most often in the Hebrew Bible while the syntagm *ṭerem* + *qātal* becomes prominent in the Second Temple period. There are, however, a few cases of *ṭerem* + *qātal* in the Hebrew Bible. Of these cases, 1 Sam 3:7 appears to be secondary as it is contextually probable that an original *ṭerem* + *yiṭqôl* has been reanalysed by scribes in accord with Second Temple syntax to become *ṭerem* + *qātal*. A few cases, however, namely Prov 8:25 and Gen 24:15 (pp. 337-342), appear to use *ṭerem* + *qātal* as a viable, active syntactic

feature of First Temple Hebrew. This is an illustration of the depth of both the written and oral features in the Tiberian Hebrew text.

Throughout this volume, Hornkohl is judicious and examines all sides of the linguistic issue while refraining from unnecessarily bold conclusions. Hornkohl's presentation advances the discussion while challenging Hebraists, text critics, and biblical scholars alike to rethink their previous positions. The main goal of the book is to demonstrate that most elements of dissonance between the consonantal and oral Tiberian tradition in the MT evidence secondary developments in line with Second Temple Hebrew while having linguistic precursors. Hornkohl's volume makes several contributions. First, there are inharmonious elements in the Tiberian tradition beyond *kethiv/qere* (p. 9). Second, he notes that while secondary developments exist in the MT because of scribal updating according to Second Temple Hebrew phonology, morphology, and syntax, the pairing of the consonantal and oral traditions in most cases demonstrates the linguistic antiquity of the MT (pp. 14, 464). Third, while there is diversity and multiple linguistic layers in the MT (p. 478), these layers do not always correspond to previous understandings. For example, it seems possible from the few linguistic elements discussed to understand the Torah as written in a slightly older form of Hebrew than CBH (pp. 418-421, 472-474). Fourth, disharmonious elements are often juxtaposed, for example the relativising *ha-* with *Qal* participle and *Qal qātal* in Gen 46:26-27, which demonstrates that though scribal updating occurred in the MT it was not pervasively exercised. These juxtaposed textual oddities might "reflect some degree of genuine preservation" (p. 370).

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Bijbel met bijdragen over geloof, cultuur en wetenschap. By: K. van Bekkum, G. van den Brink, A.M. Schol-Wetter, A. Zwiep. Nederlands-Vlaams Bijbelgenootschap, Haarlem/Antwerpen, 2022. ISBN 9789089124128. 1667 pp. € 58.

The Preface by two of the editors (Van den Brink & Schol-Wetter) raises thoughtful questions. The bible can be read on its own terms. Yet there are many places where the content is too strange, and we want to resist reducing that strangeness it to its 'primitive' character. Now, is a work of art better for its being explained? Does one need to strike a balance between head and heart when it comes to responding to it? Furthermore, there are common life-questions that the bible raises, not least in the case of sacrificial offerings, where a bit of explanation can help. Not far underneath the instructions for the ancient practices lie questions and themes that are 'everyday' and this primarily hermeneutical in nature. This means one

has sometimes to deal with sensitive questions, but fundamentally the task is to supply information so the reader can decide. Natural science provides a particular challenge, although not all knowledge is natural scientific knowledge. There is not one only Biblical worldview, even if the seemingly generally accepted 'three-storey universe' is strange to us. But that is not the message, it's just the 'husk'. After all, God is often portrayed as accommodating to the times; we need to understand those times and cultures well, just as one places Jesus against Jewish background.

The text (beautifully reproduced) is that of the Dutch NBV21. In addition to this bible translation there are 20 'theme' articles (usually around 3 pages each); 50 topics (usually one page each); and 200 marginal explanations of 'key' bible texts—all offering a good impression of the sort of questions that might arise for modern people in reading the bible—and how to proceed. The normal setting for use would be the weekly bible study, and the questions and 'further reading' at the back of the book encourage this. However, outside church circles there may also be seekers looking for wisdom in the bible. Special thanks is offered to the *Vrije Univetsiteit* and the Templeton Foundation.

When one dives into the first few pages (Genesis), the first theme, perhaps interestingly is not 'natural creation' as such, but specifically 'the Image of God', whether that be defined as valuable, relational (so, Karl Barth) or functional. Connections are made between Gen 1:26 and Gen 9:8 as well as James 3:9: humans have not lost the image, but it is a challenge to act according to our seeing it reflected in others.

The fourth topic 'Transhumanism' is linked to Gen 6:1-4, but there are no more topics after that until we get to end of Genesis (50). There are two themes very early on: *God, mens en scheping* and *Onststaan en basis van de moral*—this seems more forward looking rather than related to early Genesis completely. In the latter 'theme' there is a use of Augustine: God is good so what he wills is good. Interestingly it is here suggested that the belief in the objectivity of moral rightness has made a reappearance in contemporary culture. In the past slavery could be considered 'good' even if system of slavery was not; but that seems unthinkable now. There might be some truth in the idea that we hold moral values, because they are favourable on evolutionary grounds, such that objective morality is and illusion; yet in principle and in practice that which is morally good can often be *opposed* to what seems evolutionary favourable. Perhaps the example given, that the bible forbids adultery even though it might mean more progeny, and hence 'survival' lies that way, seems not altogether convincing. For the biblical authors the fact remains that good and evil often divided sharply, often with the metaphor of light and darkness: this seems like a bit of an afterthought.

There are no topics on Exodus or themes—just as few 'explanations', as on 4:13-16 (Moses & Aaron); 9:12 (God hardening Pharaoh's heart); 14:22-23 (miraculous events); 20:5 –visiting sins to the fourth generation; and 22:17-19 (capital punishment –used to justify witch burning.) For Leviticus we get Lev 23's *lex talionis*, then comes the Jubilee Year of Lev 25,and after that Nu 16:27-33 collective responsibility. Opposite Deut 16 we have theme-articles titled 'Rein en onrein' (Pure and impure), followed immediately by one on Homosexuality. One might conclude that ethical matters takes priority, and that the Pentateuch being a combination of laws and moral stories, this shouldn't be surprising. If covenant and revelation and salvation-history are not to the fore, then perhaps that is because those things are less 'visible', and these annotations are about where the bible meets the world of three (not four) dimensions as it were.

And yet with the New Testament things can get metaphysical. With Jn 10:10 one might be encouraged to ask 'What is life?' The answer seems to want to avoid reductionism by showing the connection with Divine Life. So too with a consideration of the limits of materialism in the theme body and spirit ('lichaam en geest'). However, one would not expect the major contribution of John's gospel to be found in taking a verse like Jn13:16 ('a slave is not more than his master') to offer an opportunity to discuss 'Slavernij', then only to conclude that the bible is not very consistent on the matter. Then a short explanation on Jn 19:14-15 on Jews in John's gospel. Sometimes the choice of topic is refreshing, and can be justified by the aim of the project as a whole, as well as by the consideration that space requires selectivity, yet at other times there seem more obvious things crying out for explanation.

I turn to consider a few more obviously 'theological' themes and topics. On the theme 'Vrije: wil en determinisme' Dolf te Velde contributes a nice article. Accordingly, God's action includes and exceeds ours, and even through our poor choices God reaches his goal. Human freedom is made available through his Son, but to win that freedom in inner conflict (*Tweestrijd*) there is a need of a new heart for (the) good. To be human is to experience limitation but not determinism, and the heart can make the difference, so that there is really not much human freedom unless converted.

Arie Zwiep in his *De opstand van Jezus* observes that resurrection from the dead would have seemed very unusual in the Greek world, but that it *was* part of OT Jewish belief, part of an overall trust in God's faithfulness. Hence 1 Cor15:54 seems to rely on Ps110.1. As to whether the resurrection happened, well the narrators were not modern historians and had no principle of neutrality. We cannot get behind the 'big bang', so to speak, and we can only see the effects in the extent of the disciples' con-

viction about this. The phenomenological approach tests whether this is all reasonable: what can be investigated are beliefs and conceptions.

Kees van der Kooij in his topic-article *Het spreken van God* argues that the biblical God communicates more in actions, but he also uses speech-acts. Above all for John 1:14 Jesus is God's word, so we look at him to know the content of God's speech, just as God established it definitively. Nowadays, however, God continues to speak in a vast variety of ways. Marten Wisse adds a nice topic-article on *God en de wereld* with reference to Acts 17, and then to Eccl 5:1/Is40:25;17:28. (For some reason in the index it gets cross-referenced to Colossians 1:17.) He outlines the challenge of Spinoza then Hegel to the God-world distinction; one problem of this is that God becomes extension of our desires and powerplays.

The co-editor G. van den Brink contributes (inter alia) *Accomodatie* and *Het handelen von God*. God is portrayed in both testaments anthropomorphically, yet at the same time God is beyond form and is Other (holy). To hold these opposite emphases together means we are to grasp him in limited fashion; and to realise that God is not literally embodied. One might find helpful Calvin's image of the grandfather speaking baby language. One should not take biblical language too literally, otherwise there are 'unscientific' elements, for the mustard seed isn't the smallest of all. However, one should also remember that Calvin belonged to a long tradition of deprecating the affective, as did the Enlightenment in its own way in thinking that miracles must be for a credulous public. The heart of the gospel is that God did not appear as a human but became one. Jesus filled human description in with his life, in his performance to help one believe that God can change mind yet is dependable. And through him God shows us how to speak of him: it is God revealed in a human life. My conclusion: I could have read more of this!

There are quite a few treatments of biblical genres and a discussion of apocryphal writings. One senses overall a fundamental-theological approach to the bible by trying to give an account of what the biblical texts were trying to do and seeing to what extent they correspond or correlate to (spiritually open) modern people's experience.

Mark W. Elliott, Highland Theological College

The Augustine Way: Retrieving a Vision for the Church's Apologetic Witness. By Joshua D. Chatraw and Mark D. Allen. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2023. ISBN 978-1-5409-6248-5. x + 197 pp. £19.65.

As late modernity has continued to view the aesthetic and moral vision of Christianity as undesirable, Chatraw and Allen advocate for a new apologetic approach to address the complex intellectual and affective longings

of individuals in our world today. By this 'new' apologetic, however, the authors mean the retrieval of an old one, a model in the spirit of Augustine of Hippo that is pastorally sensitive and seeks to persuade the whole person within his or her cultural context of the truth, goodness, and beauty of the faith with the aim of winning souls to the City of God. *The Augustine Way* is no mere going back to the fifth century, but an attempt to 'place Augustine in our present age' (p. 1) to show how the North African bishop's manner of engaging unbelief in his context can inform the pastor-apologist's witness in a de-Christianizing West.

Chatraw and Allen present their case for a contemporary Augustinian apologetic in two parts. Part one, chapters one and two, explicates Augustine's apologetic witness within the context of his own life, ministry, and cultural situation, using it as a lens through which to critique contemporary methods of defending the Christian faith. Part two, chapters three through five, builds off this foundation to cast a positive apologetic posture for the present age. Central to this posture is its explicitly affective dimension. It entails a holistic anthropology, meaning Christians ought not to appeal to the unbeliever's abstract rationality but to the whole person whose reason is shaped by his or her cultural embeddedness (p. 37). It also includes the centrality of the church for apologetic witness, viewing the congregation's embodiment of the creation-fall-redemption-restoration paradigm as a means to form the apologist (p. 123) and invite the seeker to 'taste and see' (p. 98). In terms of practical engagement, this model follows Augustine's *City of God* by entering the unbeliever's world-and-life-view on its own terms, subverting its narrative from the inside (p. 154), and demonstrating not only the superiority of the redemptive story of Scripture but also how it is the true fulfilment of that person's deepest longings (p. 160).

The Augustine Way is a commendable work on multiple levels. For example, in critiquing modern evangelical apologetic methods for their overreliance on appeals to the intellect and failure to address the heart, the authors are careful not to overcorrect into anti-intellectualism and not to separate reason and desire as independent of each other. Rather Chatraw and Allen promote an intellectualism that speaks to the unbeliever's truth-seeking in a more holistic way, in a way that sees one's rational capacities not as cut off from the rest of the inner life, but as integrally connected to and springing forth from the heart. In rejecting a brain-on-stick account of anthropology, the authors urge the reader not to view appealing to unbelievers as desiring and worshiping creatures as an alternative approach to appealing to their reason, but rather to place the human person's rationality within its proper anthropological context. They insist, 'Augustine does not recommend fideism or reject rational

thinking. Rather, he puts forward a way that is properly rational' (p. 82). This 'properly rational' way, a way that recognizes the fact that 'an individual's aims impact their reasoning' (p. 54), is a useful balance between intellectualism and fideism. By viewing the desiring, loving, and worshiping heart as the source of reason, the authors successfully reject one unbalanced apologetic method without reverting into another one-sided model.

The centrality of the local church and the authors' vision of apologetics as a pastoral endeavour is another welcome distinctive of this text. While Chatraw and Allen do not write off the usefulness of philosophers and academics to address pressing questions (p. 65), their ecclesial approach to the discipline exhorts the reader to be grounded in the local church and its surrounding context 'in a way that keeps the apologist's feet on the ground and their eyes on the hearts of their community' (p. 66). This feature, coupled with their appeal to the formative nature of the church's liturgy as an apologetic (p. 98), helpfully grounds the discipline more tangibly within the practices of evangelism and discipleship and rightly sees the church, its worship, and ordinances as an indispensable means of appealing to the unbeliever and for the believer's perseverance (Heb. 10:25).

On the whole, Chatraw and Allen have produced a useful work on apologetic method that successfully goes back into the past to move into the future as the church seeks to be a faithful witness in late modernity. The insights of Augustine's ministry in his own life and context are explored in depth and applied seamlessly to the reader's own milieu without doing injury to the distinct character of either. It provides a capacious vision of apologetics, demonstrating the discipline is not limited merely to the rational, but seeks to address the whole person with all the resources God's Word and the church have to offer. For these reasons, *The Augustine Way* serves as an excellent manual for the pastor or church leader seeking to invite more individuals into the City of God.

Isaac Whitney, Reformed Theological Seminary, Washington D.C.

Conversations by the Sea - Reflections on Discipleship, Ministry and Mission. By Andrew Rollinson. Haddington: Handsel Press, 2023. ISBN 978-1-912052-78-3. 194pp. £10.

Long beach walks for reflection and prayer are often stimulated by the companionship of others, and connect the author with John 21 and Peter's experience of discipleship. This thoughtful and timely book is rooted in ministry and Scottish contexts. Pastor to a number of significant congregations and insightful Advisor for Ministry among Scottish Baptists, Rol-

linson offers clarity of vision and purpose and gently phrased yet sharp observations on the traps churches and their leaders can fall into.

His twelve tightly-packed chapters are well worth the read. Like beach walks, you'll need to pause to take in what he's saying, retracing your steps to make sure you've grasped the implications.

He begins with the frustration of his other hobby, fishing. For Peter it meant the 'personal darkness of deep disorientation and disappointment' (page 10); for us, being 'radically reconfigured and redefined' as we face cultural shifts and navigate the 'trip-wires laid across our culture' (page 12). That plus the pressure of pastoral performance 'to meet expectations of ecclesial shoppers' (page 16).

Memorable phrases await us. 'The fundamental economy of the church is generosity and her only currency is trust' (page 18) is his governing concern as he explores the dangers of ministering out of depletion, our need of others to keep us right, and the sad and shameful realities of unsafe church. 'The great miracle of John 21 is not the miraculous catch of fish but the presence of the Stranger on the beach' (page 23).

Chapter 2 takes us through the encounters and conversations John uses to shape his gospel. Ministry is 'exemplary discipleship… Peter and his friends were bereft and broken… But it was precisely through such brokenness that the Risen Lord was able to reveal his power' (page 30f). Chapter 4 contrasts Peter and John; as they realise 'this is the Lord', their active and contemplative personalities combine to invite us to 'active service with a still centre' (page 52).

Resourcing a missional community is our priority, chapter 5, to facilitate and enable 'a fresh, up-to-date witness to the presence of the kingdom of God among us in word and deed' (page 65). We need inner security as much as skills, especially in settings where religion is perceived as doing damage: 'We need to be plausible before we can be audible' (page 68).

His chapters on the number of fish and the unexpected unbroken net play into our struggle to maintain unity around the evangel. 'Most of all, the quest for unity costs the death of our egos' (page 83). Our aim together, as one church in many places, is 'to exalt Christ in praise and teaching; to create a culture of kindness and generosity, mutual respect and a respecting of difference; and to anticipate potential division' (page 84).

The remainder of the book reflects on how to lead towards that, as we model the presence of the 'Waiting stranger who is the welcoming host' (page 88). Our struggle to exert authority and control is met by the Lord's attentiveness and space: the Lord's 'sovereign power is regal precisely because it is releasing… always given away for the redemption of the world' (page 97). The community emerging extends cross-shaped to offer the welcome of Christ and the Spirit's work of conviction and conversion.

The final chapters explore ministry starvation ('The first half of my ministry I went to conferences; the second half I went on retreats!' page 107); failure and restitution met by a restorative community; and self-awareness and self-deception transformed by 'Lord, you know…'. He's seen too many conversations where 'accountability is in danger of becoming the most talked about and least practiced part of ministry' (page 140).

Do buy, read and ponder this most valuable book, and share it with leaders in your church. As the author finally takes us to the fisherman who became a shepherd, we give thanks for this fellow SETS member's ministry and modelling for us.

Mike Parker, Edinburgh

Landscape of Hope. By Heather Holdsworth. Chicago, Moody, 2023. ISBN 978-0802-429896 hardback; ISBN 978-0802-473424 eBook. 238pp. £16.99; Kindle £9.99.

Scottish Universities have long been known for exploring theology *with* significant areas of public life. Aberdeen, a Centre for Theology and Contemporary Culture; Edinburgh, Theology and Communication, and the Centre for the Study of World Christianity; St Andrew's, the Institute for Theology, Imagination and the Arts. Perhaps the latter would be closest to Heather Holdsworth's heart.

Heather's word-art comes alongside others combining faith and creativity. Karen Sawrey's 'Infographic Bible' (2020, William Collins, ISBN 978-0-00-755461-4); artist Hannah Dunnett's 'Christian Artwork', painted images intertwined with scripture words; and the Bible Project's storytelling and visual commentaries. *Landscape of Hope* is different: illustrations made up entirely of Psalm words, shaded for emphasis, with introduction, deeply personal reflection, and historical and contemporary comment on each. Skipping to the conclusion, you'll see who to watch as we read and learn: look at God, the wicked, the righteous and David.

We're invited to read each Psalm through its word-image: 'find the beginning of the verse with your eyes, or even better, with your fingers. The phrases may be tiny or swirling around, but travel with the sentence, sense the action and meaning, the shrinking and growing through the words of the song. And ponder' (page 17).

Hats off to Moody for taking this on, allowing us to join the journey through this first group of Psalms, 1-14. After 1 and 2 introduce the whole psalter, we follow the losses and laments of 3-7. We move with David toward the longed-for presence of God, plunged into the 'shadowed valleys where anguish has echoed down forgotten ravines… As the imagery becomes stronger, the taunts increasingly vile, we come upon this stun-

ning song' (page 123). Psalm 8, 'The Glory of God and the Dignity of People', is the high point of this group. After celebrating confidence and courage in the acrostic Psalms 9 and 10, David returns to tension, trouble, times of distance from God, upheld by the Lord's strength and justice. Then down again, 11-14 taking us back through the valley of lament into 'discord and yelling; there's collision and noise' among the fools and the lawless (page 221). In all that, 'God identifies Himself as walking with the helpless… He is their refuge, protection, and chain shatterer' (page 232).

I found this combination of art and biblical poetry deeply moving, because they come from depth. The double loss of parents and the lasting experience of the illness that 'decided to stay' left her in 'extraordinary weakness… Restricted to the couch for nearly a year, with a small fold-out table to draw on, I opened King David's dialogue with his powerful Friend. As I sat each day drawing and meditating on his words, my fears were stilled by the peace of God and the room was crammed with bliss. Slow reading and creative meditation have been the steadying joy in both these seasons of disorientation' (page 9). Lament Psalms sustained her. Her subsequent, unexpected healing after a stranger's prayer means she is now steadily strengthening, eagerly telling her story to all who will listen. And there are 136 more Psalms to meditate on, to draw and share. Out of exhaustion has come a book of great beauty and power. I can't wait for the next volume!

Mike Parker, Edinburgh

Not so with you: power and leadership for the church. Edited by Mark Stirling & Mark Meynell. Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2023. ISBN 978-1-6667-6016-3 paper; ISBN 978-1-6667-6017-0 hardback; ISBN 978-1-6667-6018-7 eBook. 261pp. £25 or less; Kindle £7.86.

This is a powerful, disturbing, timely book. The back cover gets straight to it: 'The spate of recent scandals of power abuse by leaders within the evangelical world suggests something is wrong in our churches. When a leader misuses power, they have misunderstood and misrepresented God and the gospel.'

Mark Stirling starts with us: 'Our sincere prayer is this book is not used primarily as a resource for judging others, so much as an aid to prayerful self-examination' (page xiii). Part 1 examines biblical foundations of our call to be distinct disciples and be aware of the dangers leaders face. Part 2 changes gear to explore experiences of manipulative behaviours as many have given up and become unchurched.

The contributors are well-placed to listen, bringing missional and pastoral insights to the encounters they've had with victims, survivors and

companions in churches and Christian agencies. Stirling sets the scene: 'Why Another Book on Power and Why Now?' Part 1's seven chapters examine the theological roots of a growing crisis among us.

We have space to reflect on just two. Nick Mackison's concern is Evangelical naivete. While we speak of sin, 'underestimating [its consequences] leaves the church vulnerable to exploitation… Covert abusers are not someone else's problem; they are our problem' (page 47). Ezekiel 34's sharp insights are unpacked, including the case for restoring perpetrators to membership but never to office (page 54); and the fear of damage to church or institutional reputation which leads to cover-up. 'Only when sin is exposed can it be covered… through the blood of Christ' (page 55).

Meynell explores the particular weakness of evangelical churches and the irony that staff teams are one of our most dangerous settings. We need God's power 'to navigate the gap between idealism and realism' (page 62), but we're not talking much about it. Enquirers once asked 'Is what these people believe true?'; now they more likely ask, 'Am I safe with this crowd?' (page 63). Our 'supremely convincing arguments' were overwhelmed 'the moment [enquirers] discerned our power privileges.' He argues that to cross cultural pain barriers, as in Job, 'We must preach victimhood *as well*, regardless of its cultural currency. People *do* suffer at the hands of others, through no fault of their own, especially at the hands of the powerful…' and recognise that 'Every single one of us is a perpetrator of personal sin and a victim of others' sin' (page 65).

This is the constant appeal of Part 1: 'It is not power per se that is our biggest problem but our sinfulness and the damage we have experienced and done to others' (page 66). We all have some power, and are to use it wisely in 'truthfulness like Christ'. The antidote to protecting ourselves is 'a long and painful road of self-discovery and confession' (page 80), aided by key questions to discern if we're crossing lines or exploiting our privileges.

I missed input from women in Part 1, and was grateful for their insightful contributions and more global perspectives in Part 2. Eight more experiential chapters reveal how abuse feels and major on what's needed so people, churches and futures might be rebuilt by God's grace, and valuable questions are offered after each. Again, a look at just two chapters suffices.

Steve Wookey reflects on the bible's portrayal of flawed characters, and the alarming theological ignorance weakening our framework, especially the place of the cross. As a result we focus on celebrity leaders who may lead without criticism or accountability, and the gospel of grace mutates into works. He commends Walter Martin's observation that the American Banking Association's fraud training has tellers handle only

genuine money; if they are 'thoroughly familiar with the original (they) will not be deceived by the counterfeit bill, no matter how like the original it appears' (page 117f).

Blythe Sizemore had an even more raw experience. Accused of lying when she made a complaint, she slid into PTSD before finding a way forward to minister again. In Cornelius Plantinga's memorable words, 'sin is parasitic upon the good' (page 130). Disoriented, ashamed and broken, 'I felt I had been left with a sunburn that just would not heal… Years later, I still feel that sunburn' (page 133). Scripture and friends brought her slowly towards healing: she began to appreciate that 'entering into the suffering… is God's work' (page 134); people's willingness to keep listening; and 'gentle and gracious reminders of the hope (we) have in Jesus… (to) face the dark reality of this broken world and the evil among us, while simultaneously looking beyond to the suffering Christ, the one who truly understands our pain' (page 136).

This book is uncomfortable yet steadily, faithfully insists on the Lord's power to transform our flawed and damaged communities. God's word and Spirit are alert and able to bring repair, and these authors have given us a vital resource to keep one another healthy.

Mike Parker, Edinburgh

Reinventing Christian Doctrine. By Maarten Wisse. London: Bloomsbury (T&T Clark), 2023. ISBN: 9780567704306. Paperback £26.09.

Here we have a fine piece of theological writing by the Reformed Professor and Rector of the Protestantse Theologische Universiteit, whose doctoral work was done under the late and much-missed Christoph Schwöbel, to whom the book is dedicated. The first chapter does a very good job of justifying the author's aim of bringing the Law-Gospel distinction back to the centre of theological discussion, a discussion that has become rather propositional in nature (and much concerned with divine metaphysics). The core idea seems to be that God, whatever else he is, is ethical (righteous, holy, good) and that this means theology's focus should be (as it was in the Reformation) on how forgiveness is needed in response to (moral) law-breaking, and just how it can be achieved and received. Practical piety in the form of morality and law is the end and even the essence of Christianity. (Although the question of how God's holiness relates to what can be expected of humans requires a bit more attention than it receives here.)

Wisse insists that God acts in two ways towards human beings (law and gospel) and that realising this is key to reading the bible. 'Starting with the 1535 edition of the *Loci Communes*, Melanchthon expresses him-

self much more positively on the role of the Ten Commandments in the believer's life.' (29) Wisse does not attend to the question of whether and why Melanchthon might have changed his mind again after 1535. Calvin's distinction is more that between Old and New Testaments, but it is a distinction (a difference of degree) and not an opposition. In a close reading of *Institutes* II.10.1 'covenanted to him by the same law and by the bond of the same doctrine', Wisse comments: 'The problem seems to be that Calvin allows for just a single dynamic in both the Old and the New Covenant, and that he calls this dynamic 'law'!' (32) Now apart from whether or not Calvin would use the term 'dynamic', surely a closer-still reading would recognise that 'the same doctrine' is half of the matter. Wisse is probably right to argue that Melanchthon and Calvin were opposed here. The further interesting question is whether most Reformed (Voetius and Cocceius) followed Melanchthon's distinction, as is claimed (35), even if the Gallican and Belgic Confessions do not. It seems unlikely Voetius viewed it as an opposition, but we probably need a bit more information.

He then turns in Chapter 3 to John's Gospel. It was well before the Reformation that John got read through a Pauline lens, such was the predominance of soteriology in medieval biblical interpretation. To interpret Calvin's Christology in his John commentary as 'principial' (as per Arnold Huijgen) seems to strain the evidence in light of Barbara Pitkin's work (*What* Pure *Eyes Could See: Calvin's Doctrine of Faith in Its Exegetical Context*). To my thinking Richard Muller distinction between pre-Enlightenment Reformed and post-Enlightenment (Schleiermacher, Barth) seems fairly sound. There is a boldness in privileging Jn1:3-4 (light that gives light to all) and Jn14:6&9 (the way, the truth and the life/believe in Christ's divinity which requires a clean heart), which seems to put Augustinian mysticism which can contemplate God in Christ-an ontological Christocentrism—over many other Johannine verses with their soteriological Christocentrism. These are deep waters and by the end of the journey one has the impression that Augustine's natural theological instincts mean these verses interest them more than they should, were he, Augustine, a proper Augustinian. The thread of the argument is not always easy to follow, but the material is rich and thought-provoking.

Barth gets accused of an overly radical 'by John alone' in the exclusivity of his version of the Christian faith, to which he might well have pled 'guilty'. As mentioned in Chapter Two, Barth's version was more one about epistemology. I do think this is a bit of a caricature of Barth not for what it describes about his theology but for what it omits—Church Dogmatics III for example.

In Chapter 5 the doctrine of *Sola Scriptura* is critiqued (too often it is used to lend objectivity to particular, even eccentric interpretations), then

defended so long as it doesn't mean *tota scriptura* (not all books or chapters or verses are equal.) 'The *sola* is infinite, in the sense that it will never be fulfilled'. (128) The appeal to the singularity of the Incarnation and God's acts in history is opposed to a sacramental presence. This reviewer would be happier seeing the alternative as pneumatological, ecclesiological, even with scripture as firmly *norma normans*.

More challenging is the doctrine of 'double predestination', which he seeks to defend in Chapter 6: 'the ultimate verdict on our life does not rest I our own hands.' (133). Confident claims of Universalism involves a will to power. 'One can never put oneself in the position of declaring everyone's sins forgiven. That would be an exceptional form of hubris.' (136) But so equally would be the position of declaring that only some people would be, even if it retains uncertainty and leaves God to be God. Sure, universalism might make grace cheap: but why would an obvious sinner's funeral be more problematic than that of a less obvious sinner? Again, true, a God who forgives every sin might equally be 'a monster'. Indeed what he quotes by 'Gregory MacDonald' ('not saving all people seems utterly out of character with the kind of God revealed to us in Jesus Christ') seems even more a straw man, selectively reading the bible with little justification for it, than even John Piper in the previous chapter. Yet it does seem that Wisse wants to plead a certain agnosticism on the issue of double predestination. Deuteronomy 29:29, as employed by a Brakel is indeed an interesting text here. God is free to save few or all. I find the argument on p.145 a little beset by *non sequiturs*: one could be moved to believe by grace without predestination. Assurance of election (theological) is not the same as assurance of faith (psychological), but surely there is much of an overlap. Distinguishing the *opus Dei* and *opus hominum*, which also drives the chapter on the Eucharist, the recurring motif might well be theologically principled but are they really to be divided?

The final chapter offers an alternative account of a theology of religions to that provided by one modelled on the doctrine of the Trinity. Truth-claims are more like 'law' in their all-encompassing range, but they can form a common core or as Wisse prefers a common critical instrument for religions. The alliance of Melanchthon and Voetius is re-introduced in the last few pages. 'For Voetius, the forgiveness of sins of which Melanchthon speaks is the outcome of the communicative dynamics of the Gospel proclaiming and promising it, and faith embracing Christ proclaimed by the Gospel.' (196) The Gospel is a possibility that needs actualising in faith, an invitation, not a propositional description of reality.

At first I thought this book looked like a collection of essays, but both through some re-writing and editing the whole thing hangs together well. It is original and thoughtful, even of one wishes some matters had been

followed through, which might have meant sacrificing some of the themes and chapters (on Scripture, the Eucharist, and the World Religions perhaps) to allow space for that. I found myself stimulated and provoked in the best possible sense.

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