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TSEF BULLETIN

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A Publication of
**THEOLOGICAL
STUDENTS
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THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS FELLOWSHIP

Theological Students Fellowship is a professional organization dedicated to furthering the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We provide context and content for theological reflection and spiritual formation in the classical Christian tradition. TSF 1) supports local chapters at seminaries and universities, providing students, pastors and professors a context for encouragement, prayer and theological reflection; 2) publishes *TSF BULLETIN*, offering biblical and theological resources of classical Christianity necessary for continued reflection on and growth in ministry; 3) provides reprints, bibliographies, longer monographs, books and tapes on topics relevant to persons seeking to minister with integrity, in light of biblical faith in today's complex milieu.

Membership is open to all pastors, students, professors and laypersons engaged in or preparing for ministry. Membership package including letter, articles, discounts on conferences, books and services and subscription to *TSF BULLETIN* will be mailed on receipt of dues. Individuals, libraries, and institutions may subscribe to *TSF BULLETIN* separately.

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DEC 15 1986

Twice now it has been my privilege to attend a very enriching conference held each June on the campus of Eastern College in St. Davids, Pennsylvania.

The brainchild of Dr. Robert Seiple, president of both the College and Eastern Baptist Seminary, the Evangelical Round Table brings together Christians of differing viewpoints to discuss issues which are creating tension within the same faith-community. In 1984 the first Round Table focused on Central America and the question of what policy our country ought to pursue regarding Nicaragua. I was not present but I have been reliably informed that the exchange of opinions generated heat as well as light. In 1985 the second Round Table examined the vexatious and explosive problem of the Israeli/Palestinian controversy. Again, considerable heat was generated in the enlightened interchange of antagonistic convictions.

This year evangelicalism itself was analyzed. While the central theme, "Will Evangelicalism Survive Its Success?," did not elicit the strong emotions which had marked the two preceding conferences, it did afford opportunity for the expression of a wide-ranging spectrum of opinions. Thomas Johnson's report (p. 8) will fill in the details for us.

With the kind permission of Dr. Seiple we are publishing some of the addresses which were given at the 1986 Round Table. Hoping that these annual discussions will serve not only as a catalyst for evangelical self-criticism but also as an antidote to the fissiparous tendencies within the evangelical family which strongly embraced and sharply divergent positions exacerbate, Dr. Seiple desires that the Round Table papers be circulated as widely as possible.

Since the contributions we are including come from well-known evangelicals, I will not mention each of their articles separately. I do feel, however, that I ought to offer at least a quasi-apology for including the ethos-setting exposition of Romans 14 which I presented on two successive mornings at the conference last June.

Besides these stimulating articles, we are including reports of two other conferences that readers will—or certainly should—find of interest. We are also including Stephen Mott's review-essay on *Brave New People*, the much-controverted study by D. Gareth Jones of the moral complexities created by biotechnology. Regardless of one's belief about abortion (and in my opinion a consistent pro-life ethic requires an intelligently implemented anti-abortion stance), we must not succumb to an irrational book-burning hysteria which insists that responsible Christian scholars refrain from putting into print their examination of the agonizing complexities which scientific achievements are raising. The cause of truth is best served when individuals of competence and integrity are free to state and debate in the public arena whatever opinions they have conscientiously reached.

As for in-house affairs, let me bid a regretful but most appreciative *adieu* to Becky Groothuis whose efficiency, diligence, and insight in her dual capacity of Publishing Coordinator and Office Manager were invaluable assets to the *Bulletin*. We pray that God will bless Becky and her husband Douglas in the new ministry they are jointly undertaking. Let me also express our sincere gratitude to Karl Hoaglund for his devoted labor as our Circulation Manager.

In a world where faith, love, justice and truth are always under attack, this is the time of year to recall John Henry Newman's great lines concerning the Incarnation:

*O, loving wisdom of our God!
When all was sin and shame,
A second Adam to the fight
And to the rescue came.*

In the assurance of His victory I wish you a joyful holiday season and a productive 1987!



Finis To Fratricide

by Vernon C. Grounds

In I Corinthians 11:22, Paul raises an intriguing question: "Do you despise the church of God?" Our response, of course, is unhesitating and emphatic: by no means! Instead of despising the church, we prize it and are inexpressibly grateful to God for its ministry. Yet we must listen attentively to the criticisms of church-despisers in order to more effectively carry out our Savior's mandate to evangelize the world.

One criticism which the church-despisers direct against us is that of *mythology*. They charge that we subscribe to beliefs which are simply incredible. We believe not only in the reality of the supernatural, the possibility of miracle, and the divine authority of an accidental collection of Semitic documents. We also, the church-despisers scoff, believe in the infallibility of Moses, the edibility of Jonah and probably the superiority of American society.

For a second thing, the church-despisers charge us with *apathy*. We talk grandiosely about transforming the world and getting the will of God done in space and time. But by and large our churches are narcissistic groups of uninvolved individuals, members who are concerned about their own souls, marriages and families, and who consequently devote energy and money to self-centered edification and amusement.

The church-despisers also level against us the charge of *hypocrisy*. They point out the discrepancy between our profession and our practice, our belief and our behavior, our creed and our conduct. Love, unity, and compassion may be our watchwords, but we fail to incarnate our high ideals. Christians, the church-despisers claim, are not conspicuous for their sacrificial loyalty to biblical principles.

Fourth, the church-despisers charge us with *bigotry*. We split hairs over even nonessentials and assert that our views are in precise alignment with the mind of God Almighty. Who among us will deny that a spirit of intolerance characterizes large segments of evangelicalism—not simply and understandably with respect to the historic centralities of the gospel, but likewise with respect to the very debatable distinctives of our separate denominations?

Still further, they charge us with *disunity*. How often we sing the well-known words:

*We are not divided, all one body we,
One in hope and doctrine, one in charity.*

Yet the very same hymn includes this stanza:

*Yet with a sorry wonder, men see her sore-oppressed,
By schism rent asunder, by heresy distressed.*

The scandal of Christianity from early on has been its disunity, its failure to fulfill its Lord's entreaty, "May they all be one as we, Father, are one" (John 17:21).

A satirical poet whose identity I have thus far been unable to ascertain observed the divisiveness among Christians and expressed what he interpreted as the attitude of at least some of the churches:

*We are the Lord's elected few. Let all the rest be damned!
There'll be no room up there for you. We don't want heaven
crammed.*

I often recall that contentious handful of saints, a splintered group which erected a sign with movable letters outside its

meeting-place. It announced to passers-by, "Jesus Only." But after a night of violent wind that sign read, "Us Only." When the church universal is reduced to a splinter of schism, who can blame our critics for their scorn?

Leaving aside all the other criticisms, let us zero in on the charge that evangelicalism has been and still is marked by disunity. What can we do to blunt the painfully sharp edge of justifiable criticism? More than that, however, what can we do in order to achieve in fuller measure the openness of his body for which our Savior pleaded? I am persuaded that what we need to do is become full-fledged biblicists, allowing the Scripture to dynamically control our practice as well as to theoretically shape our beliefs. I am convinced that the antidote to fratricidal disunity is found in the fourteenth chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans. Here are principles which, if they become operative in our churches, will bring a finis to ecclesiastical conflict. On the contrary, if we fail to put these principles into practice, I anticipate many a tragic rerun of our past divisiveness.

Though the background of this pivotal passage is probably familiar to all of us, suppose I review it very hastily. In the capitol of the Caesars is a church composed of both Jews and Gentiles. Some members of this mixed congregation have been reared on an Old Testament diet. As a result they find it impossible to shake off life-long taboos, especially taboos grounded in their sincere loyalty to the Word of God. They look upon the indiscriminate eating of meat as an act of disobedience to the Mosaic law and therefore an act of disobedience to Jehovah. They view the keeping of the Sabbath and other sacred days as a matter of conscientious piety. Thus they are vegetarians and Sabbatarians. They form the party of weak believers, genuine Christians who have not yet grasped the pure graciousness and liberating spirituality of the gospel. By no means inferior in character or commitment, they are nevertheless immature, bound by custom and ignorance and prejudice.

In the church at Rome, however, there are other believers who do not practice the taboos of these weaker Christians. The strong Christians, as Paul designates them, have come to see the full meaning of the gospel. They have come to see that the Old Testament regulations concerning unholy foods and holy days were wiped out by the sacrifice of Calvary. They have come to see that they are living under grace, and the keynote of grace is freedom from all legalism. They have come to see, accordingly, that a surrender to legalism is a betrayal of the gospel.

Now each party is dogmatic, convinced that it alone possesses the truth and that the rival party is wrong, dead wrong. So with these two factions in the same church, there is danger that civil war will suddenly erupt like a volcano. How, then, does Paul handle this explosive situation? Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he lays down principles which, if put into practice, are guaranteed to prevent ecclesiastical civil war. What are these peace-producing principles?

I

We must extend the hand of fellowship to Christians who differ with ourselves concerning those matters of belief and behavior that Scripture leaves unsettled. Notice Romans 14:1-4:

Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing

judgment on disputable matters. One man's faith allows him to eat everything, but another man, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God accepted him. Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

In either case, however, Paul turns on a red light. Break the nasty habit of name-calling, he orders his readers. Stop pinning labels, which are probably libels, on your brothers and sisters. Remember that, when you indulge in either despising or criticizing your fellow Christian, you are guilty of pride, self-righteousness and contempt. Remember too that, when you despise or criticize, you stir up bitterness and hatred and strife. You become the Devil's stooge. Thus from here on out, instead of despising or criticizing, exercise respect and

When the church universal is reduced to a splinter of schism, who can blame our critics for their scorn?

Notice also chapter 15:7 (for we cannot isolate chapter 14 from its context in the Roman letter): "Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God."

What is Paul's explicit directive? Welcome your brothers and sisters in the faith even though, as you understand your faith, they are weak and immature, holding to opinions and practices which are wrong—at least in your opinion. Yes, welcome the weak brothers and sisters precisely because they are brothers and sisters. They too have sincere faith in Jesus Christ as the incarnate Son of God who died for our sins and rose again in Easter victory. God has therefore accepted them into the membership of the true church, and hence you must not reject them, wrong as they may be concerning some matters. Welcome them, Paul commands us, provided they have a sincere faith in the centralities of the gospel. Welcome them despite their ignorance or stubbornness or prejudice or misunderstanding or maybe downright stupidity. Welcome them, and then refrain from unedifying controversy about those things which Scripture leaves unsettled.

Now what does this mean for us? What does it mean unless it means that fellowship in the gospel of Jesus Christ does not demand an absolute uniformity of viewpoint and interpretation? What does it mean unless it means that fellowship in the gospel of Jesus Christ is compatible with sincere differences of opinion? What does it mean unless it means, as Protestants have historically contended, that when God leaves an issue open we have no authority to close it by ecclesiastical mandate? So the first principle Paul lays down is this: fraternize, don't ostracize! Make the centralities of our faith your platform for fellowship, and guard against making toothpicks for planks!

II

Second, we must exercise respect, courtesy and tolerance. Paul lays down this directive in the third verse: "The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him." The apostle realizes that a strong believer who is emancipated from old scruples and prejudices may indulge in sarcastic criticism of weaker brothers and sisters. He or she may label them narrow-minded prudes or hair-splitting legalists or straight-laced Pharisees or creaking traditionalists or unenlightened mossbacks. Such persons may poke fun at their old-fashioned fundamentalism. But, on the other hand, the vegetarian or the Sabbatarian, the conscientious abstainer, may denounce the stronger brothers and sisters as unspiritual rebels or low-living libertines or high-minded intellectuals or inflated egotists or perhaps camouflaged liberals.

courtesy and tolerance.

III

We must resolutely refuse to push God aside and pass judgment on another Christian's motives. I call your attention again to verses three and four:

The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him. Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

I call your attention also to verse ten: "You, then, why do you judge your brother or why do you look down on your brother? For we will stand before God's judgment seat." Again, look at verse thirteen: "Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way."

Oh, how subtle, how chronic is the temptation to usurp the prerogatives of God Almighty! As if we were omniscient! As is in our finitude we could possibly know whether or not our fellow believers are being true to their own deepest insights, loyal to that interpretation of Scripture which they have been able to attain! As if we could possibly know all the forces and factors which are motivating the behavior of our brothers and sisters? No! No! No! What Paul assumes, therefore, is the integrity of his fellow believers. He takes it for granted that his fellow believers are motivated spiritually, not carnally. Yes, Paul operates on the premise that his fellow believers are motivated by a desire to please God. That surely is the point of verse six:

He who regards one day as special, does so to the Lord. He who eats meat, eats it to the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who abstains, does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God.

So unless fellow believers are guilty of heresy or immorality in plain contradiction of Scripture, I must refuse to judge their motivation. I must steadfastly decline to play the role which belongs exclusively to our omniscient God.

IV

We must insist on the right, indeed the inescapable obligation of personal responsibility. How emphatically Paul says this in verse five: "One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind." How emphatically he likewise says this in verse twelve: "So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God." And here, as we

all perceive, is the biblical foundation of our great Protestant distinctive, the sovereignty of the individual soul, the right and duty of every human being to establish a first-hand relationship with the Creator who will ultimately be his or her Judge. I cannot breathe for my brother; he must do his own breathing. Neither can I think for my sister, decide for my brother, trust for my sister or die for my brother. They must do their own thinking and deciding and trusting and dying. Consequently, I cannot answer for my brothers and sisters, nor can they answer for me.

To be sure, they may help me, and I may help them. We may share our opinions—or merely pool our ignorance and prejudice. Each of us may prayerfully seek to instruct, persuade and correct the other. But in the end I must make up my own mind before God. I must stand on my own feet before God. I must answer for my own life to God. And my brothers and sisters must do the same.

In view of this awesome and inescapable fact, Paul urges

No Christian must be pressured to agree with an opinion or a practice which her own conscience cannot sincerely accept. No Christian must be coerced by a crowd, even if the crowd is a church congregation.

us to insist on the right of personal responsibility.

V

We must hold fast to the inviolability of conscience; and this is, obviously, a corollary of the tremendous fact which I have just been discussing: our personal responsibility before God.

What is the thrust of verse fourteen? "As one who is in the Lord Jesus, I am fully convinced that no food is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for him it is unclean." The thrust of this text is plain. The conscience must be obeyed even if it is weak and warped and wrong. This theme is repeated in verse twenty: "Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble." This theme reemerges in verses twenty-two and twenty-three:

So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the man who does not condemn himself by what he approves. But the man who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin.

If people violate their own conscience, Paul asserts, sin is being committed. Such people are wrong even though what is being done is right. Suppose a man does something which is right and yet, as he does the right thing, he senses that he is doing wrong; then he is wrong even though the thing he does is right. Hence no Christian must be pressured to agree with an opinion or a practice which her own conscience cannot sincerely accept. No Christian must be coerced by a crowd, even if the crowd is a church congregation. No Christian must be forced to compromise conviction for the sake of tradition. Granted that she may be shortsighted or stubborn or sinful. She must nevertheless hold fast to the truth as she sees it; and there is no power that can enable her to see the truth differently except the power of the illuminating Holy Spirit.

Let me sharpen the issue. A brother may sincerely believe in the ordination of women; and we don't agree. A sister may fervently believe in all five points of Calvinism, passionately defending double predestination; and we don't agree. A brother

may believe in *laissez faire* capitalism as a good and necessary deduction from certain biblical texts and principles; and we don't agree. A sister may believe that abortion under specific circumstances is the lesser of two evils; and we don't agree. A brother may believe that the advent of the nuclear age necessitates pacifism and our country's unilateral disarmament; and we don't agree. A sister may believe that neighbor concern gives support to the enforced busing of school children; and we don't agree. A brother may believe in racial segregation as practiced in South Africa; and we don't agree. A sister may believe that capital punishment is inconsistent with the pro-life stance; and we don't agree. A brother may believe that the Genesis account is compatible with theistic evolution; and we don't agree. If our brothers and sisters honestly deduce from Scripture beliefs and practices which we are convinced are wrong, we must grant them the right to hold those convictions. Indeed, we must protect their right to be wrong. We will no doubt struggle to straighten out (as we

view it) their corkscrew logic. We will challenge their exegesis and indicate the baleful consequences of the teaching they are espousing. We may be conscientiously unable to become members of their churches. But we will not leave them out of the church which is Christ's body. We will not repudiate their claim to be children of God. No, instead of that, we will joyfully acknowledge that all of us belong to the same spiritual family. We will champion their loyalty to that inner monitor which whispers to every human being, "Whatever you believe wrong ought not be done; whatever you believe right ought to be done though the world oppose you." In short, as Christians obedient to Scripture we must affirm the inviolability of conscience.

VI

We must acknowledge the lordship of Christ in all our interactions. Is there in all the New Testament any other passage which trumpets the sovereignty of our Savior more eloquently than verses seven through eleven of this chapter?

For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgement seat. It is written, "'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God.'"

By the sacrifice of the cross, by his Easter victory, Jesus Christ, once despised, disgraced, and seemingly defeated, is now enthroned as cosmic King. The totality of existence is under his rulership, all of life and all of death, this world and the next world, present and future, time and eternity, everything is under His rulership. Therefore whether we eat and drink, whether we fast and pray, no matter what we do, we must do it for the sake of Jesus Christ. In everything, we must strive to please our Lord. I must not do what I please. I must not do what my church or denomination pleases. I must do what pleases my Lord. I must seek his will, his glory, his

approval in everything even if, in pleasing him, I displease you.

And I must unreservedly confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord of my brother's life, the Lord of my sister's heart, the Lord of my brother's service. I did not die for my brothers and sisters; Jesus Christ did. My brothers and sisters do not belong to me; they belong to Jesus Christ. So my brothers and sisters must not please me, they must please Jesus Christ, just as in everything I, too, the bondslave of the Savior, must seek to please my Lord and Master.

standards in the United States. Times were changing, and the step away from Victorian legalism was all for the better.

In my opinion, that is the stand we must take against all legalism, Victorian or otherwise. We must defend the blood-purchased liberty of the gospel.

VIII

Finally, we must live by the law of love. Paul asserts this in

If Scripture is silent concerning the issue, we must never, never, never allow a human opinion to be imposed on us if it were a divine norm.

VII

We must defend the liberty of the Gospel. Consider what Paul writes in verse fourteen: "As one who is in the Lord Jesus, I am fully convinced that no food is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for him it is unclean." Next add verse seventeen: "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." Now observe the very heart of verse twenty: "All food is clean, but it is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble." In other words, we must keep on affirming that the gospel spells the death of legalism. Our relationship to God is not a matter of externalities. Salvation is neither obtained nor retained by what we do or fail to do. Salvation is purely a matter of faith in redeeming grace. Consequently, we must resist steadfastly any attempt to introduce human merit, gained by lawkeeping, as a condition of justification or sanctification. To be sure, we must make concessions to immaturity and prejudice, but we must never, never, never allow the gospel to be undercut by legalism. So understand me when I repeat what I was emphasizing before: if Scripture is silent concerning the issue, we must never, never, never allow a human opinion to be imposed on us if it were a divine norm. Here I think we can learn a salutary lesson from Donald Gray Barnhouse, that gifted and forthright expositor of God's Word. Allow me to share with you a simple and, I think, amusing anecdote from his multi-volume commentary on the Roman Letter:

Many years ago, I led a Bible Conference at Montrose, Pennsylvania. About 200 young people were present, and a few older people. One day two old ladies complained to me in horror because some of the girls were not wearing stockings; these ladies wanted me to rebuke them. This was about the year 1928. Looking them straight in the eye, I said, "The Virgin Mary never wore stockings." They gasped and said, "She didn't?" I answered, "In Mary's time, stockings were unknown. So far as we know, they were first worn by prostitutes in Italy in the 15th century, when the Renaissance began. Later, a lady of the nobility wore stockings at a court ball, greatly to the scandal of many people. Before long, however, everyone in the upper classes was wearing stockings, and by the time of Queen Victoria stockings had become the badge of the prude." These ladies, who were holdovers from the Victorian epoch, had nothing more to say. I did not rebuke the girls for not wearing stockings. A year or two afterward, most girls in the United States were going without stockings in the summer, and nobody thought anything about it. Nor do I believe that this led towards disintegration of moral

verse fifteen which might better be translated: "Now you are living by the law of love." He asserts this likewise in chapter thirteen, verses eight through ten:

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellow man has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

If I live by the law of love, I will not scandalize my brothers and sisters. This is the burden of the 14th chapter and verse thirteen: "Therefore let us stop passing judgement on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way." If I live by the law of love, I will not grieve my brothers and sisters. This is the burden of the fifteenth verse in this same chapter. "If your brother is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy your brother for whom Christ died." If I live by the law of love, I will not offend or weaken or destroy my brothers and sisters. This is the burden of verses 20 and 21: "Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble. It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother to fall."

Thus, motivated by love, I will avoid doing anything that is going to hurt my brothers and sisters or bring them under the chastening judgment of Jesus Christ. Rather than scandalizing them, I will make these sacrifices which promote harmony and produce edification. This is the burden of verse nineteen: "Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification." Motivated by love, I will make any sacrifice—except the sacrifice of God's truth—to help my brothers and sisters become more like Jesus Christ, experiencing righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Motivated by love, I will carry out verse 22: "Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God." Thus I will not pugnaciously insist on the acceptance of my opinions. I will soft-pedal my prejudices. I will forego some of my liberties, if by doing so I can prevent my brother from losing out spiritually.

These are the eight principles which the Holy Spirit lays down through Paul, principles which, if put into operation, will prevent any future outbreak of ecclesiastical civil war.

Pastor Martin Niemoller was imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp. As Christmas 1944 dawned, the Dachau authorities, who had denied Protestants the right to worship,

relented and ordered Niemoller to conduct a service. He writes of that event:

There were seven of us: a British colonel, a Dutch minister of war, two Norwegian ship-owners, a Yugoslav diplomatist and a Macedonian journalist, and me, the Lutheran pastor from Germany. When I realized what a task I should have to fulfill, I felt embarrassed and even desperate; for how should I—the German—find the right way to the hearts of this congregation, to men who hated Germany and Germans and who could not do otherwise?

But a sort of minor miracle happened. As Niemoller has recorded:

At noontime before Christmas Eve somebody knocked at my door. The cell was opened, and in came the Dutch minister of war with the Gestapo guard. "Good morn-

ing, pastor," he said. "I am just dropping in to ask you something. My comrades and I myself want to celebrate Holy Supper with you tonight after your sermon. You may be astonished, but we could not help asking you." In this way it happened that in the evening I preached my sermon: "Glory be to God in heaven and peace on earth to men of good will!" And peace there was when we knelt down, seven people of different nations, divided by hatred and war, but now united and bound together by the love of God and by the grace of Jesus Christ. The small cell widened, walls and wires disappeared. We felt liberated and, in a flash, we saw God's promise fulfilled: "Peace on Earth."

My brothers and sisters, let us pray and work to the end that our churches may be healingly "united and bound together by the love of God and the grace of Jesus Christ."

Evangelical Diversity and Self-Criticism: Signs of Hope

by Thomas F. Johnson

Nearly two hundred evangelical leaders gathered June 4-6, 1986, at Eastern College, St. Davids, Pennsylvania, for the third annual Evangelical Roundtable. The topic was "Evangelicalism: Surviving Its Success." In his opening remarks, Robert Seiple, president of the college and of Eastern Baptist Seminary, which sponsored the conference, welcomed those present, encouraged discernment, open dialogue, and understanding among the conferees, and warned them against dogmatism. A similar theme was sounded by *TSF Bulletin* editor Vernon Grounds in the morning Bible studies on Romans 14 and 15.

Roots Of Social Concern

Johns Hopkins historian Timothy L. Smith led off a lineup of heavy-hitting addresses by providing a historical overview of evangelical involvement in "social idealism" (see article, p. 10). Evangelicals were in the forefront of liberation movements in the 19th century (women's rights, defense of the poor, anti-slavery, free public schools, etc.) He demonstrated that contemporary evangelical social concern has deep roots in their nineteenth century ancestors' passion for the kingdom of God.

Southern Baptists

Roy Honeycutt, president of embattled Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, asked whether success would destroy the SBC. Documenting both its successes and its divisions, he warned that the Lord of history will judge the church with a divine perspective on success. Southern Baptists, he said, are a people searching for a new identity, with the loss of both the cultural and programmatic syntheses that have held the denomination together in the past. Will the new theological synthesis currently being "forced" by more conservative leaders work? "Not in my lifetime and certainly not in my tenure as president of Southern Seminary," Honeycutt vowed.

Feminist Concerns

One of the highlights of the conference was the clash of

feminist perspectives represented by Elouise Fraser, Eastern Baptist Seminary theologian, and Elizabeth Achtemeier, Old Testament professor from Union Seminary, Virginia. Fraser struck hard against the sin of paternalism among evangelicals, the "fathers"-know-best attitude that stifles theology and leads to fruitless battles over inerrancy and creationism. "Do not marginalize the concerns of evangelical feminists," she warned.

Achtemeier, while asserting the bias against women in the church is a scandal, saved her strongest words for feminist theology itself, which, she said, by insisting on the use of female terms for God, is leading the church to a religion other than Christianity, a Canaanite goddess religion, that unifies creation with Creator and ultimately makes human history meaningless.

Black Perspective

A black evangelical perspective was brought by Tuskegee Institute professor James Earl Massey (see article, p. 16). He noted that black churches are almost universally evangelical and that they have contributed to the movement in five ways: (1) by proving that Christianity is not a white man's religion (2) by a rich, musical heritage (3) through an active witness against racism (4) through celebrative and radical preaching and (5) by taking leadership in urban ministry. When asked why there is such a low visibility of blacks in evangelical theology, Massey replied, "Blacks and whites have had different agendas: whites have been preoccupied with theologizing, blacks with doing things."

Evangelism

Evangelism was the primary concern of the first evening. Jay Kesler, former Youth for Christ national director and now president of Taylor University, spoke on "Jesus, Rambo and the Gates of Hell." He maintained that there are millions of pagan young people in America today with no personal or family ties to the church. YFC learned that they cannot be reached by youth who have grown up in the church and in Christian homes; rather, it takes an ex-pagan to reach a pagan. He warned that instead of taking on the new challenges of evangelism, the evangelical movement is succumbing to the siren song of civil religion. Both Jesus and Rambo are being

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solicited to bless America. But Rambo is Barabbas! So the question is: will evangelicals maintain an authentic Christ, even at the risk of crucifixion?

Samuel Escobar, missiologist from Eastern Baptist Seminary, added a Third World perspective. He noted that the church can be a hindrance rather than a help to evangelism. When that happens, he maintained, God raises up parachurch movements to spread the gospel. Evangelical survival depends upon letting mission set the agenda for theology, re-thinking authentic piety, and ceasing sterile doctrinal disputes.

Joel Nederhood, director of the Back to God Hour, concluded the focus on evangelism by advocating greater use of broadcast and video media. Yet he warned against selling out the integrity of the gospel for "effectiveness." There is a tendency to try to "zap" people in thirty to sixty minutes with a flamboyant, sensational, simplistic message. "Be effective," he urged, "but be authentic."

Biblical Authority

The issue for the next morning was biblical authority. Bruce Waltke, an Old Testament scholar from Westminster Seminary, stressed the normativity and contemporaneity of the Bible. "It is the direct Word of God." One cannot separate "Word of God" from "Scripture."

Manfred Brauch, New Testament professor from Eastern Baptist Seminary, maintained that the highest view of the Bible is the one that is most faithful to the Bible's own intention. This intention focuses on God's saving, incarnational actions in history and especially in Jesus Christ. The inspiration and authority of the Bible must, then, be understood not deductively, but incarnationally, by an inductive study of the text itself, its statements and phenomena. When we make that examination, we find that the term "inerrancy" is not very helpful in conveying the essential authority of Scripture. Brauch argued that just as Jesus was divine yet came in human weakness, so the Bible speaks with divine authority, even though it participates in the normal, human limitations of its authors.

Paul J. Achtemeier, who teaches New Testament at Union Seminary, Virginia, emphasized the relation between biblical authority and preaching (see article, p. 19). Scripture is the vehicle for the Word of God to be addressed to the church. This happens when the Holy Spirit witnesses to the lordship of Jesus Christ in the context of the Christian community. It is in the community that we hear the Bible as God's Word spoken to us. Achtemeier also advocated a new approach to the historical-critical method. "Historical" helps us appreciate that the Bible comes from another time and culture; it puts a necessary distance between ourselves and the text. "Critical," though, must be understood as self-critical—critical of our own assumptions, values, and pre-understandings that often keep us from hearing the Word of God. Without the historical-critical method, we will preach ourselves, and not Jesus Christ, as Lord.

Thinking Styles

In a less-focused afternoon session, mission strategist Waldron Scott defined three styles of thinking or categorizing: "bounded set," "centered set," and "fuzzy set." The first characterizes most Western thought, the latter two most non-Western peoples. He then offered the challenging insight that "most of our problems in evangelical theology have been caused by the more rigid, either/or, 'bounded set' thinking." We need to explore a theological style that emphasizes relation to a fixed center and an appreciation of paradox and ambiguity.

Brave New Publishers

James Sire, senior editor at InterVarsity Press, asked whether we should be censoring "brave new publishers," a reference to the book by Gareth Jones, *Brave New People*, which IVP was forced to withdraw under pressure from militant Christian anti-abortionists. Sire said publishers must have the freedom to publish responsible, unpopular views. Christian readers also have a responsibility to read, think and change before reacting publicly. The Christian Right's response to Jones' excellent book, now published by Eerdmans, was not appropriate, he claimed.

Too Much Politics?

Ex-Falwell staffer Cal Thomas, now a Washington-based columnist, warned that there is a limit to how involved evangelicals can become in politics without either being co-opted by the state or losing the church's distinctive message of salvation. Christians of the left and of the right have made the same mistake of identifying of the kingdom of God with the kingdoms of this world. Human government, however, will not solve our fundamental problems.

Justice

Evening messages by Calvin College philosopher Nicholas Wolterstorff and Eastern Baptist Seminary ethicist Ron Sider proclaimed the biblical mandate of justice. Wolterstorff outlined the case for caring about justice: people are being treated unjustly, true Christian piety demands justice, and the God of the Bible loves and does justice. The presence of the kingdom in Jesus' ministry and the continuation of his ministry in his body, the church, also demand that we work, and not just wait, for justice.

Sider raised the question whether evangelicals will ever agree about what the Bible says about justice, in view of the name-calling and malicious stereotyping that have marked their internal debates over social issues. He urged a Covenant of Evangelical Integrity that calls for careful listening to and appreciation of the critiques of the other side and for on-going dialogue between differing views, e.g., between the more liberal Evangelicals for Social Action and the more conservative Institute for Religion and Democracy. Many of those present signed the covenant at breakfast the next morning and hoped for its wider distribution.

Trueblood

The final addresses came from D. Elton Trueblood, octogenarian and evangelical statesman, Roberta Hestenes, Fuller Seminary's professor of discipleship and Christian formation, and from Os Guinness, author and Brookings Institute fellow. Trueblood, in a moving address titled "The Basis of Recovery," called for more "great evangelical leaders," such as John Baillie, J.B. Phillips, and C.S. Lewis, for persons whose lives are characterized by the inner life of devotion, the outer life of service, and the intellectual life of thought. These distinctives have also characterized Trueblood's own career.

The Need for Evangelical Maturity

Hestenes' message was the most exegetical of the conference. She interpreted present-day evangelicalism in the light of Paul's Corinthian correspondence. Her analysis noted that: (1) we have been seduced by success, confusing means and ends (2) we have Corinthian standards of leadership, valuing more the superstar than the servant (3) we have acquiesced to superficiality, seeking quick-fixes for problems that took generations in the making (4) and we have an affinity for Ayatollahesque "great Satan" theories to explain why things go wrong ("If you can link your opponents to some 'great

Satan,' then you don't have to address the specifics of their arguments"). It is time for evangelicals to mature, she concluded, especially by "putting behind us old formulas and old dichotomies."

A European Perspective

Finally, in the most intellectually stimulating message of the conference, British evangelical Os Guinness offered a European perspective on American evangelicalism (see article, p. 22). He compared this moment in American history to the evangelical hour in 19th century Britain, which saw an opportunity for authentic revival and social reform. The American concern for religion is not superficial but deeply rooted. Evangelicals can play a strategic role if they maintain the

Christian faith's two major strengths, the lordship of Jesus Christ over every sphere of life and the challenge of being Christian in the world while living in tension with it. Are today's evangelicals doing this? No, Guinness maintained. They are compromising the gospel to gain "success" and conforming to American culture. "Even if we win all the 'right' Christian issues, we may lose America's soul." Will God be God to evangelicals, or will they turn away to idols? "Ascribe glory to the Lord before the darkness falls," he concluded in a somber challenge.

The complete texts of all the presenters' remarks will be printed and published by Eastern College and Seminary before next year's Roundtable, which will focus on "The Sanctity of Life."

A Shared Evangelical Heritage

by Timothy L. Smith

It is a splendid kindness to be asked to comment on an aspect of American and British evangelicalism which has rarely been noticed by commentators or historians: its amazing non-sectarianism. Sectarian competition that once existed within and between various evangelical communities and traditions has steadily declined. Scores of conferences involving many evangelical movements and their supporting denominations take place with almost no expression of sectarian rivalry. Onlookers will find this amazing, since the legend, both in historical accounts and among recent secular observers, is that ecumenicity is a trait of liberal Christianity and sectarian strife a principal feature of old-time Protestantism.

Why is this degree of good fellowship and mutual cooperation possible? It arises from the broad agreements among evangelicals that date from their beginning as a self-conscious Christian movement two hundred and fifty years ago in Scotland, England, Germany, and America. An evangelical, historians can now perceive, is one who, since the time of John and Charles Wesley, George Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards, and August Francke, has believed that his or her religious life should rest fully upon the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures; that the center of those Scriptures is the promise of moral and spiritual rebirth through faith in Jesus Christ and the gift of God's Holy Spirit; and that, on both these accounts, believers should be devoted to evangelism, that is, to persuading lost persons to trust in Christ, and in that faith be born again.

These central affirmations informed American Protestantism throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In 1740, for example, the greatest Puritan pastors of Boston invited George Whitefield to his first evangelistic engagement there. He preached in nearly all of their pulpits and a great religious awakening followed. What prompted them was the reprinting in Boston of several of Whitefield's sermons, including his discourse preached in England three years before on *The Nature and Necessity of the New Birth*.¹ Another example: the first Lutheran pastors in Pennsylvania and New York and southward to Virginia and the Carolinas were Pietists. They came chiefly from the missionary institution at Halle, Saxony, in response to the pleas of Lutheran lay people already in America. They forwarded their petitions through a graduate, Henry M. Muhlenberg, who became the great organizer of colonial Lutheranism.²

American Methodism's vitality stemmed from the same three commitments. Methodism came to America on the eve of the War of Independence, while still a spiritual community within the Church of England. It decisively influenced what became the Virginia and Ohio dioceses of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Though the Methodists separated from their parent communion in 1784, Wesley's followers grew rapidly and by 1850 had become the largest Protestant sect in the United States and Canada.³

Meanwhile, a similarly evangelical Baptist movement emerged out of the most revivalistic wing of Connecticut Puritanism and, through American and English immigrants, in the maritime provinces of Canada.⁴ Transferred to the South by two of its young men who had studied theology at Yale, it began spreading among the plain people of that section, both slaves and free, like a benevolent plague. Though both Methodist and Baptist communions were divided during the long controversy over slavery, the Southern Baptist Convention eventually replaced the Methodist Episcopal Church, North, as America's largest Protestant group.⁵

The followers of Alexander Campbell, a Presbyterian evangelist from Scotland who was briefly a Baptist, now form three denominations: the Churches of Christ, Disciples of Christ, and Churches of Christ and Christian Churches. Congregational independence and adult baptism by immersion have always been as important to them as to Baptists. The nineteenth century forebearers of all three groups rest their faith on the same evangelical principles, though they emphasized reason more in explaining the process of one's embracing the faith by which he or she was born again.⁶

So with the multitude of nineteenth-century Protestant denominations organized among immigrants from Northern Ireland, Scandinavia, Germany, and central and eastern Europe. Without reference to the much-vaunted American frontier environment and often in conscious rejection of some notions that were popular among older American denominations, they formed themselves into religious communities that drew deeply upon British and continental understandings of these same three evangelical ideas.⁷

Likewise, when American Blacks won the freedom to establish their own congregations—a right that white southerners granted them only after the Civil War—they became mostly Methodists or Baptists. Black Christians were not only one hundred per cent American Protestants, as has often been pointed out, but they were and have remained overwhelmingly evangelical, preaching a Bible-centered gospel of the

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new birth and steadily evangelizing their fellow Blacks.⁸

The growing awareness of twentieth-century American and Canadian evangelicals that they are united on these larger issues—a unity only recently rediscovered by the mass media of communication and by some conservative Christians as well—has caused them to think of their movements as compromising the religious majority instead of a disparate body of minority sects. True, they all know that the literary, scientific, and business culture of our times is still moving in a secular direction, and that the clergy in old line denominations are still deeply affected by various kinds of theological liberalism. But evangelicals in all traditions draw together around the three historic principles. Their contest with religious modernism for the soul of America has helped to harden that unity.⁹

were important pioneers in promoting social reforms in England and America. Few realize, however, that multitudes of social reformers were rooted in Puritan, Continental, or Scotch-Irish Calvinist ideas; that Baptist, Lutheran, Episcopal or Anglican, and churches of Christ or "Christian" ministers were in the past deeply concerned about social justice; and that small denominations such as the Seventh-day Adventists, German Baptists, and the many kinds of Mennonite and Scandinavian free churches emphasized particular social ministries. Moreover, to ponder the tremendous communities of Black Christians, now organized mostly into various Baptist, Methodist, and Pentecostal denominations, is to be reminded that these peoples, like Puerto Rican Pentecostals and Mexican-American Roman Catholics, have not needed a "social gospel" because they always understood the gospel to be both social

Probably at no time since the Reformation has there been less sectarian feeling among a broad and diverse community of Christians than now exists among Bible-believing Protestants.

Except for extremists in each tradition, probably at no time since the Reformation has there been less sectarian feeling among a broad and diverse community of Christians than now exists among Bible-believing Protestants. With our Pentecostal brothers and sisters leading the way, we have managed to reach out in fellowship and thought about the Holy Spirit to those Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Christians who share the current religious awakening.¹⁰ We have rejoiced in the steady multiplication of pastors and congregations in the old line Protestant denominations who accept and promote the evangelical movement, often seeding those denominations with young clergymen trained in evangelical theological seminaries like Fuller, Bethel, Gordon-Conwell, and Southwestern Baptist.¹¹ Evangelical ministers of every denomination and none, and professionals who support them in colleges and welfare institutions, nearly all read *Christianity Today*, the world's largest non-denominational journal. Most of them are members or adherents of the vast umbrella organization called the National Association of Evangelicals.¹²

Looking back, we can see that one of the self-deceptions of the modern ecumenical movement is that because of its emphasis on biblical doctrines, traditional and evangelical Protestantism helped to divide Christianity into a multitude of warring sects. Self-proclaimed ecumenists have freely offered their description for that strife: jettison orthodox Christian doctrines and adopt a program of social action that is adapted to modern ethical demands and rooted in the perceptions of modern culture.¹³ In response, ironically, modern evangelicals, particularly the fundamentalist party, have sometimes believed this libel, and acted as though one's orthodoxy is certified by abrasive dogmatism in theology, silence on social issues, and advocating nationalistic and economic doctrines shared by the most conservative secular politicians.¹⁴

The shared heritage of evangelical social concern, however, especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, exposes the modernist self-deception for what it often is: an excuse to lay aside the old-time religion, to reject biblical Christianity. For in historical fact, the concern for social justice has been a major contribution of evangelical faith to modern culture. And it has sprung in various ways from every one of the religious traditions that today contribute to the evangelical movement. To this aspect of the historic consensus I now direct your attention.

Most literate Christians know that Wesleyans and Quakers

and spiritual.

True enough, the several Wesleyan denominations that flourished in the nineteenth century, along with small but earnest communities of Quakers, deserve much credit for their promotion of peace, the liberation of women, the abolition of slavery, justice to native Americans, and the crusade against the manufacture and sale of liquor (which they considered a social blight spread by the greed of brewers and saloonkeepers). Moreover, they usually championed the cause of poor people in British and American political contests.¹⁵

However, I wish to stress here, the role of non-Wesleyans and non-Quakers in promoting social justice. The Lutheran Pietists in America, the New England Puritans, the Scotch-Irish and other Presbyterians, the German Peace-church people, the Baptists, and the Scandinavian Christians, of both Lutheran, Covenant, and Free Church backgrounds helped shape the Christian heritage of social concern in America. And though I do not have the space to underline it, the same can be said of the social convictions of many Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christians as well, especially whenever the evangelicals among them turned their attention to biblical ethics. In short, no one spiritual tradition in Christianity, but all of them, whenever they became preoccupied with trying to follow Moses and the prophets, Jesus and the apostles, developed not only an individual ethic of righteousness and love, but a social one as well.

The story begins with the Protestant Reformation and the proliferation of evangelical movements that followed in its train. John Calvin's hopes for a Christian social order in sixteenth-century Geneva, Switzerland, helped to shape a Scottish Presbyterian culture and to provoke the Puritan revolution in England. That revolution made English Puritanism a model for all kinds of religious movements of social transformation, including the establishment of the Puritan Commonwealth in New England. Later, that Puritan tradition encouraged nineteenth century Congregationalist and Presbyterian pastors to embrace the goal of building the kingdom of God on earth.¹⁶

Less perhaps can be said about Martin Luther, but Lutheran scholars now stress the Reformer's teaching, especially in his later years, that Christians must live a life of holy deeds, and that these are not human works but the fruit of divine grace.¹⁷ The step from that understanding to a commitment to charity, mercy, and justice toward all persons is a small one, and Lutheran pietists of all descriptions often took it, both in Europe

and America. Hence the multitude of orphanages, homes for the aged, and schools that they founded under the leadership of August H. Francke and Henry M. Muhlenberg.¹⁸ Pastors who came from Germany in the nineteenth century to serve relatively recent immigrants brought a similar consciousness of social obligation to many German-American evangelicals. Typical, for example, was the role that Gustav Niebuhr played in the mixed Lutheran and Reformed Synod that nurtured his two sons, H. Richard and Reinhold Niebuhr, famous ethicists in the generation that preceded our own.¹⁹

after, the Southern Baptist Convention furthered the idea of the sovereignty and independence of each congregation, even while it was making Southern culture overwhelmingly Baptist.²⁴

Out of these early commitments to social idealism emerged the nineteenth century evangelical passion to build God's kingdom on earth. The spark of the social flame was no doubt the emergence of hopes for the near onset of the millennium, the biblical thousand years of peace on earth. Scholars often attribute the millennial idea to Jonathan Edwards, even though

The concern for social justice has been a major contribution of evangelical faith to modern culture.

Continental backgrounds of the tradition of social reform are also evident from the work of Mennonites, Brethren, Moravians, and other German "Peace Christians," as they were called. True, many Mennonites championed the idea of "two kingdoms," one divine and the other human, to both of which Christians belonged; and they tended across the years toward increasing preoccupation with the relationship of their own "separated" congregations to the kingdom of God.²⁰ All these groups, however, were committed to an ethic of non-violence. They refused to serve in armies, bear arms, swear oaths in courts of law, or otherwise to give the heart's allegiance to a worldly kingdom—an attitude still evident in the well-known encounters of the Amish Mennonites with the state. They have kept alive the idea that Christianity is a counter-cultural religion, and point out that a merely civil or public faith allows all kinds of corruptions of Christian ethics in the name of national patriotism.²¹

Anglican traditions of social justice contributed much to the American scene as well, from the colonial period forward. True, the Church of England's record on slavery in the colonies was a sad one. After some uncertainty in the seventeenth century, they surrendered to the insistence of colonial planters that the new spiritual status of converted slaves did not free them from their bonds. During that century also they abandoned much of their dream of evangelizing and educating the native Americans or American Indians, as many still call them. The story of the Anglican effort to educate the poor English-speaking children, however, both in the Old World and the New, is part of the background of George Whitefield's orphanage in Georgia and, indeed, of much else in the humanitarian bent of Whitefield and the Wesleys.²²

John Wesley's Methodists, of course, took a much sturdier stand against slavery, both on England's Caribbean sugar islands and in the new American nation. In the United States, forty years of Southern resistance to that stand eventually frustrated Bishop Francis Asbury's effort to build an antislavery communion. During the early years of Methodism in America, however, Southern whites set their slaves free on becoming church members. Later on, when freeing one's slaves became illegal, Bishop Caspers of South Carolina, one third of whose members were Black, carried on an impressive ministry of evangelism and oral education for slaves.²³

Meanwhile, in Britain and America, that wing of the Baptist movement which took its stand for the sovereignty of the congregation, for adult baptism by immersion, and for the separation of church and state led the way in resisting the power of the political authorities to impose their will on the churches. They gave sturdy support to the independency of New England Baptists before and after the Revolution. There-

the Northampton pastor got only a few lines into print about it during his lifetime. The idea's first great American advocate was Samuel Hopkins, Puritan pastor at Newport, Rhode Island, during the decades following the American War for Independence. His widely circulated lectures on the millennium, like a half-dozen of John Wesley's later sermons, gave a rational and biblical basis for expanding Christian hopes.²⁵ However, these hopes sprang as much from the popular optimism generated by the settlement of a new and now republican nation composed of peoples from many European and African lands. Christians on both sides of the Atlantic believed God was moving forward the timetable of human destiny, in response to worldwide evangelism. Clergymen in all nations urged believers to seek an outpouring of the Spirit of God that would prepare the kingdom for the King.²⁶

Thus in the late 1770s, millennialism sparked the organization of the New York and Connecticut Missionary Societies. Both were modeled on recent British examples and aimed at supporting ministers on the frontiers of western New York and Pennsylvania.²⁷ The philosophy and aims of the missionary movement were, then, international from the start. Witness the close association of millennialism with overseas missions, first in Scotland and England and shortly afterward in America, where both were joined in the famous "Haystack prayer meeting" conducted in 1812 by students at Williams College in western Massachusetts. From that point forward the missionary idea drew deeply upon the internationalism that pervades the New Testament Scriptures. These declare that the teaching and ministry of Christ and the apostles were not the announcement of a new faith but an extension to all peoples of the promises God had first made to Abraham and his descendants.²⁸

As with John Wesley's millennial views, faithfully understood and reproduced in the preaching of generations of his British and American followers, so with those of Lutheran and Reformed evangelicals of the nineteenth century: in our modern sense they were neither premillennial nor postmillennial. Rather, they declared that the Christian churches must seek the evangelization of the whole world amidst an outpouring of the Spirit, and so hasten Christ's return. His coming would make the hoped-for thousand years of peace a social reality. In that day, they were convinced, and increasingly as it drew near, justice would roll down from the mountains, the burdens of poverty would be lifted, and all forms of oppression, including slavery, war, ignorance, and exploitation, would pass away.²⁹

Millennial hope, then, underlay all aspects of nineteenth century social idealism. I did not understand this fact when I wrote my first book, *Revivalism and Social Reform*, and made

the chapter on the anticipation of Christ's kingdom the last and climactic one, rather than, as I should have, making it the first and foundational one.³⁰ One of my early graduate students, Garth Rosell, now academic vice-president at Gordon-Conwell Seminary, later taught me what reading broadly in the evangelical literature of the first two decades of that century has fully confirmed: millennialism is a parent to the nineteenth century revivalism, not its offspring.³¹

effort to regulate private morality.³⁸ Only after the adoption of that amendment, when enforcement of the Volstead Act fell upon individuals, did publicists and politicians who opposed Prohibition convince a majority of American voters that the hope to regulate morality had in fact motivated temperance reformers. After fifteen years of capricious enforcement, the nation turned against Prohibition.³⁹ Historians have ever since neglected the true story of the "noble experiment."

Advocates of the Marxist notion that evangelical Christianity is an opiate against privation, that it so focuses converts' minds on heaven that they are of no earthly good, should consider the Blacks. Thousands of them became Christians while yet under slavery, and their hopes for heaven sustained both their submission and resistance to terrible injustice.

Moreover, millennialism pervaded the nineteenth century peace movement. About this I also knew little, and felt less, during the period when I was writing that book. The association of the two ideas, I now see, was close and widespread. Edward Hick's famous painting, "The Peaceable Kingdom," showed all kinds of lions lying down with the lambs. Not only Quakers, Mennonites, and German Brethren, but New England Congregationalists and Southern Presbyterians were regional leaders.³² A small but significant minority of American Methodists, in Canada and all parts of the United States, kept alive the revolutionary commitment to non-violence, though here as elsewhere in the nineteenth century radical Christian pacifism was rare.³³ Moreover, the several wars fought by the United States, from the Mexican to the Spanish-American, each muffled for a time the rhetoric of peaceableness.³⁴

But concern for peace was so strong that on the eve of the Civil War deeply anti-slavery Christians like the Methodist lay evangelist, Phoebe Palmer, suppressed their abolitionist feelings out of fear that they might help drive the nation into civil war. William Lloyd Garrison championed both abolitionism and peace. He argued throughout his life for peaceable secession by the North.³⁵ When the nation drifted into the bloodiest war of the century, freeing the slaves was not its first aim, but the preservation of the union. Only in retrospect can we view Lincoln's wartime emancipation of the slaves still under Confederate rule as a "good" outcome. "Good," that is, if one disregards the alternative of peaceable and compensated emancipation. Such a politically realistic policy might have overcome the stubbornness of the most radical pro-slavery Southerners.³⁶

The temperance movement was equally important to nineteenth century evangelicals. It eventually succeeded after one hundred years of political agitation. The movement sprang up during the first decade of the nineteenth century, when the protest against New England manufacturers and sellers of rum became an important expression of the evangelical desire to save the poor from exploitation by the wealthy. By the late 1820s, New England Congregationalist pastors were turning against all use of alcohol, and Charles G. Finney was making total abstinence, like peace and anti-slavery, the obligation of all Christians. It was a centerpiece of the social reforms he advocated during the 1830s in his New York City congregation as well as at his college at Oberlin, in Ohio.³⁷

The principal thing to understand here is that right down until the passage during World War I of the Eighteenth Amendment, which enabled Congress to ban the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors, the movement seemed to its sponsors a crusade for social justice, rather than simply an

The "common school" movement, later called the campaign for free public schools, was even more important to nineteenth century Christians. Poor children rarely had access to the private schools conducted by either entrepreneurial teachers or religious congregations. In the new settlements of the West, struggling congregations were usually unable to maintain schools at all. Though on the northern sector of successive frontiers, from New York to Oregon, settlers from Puritan New England led the way, there and in most of the Ohio and lower Mississippi valleys the great diversity of denominations, all wishing to educate children, was a formidable obstacle.⁴⁰

Clergymen and laypersons gradually realized that the moral values essential to both democracy and Christian faith could be taught to all children in common, without favoring the doctrines of any one sect. Often Eastern churches sent out educational missionaries to the West, directing them to organize non-denominational "common schools" in frontier towns which had none, then to do gospel work on Sundays in church buildings belonging to one or another denomination.⁴¹ From the experience of many persons, then, the conviction emerged that free and tax-supported education for poor children was the social obligation of all Christians.

Little wonder that the public schools were so infused with the spirit of Protestant evangelical faith. At times, they became suspect to both Jews and Roman Catholics, the one wishing them to be less Christian and the other, more Catholic. After some slight modifications in larger cities, however, the campaign for free, and later for compulsory, public schooling moved ahead. One of its major themes was social justice for poor children.⁴²

Likewise, the anti-slavery movement won favor among a broad company of evangelicals. The story of widespread religious support of it has been told in a number of volumes, including my own, but I wish to stress here three neglected aspects of that story. First, the opposition of Black Christians to slavery, even when expressed by nothing more than flight, gained strength from their identification with the enslaved Hebrews, whom God liberated under Moses. Advocates of the Marxist notion that evangelical Christianity is an opiate against privation, that it so focuses converts' minds on heaven that they are of no earthly good, should consider the Blacks. Thousands of them became Christians while yet under slavery, and their hopes for heaven sustained both their submission and resistance to terrible injustice. Neither before nor after Civil War do we find any pro-slavery Black Christians; almost none made compromises with the institution that were not forced upon them. Escaped slaves who became pastors of free Black

churches in the North, such as the notable Prebyterian W.J.C. Fennington, author of *The Fugitive Blacksmith*, expressed an understanding of Christianity that scholars have only recently begun to appreciate.⁴³ Once the Civil War liberated them, an amazing number of Black church organizations moved above-ground in every part of the South. They became the centers of Afro-American education and communal life precisely because Christianity had won such deep loyalty among the enslaved.⁴⁴

Second, the support many white evangelicals gave to colonizing slaves in Africa—a grand piece of wishful thinking or, as some steadfastly believe, a substitute for dealing honestly with the problem of the free Negro in America—drew in some cases, at least, upon three reasonable notions. It seemed to its evangelical proponents a way of helping to Christianize African societies, an act of restitution of having torn Black persons from their homelands, and a means of hastening through both these means the dawn of the millennium.⁴⁵

Third, Black education both before and after the Civil War was a major evangelical concern. After state law made it illegal to teach slaves to read and write, Methodists in South Carolina carried on for thirty years an extensive program of oral education, aimed at helping Black people to learn all they possibly could without knowing how to read. Secretly, of course, and in very large numbers, Blacks taught one another to read; and, in defiance of the law, a few whites taught their slaves to do so. After the Civil War, when missionaries from the North began to pour into the South, their first preoccupation was the education of Black people. They founded scores of academies and a few struggling colleges like Hampton Institute. A multitude of small and primitive church buildings served as schoolhouses on weekdays, well into the twentieth century. Long before this educational crusade became a campaign to reconstitute the culture of the South in ways that both secular and religious persons supported, a vast program of education, both rural and urban, had been set in motion. It combined white missionary zeal with the social aspirations of Black Christians.⁴⁶

Since Black education, like the abolitionist agitation that preceded it, focused attention upon the poverty and social need, the freed slaves developed an understanding of Christianity that made compassion and social justice central. Toward the end of the century, when whites developed various forms of social Christianity, Black religion showed little change. They had always considered the gospel to be as much concerned with social as with individual ethics.⁴⁷

But for whites, the emergence of a socially concerned Christianity was a great leap forward. Robert H. Bremner believes the discovery of poverty in the United States took place only with the arrival of vast numbers of penniless European immigrants in the 1880s. Evangelical Christians discovered it, however, in the three decades preceding the Civil War. By the 1840s, groups of pastors and lay people were organizing volunteers to visit weekly the destitute families in each block of every sizeable city in America, looking for cases of illness, hunger, or cold that required immediate help.⁴⁸ After several years, interdenominational city missionary societies came into existence in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, then in smaller cities. Their organization fell chiefly to Congregationalists and Presbyterians, although many others assisted. They have survived down to the present day, as did many of the mission institutions organized just after the War, in emulation of Jerry Macaulay's famous one in New York City.⁴⁹

During the same period, Christian movements to aid the impoverished masses in Britain and Canada caused many Anglican and most Methodist leaders to support various pro-

grams of social and political reform. These gave rise at last to a full-blown Christian socialism.⁵⁰ In less dramatic ways, Bernard Semmel has pointed out, Methodists there also helped reshape the personality and morals of people who must for the foreseeable future live in industrial cities and learn the self-reliance that free enterprise capitalism demands.⁵¹

At the end of the nineteenth century, when German Baptist Walter Rauschenbusch accepted a pastorate in New York City's "Hell Kitchen," his ministry to the poor, initially a thoroughly evangelical one, was simply the most socially radical of a multitude of missionary and institutional church ventures which aimed to show gospel compassion to the masses.⁵² The 1890s witnessed an immense expansion of the English-born Salvation Army and its offspring, the Volunteers of America, in this country. Evangelicals organized myriads of social service agencies— orphanages, rescue homes for unwed mothers, and employment bureaus, for example—to help poor people whose migration to the city had produced not success but abject failure.⁵³

That providing medical care for the needy should have followed in the train of all of these endeavors is no surprise. The deaconess movement, as I pointed out earlier, gave early leadership to it. Lutheran and Methodist organizations gave the deaconess name to some of the finest hospitals in the nation. Many of these began as nursing homes. So with the Baptist hospitals that dot both northern and southern cities.⁵⁴ Even small sects, thought to be concerned only with spiritual matters, got into the act. Seventh-day Adventists established "sanitariums" in many states.⁵⁵ The first piece of printing by Phineas F. Bresee's infant Church of the Nazarene in California was a small card announcing the opening of services in Redmen's Hall, Los Angeles. On the back, the card announced that the daughter of Bresee's co-founder, Joseph P. Widney (a prominent physician and president of the infant University of Southern California) had drawn together a group of practical nurses, who offered to provide free medical care for the poor in the neighborhood.⁵⁶

Meanwhile, of course, every immigrant people was developing a sense of solidarity and mutual aid that reflected both its religious traditions and its understanding of the call of Christ in the modern world. The World Parliament of Religions, at the Chicago Exposition of 1893, gave a great boost to such social idealism; so did the Men and Missions Movement twenty years later.⁵⁷ Dutch immigrants, for example, pondered deeply the meaning of the socially concerned Calvinism of Abraham Kuyper, a religious and political leader in Holland who became prime minister of that country in 1901. Kuyper rejected all views of evangelical Christianity that would deny the believer's responsibility to help Christianize the culture. Both at Hope and Calvin Colleges, in central Michigan, his ideas inspired three generations of Dutch-American Christians. At Calvin, they helped to spark the evangelical denomination called the Christian Reformed Church. At one crucial point in its early history, the latter group opted for Prohibition, even though beer-drinking had been customary in Dutch culture. The persuasive argument was that the Bible commanded that we should love our neighbors as ourselves. Since evangelical religion aimed to teach Christians how to live by that standard, the strong must help the weak by forswearing alcoholic beverages, and thus encourage total abstinence among poor people!⁵⁸

Conclusions

First, today's Evangelicals for Social Action, World Vision, Sojourners, and the Evangelical Roundtable are not signs of surrender to modern liberal influences but, rather, marks of a

revival of the old-time religion. Although today certain modern ideologies, whether those of liberal democracy, of liberation theology, or of either Christian or Marxian socialism, aim also at social justice, they are much less originators than imitators of an evangelical renewal that has gone on since Wesley's day. True to its several traditions, earnest Christianity roots compassion in the Old and New Testaments.

Second, since the day when John Fletcher tried to mediate the labor grievances of the poor miners in England's Severn Valley, evangelicals have declared that the pursuit of social justice is best carried on by non-violent and moral means. That is true whether Christians champion women's rights, the access of children both born and unborn to a decent existence, or the needs of the poor in Brazilian barrios, Nicaraguan vil-lages, and Ethiopian deserts. It is also true of today's tragic divisions in the Union of South Africa. There, Black and Col-ored peoples are now rejecting any substitute for a just access to the wealth and opportunities of their beloved country.

Third, spiritual Christianity, living on daily instruction and inspiration from the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, is, as it ever has been, the source of that moral power by which many evils in society can be done away. The chief explanation for repeated outbursts of reforming zeal in our several evan-gelical communities has not been political ideology, but the ethics of Moses and Jesus. St. Paul was doubtless thinking of both of them when he wrote that all of the moral law is summed up in the words "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." That some evangelical Protestants refuse to accept this simple lesson from Scripture, in an age when Philippine and Polish Roman Catholics seem to have grasped it, is be-yond my comprehension.

¹ The sermon is being reprinted in my volume, *Whitefield and Wesley on the New Birth*, fall, 1986 (Zondervan Publishing: Grand Rapids, Michigan) the introduction to which spins out the evidence for the preceding points.

² Henry M. Muhlenberg, *The Journals* . . . , trans. Theodore G. Tappert and John W. Dobestien (2 vols.; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1942, 1950), I, 85, 8, 121, 141-2, 145.

³ Winthrop S. Hudson, *Religion in America* . . . (3rd. ed.; New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1981), 179-81; Emory Stevens Bucke, ed., *The History of American Methodism* (3 vols.; Nashville, Tenn.: The Abingdon Press, 1964), I, 115-20, 131, 141-4, 187, 223-5, 238, 296-301; Donald S. Mathews, *Religion in the Old South* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), 28-38.

⁴ C.C. Goen, *Revivalism and Separatism in New England: Strict Congregationalists and Separate Baptists in the Great Awakening* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962); George A. Rawlyk, *Ravished by the Spirit* (Kingston, Ontario: McGill-Queens University Press, 1981).

⁵ Mathews, *Religion in the Old South*, 22-8.

⁶ Alexander Campbell *The Christian System* . . . (4th ed.; Cincinnati: H.S. Bosworth, 1866), 15-23, 30-32, 34, 149-53; Robert E. Hooper, *Crying in the Wilderness: A Biography of David Lipscomb* (Nashville: David Lipscomb College, 1979), 30-3, 123-25, J.W. McGarvey, *Autobiography* . . . (Lexington, Kentucky: College of the Bible, 1960).

⁷ Timothy L. Smith, "Religion and Ethnicity in America," *The American Historical Review*, 83 (December, 1978): 1155-1185. cf., for examples, Milton L. Rudwick, *Fundamentalism and The Missouri Synod* . . . (St. Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 1966), 1-86; James D. Bratt, *Dutch Calvinism in America* . . . (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1984), 1-82.

⁸ Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The "Invisible Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); Owen D. Pelt and Ralph Lee Smith, *The Story of the National Baptists* (New York: Vantage Press, 1960).

⁹ Timothy L. Smith, "The Evangelical Kaleidoscope and the Call to Christian Unity," *The Christian Scholar's Review*, 15 (Spring, 1986): 125-40 (reprinted, with minor revisions from *Mid-stream*, 22 (July/October, 1983): 308-25; Mark Noll, "Evangelicals and the Study of the Bible," and George Marsden "Introduction," in Marsden, ed., *Evangelicalism in Modern America* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1984), vii-xix, 103-21.

¹⁰ See the essays by Athanasios F.S. Emmert, Walter J. Holweger, Donald L. Gelpi, S.J., J. Massynberde Ford and Kilian McDonnell, O.S.B., in Russell P. Spittler, ed., *Perspectives on the New Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1976).

¹¹ Thomas C. Oden, *Guilt Free* (Nashville, Tennessee: The Abingdon Press, 1980), 80-137, is an example. George C. Marsden's forthcoming history of Fuller Theological Seminary will chronicle its influence upon the Baptist and Presbyterian denominations, especially in the Far West.

¹² Joel A. Carpenter, "From Fundamentalism to the New Evangelical Coalition," and Richard N. Ostling, "Evangelical Publishing and Broadcasting," in Marsden, ed., *Evangelicalism*, 3-16, 46-55.

¹³ Even such a neo-conservative ecumenist as Richard John Neuhaus, in his *The Naked Public Square: Religion and Democracy in America* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1984), 22. Cf. James Luther Adams, *Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Culture, Science, and Religion* (New York: Schocken Books, 1970), 1-3, and *passim*.

¹⁴ Richard V. Pierard, "The New Religious Right in American Politics," in Marsden, ed., *Evangelicalism*, 161-74; David O. Moberg, *The Great Reversal: Evangelism versus Social Concern* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1972), 8-45.

¹⁵ James M. Gustafson, *Christ and the Moral Life* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968; reprint, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1977), 70-83, analyzes Wesleyan ethics. See also, Leon O. Hynson, *To Reform the Nation: Theological Foundations of Wesley's Ethics* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Francis & Taylor Press, 1984); and Sydney V. James, *A People Among Peoples: Quaker Benevolence in Eighteenth-Century America* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963).

¹⁶ Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution* (New York: Viking Press, 1972), 11-5, 70-121; Gary Scott Smith, *The Seeds of Secularism: Calvinism, Culture, and Pluralism in America, 1870-1915* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1985), 141-57.

¹⁷ Paul Althaus, *The Ethics of Martin Luther* (Philadelphia: The Fortress Press, 1972); Gustafson, *Christ and the Moral Life*, Chaps. 3-4.

¹⁸ Ernst Stoeffler, *The Rise of Evangelical Pietism* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965).

¹⁹ William G. Crystal, "'A Man of the Hour and the Time': The Legacy of Gustav Niebuhr," *Church History*, 49 (December, 1980): 416-32.

²⁰ Richard McMaster, *Land, Piety, and Peoplehood: The Establishment of Mennonite Communities in America, 1685-1770* (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1985); James C. Juhnke, *A People of Two Kingdoms: The Political Acculturation of the Kansas Mennonites* (Newton, Kansas: Faith and Life Press, 1975).

²¹ Wes Michaelson (of the Sojourners Community), "Evangelicals and Radical Discipleship," Ronald Sider (of Evangelicals for Social Action), "Evangelicalism and the Mennonite Tradition," and C. Norman Kraus (of Goshen College), "Anabaptism and Evangelicalism," in C. Norman Kraus, ed., *Evangelicalism and Anabaptism* (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1979), 63-82, 149-68, and 172-82.

²² John Butler, "Enlarging the Body of Christ: Slavery, Evangelism, and the Christianization of the White South, 1690-1790," in Leonard I. Sweet, ed., *The Evangelical Tradition in America* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1984), 87-112; Frank J. Klingberg, *Anglican Humanitarianism in Colonial New York* (Philadelphia: The Church Historical Society, 1940).

²³ Mathews, *Religion in the Old South*, 138-201, updates the same author's *Slavery and Methodism, a Chapter in American Morality, 1780-1845* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1965), 1-87.

²⁴ Rufus Spain, *At Ease in Zion: Social History of Southern Baptists* (Nashville, Tennessee: Vanderbilt University Press, 1967); essays by Gardner Taylor, Wilfred H. Peterson, Charles G. Adams, and Edwin Scott Gaustad, in James E. Wood, Jr., ed., *Baptists and the American Experience* (Valley Forge, Pennsylvania: The Judson Press, 1978), 39-53, 57-71, 95-118.

²⁵ Samuel Hopkins, *A Treatise on the Millennium* (Boston, 1983); Ernest Lee Tuveson, *Redeemer Nation: The Idea of America's Millennial Role* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 52-136.

²⁶ James W. Davidson, *The Logic of Millennial Thought: Eighteenth-Century New England* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1977), 122-75; Nathan Hatch, "Millennialism and Popular Religion in the Early Republic," in Sweet, ed., *Evangelical Tradition*, 113-30.

²⁷ Richard Pointer, *Pluralism in Early America: Diversity and Religion in Eighteenth-Century New York*, forthcoming at The University of Indiana Press.

²⁸ Timothy L. Smith, "Missions and Millennialism," in Jan Shipps, ed., *Revising America*, forthcoming at The University of Indiana Press; Tuveson, *Redeemer Nation*, 82-5.

²⁹ John Wesley, "The General Deliverance," "The General Spread of the Gospel," and "The New Creation," are in his *Works* (14 vols.; New York, 1872; reprinted, Kansas City, Missouri: Beacon Hill Press, 1978), 241-52, 277-95.

³⁰ Timothy L. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform on the Eve of the Civil War* (Nashville, Tennessee, 1957; reprint: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 258, confesses this and other shortcomings in an "Afterword."

³¹ Garth Rosell, "Charles Grandison Finney and the Rise of the Benevolence Empire," unpub-lished Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Minnesota, 1971.

³² Ronald G. Walters, *American Reformers, 1815-1860* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), discusses "Women and War," in chapter 5, pp. 101-21. Cf. generally Peter Brock, *Pacifism in the United States* . . . (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1968).

³³ Donald and Lucille Dayton, "An Historical Survey of Attitudes Toward War and Peace within the American Holiness Movement," in Paul Hostetler, ed., *Perfect Love and War* . . . (Nappanee, Indiana: Evangel Press, 1974), 136-40.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 141-2; Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Lewis Tappan and the Evangelical War Against Slavery* (New York: Atheneum Press, 1971), 248-68, 328-46.

³⁵ Aileen Kraditor, *Means and Ends in American Abolitionism: Garrison and His Critics on Strategy and Tactics, 1834-1850* (New York: Random House, 1969) chapter 4; James Brewer Stewart, *Holy Warriors: The Abolitionists and Slavery* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1976), 30-1, 88-95, 165-6; Charles E. White, *The Beauty of Holiness: Phoebe Palmer as Theologian, Revivalist, Feminist, and Humanitarian*, forthcoming, Zondervan Publishing House.

³⁶ Stewart, *Holy Warriors*, 147-77.

³⁷ Anne C. Loveland, *Southern Evangelicals and the Social Order, 1800-1860* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), 130-58; Barbara Leslie Epstein, *The Politics of Domesticity: Women, Evangelism, and Temperance in Nineteenth-Century America* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1981).

³⁸ Ruth Bordin, *Women and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981); James H. Timberlake, *Prohibition and the Progressive Movement, 1900-1920* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1963).

³⁹ Paul A. Carter, *The Decline and Revival of the Social Gospel . . . 1920-1940* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1954).

⁴⁰ Lawrence Cremin, *American Education: The National Experience, 1783-1876* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 17-102.

⁴¹ Timothy L. Smith, *Uncommon Schools: Christian Colleges and Social Idealism in Midwestern America, 1820-1950* (Indianapolis, Indiana: Indiana Historical Society, 1978); David Tyack, "The Kingdom of God and the Common School," *Harvard Educational Review*, 36 (1966): 447-69.

⁴² Timothy L. Smith, "Protestant Schooling and American Nationality, 1800-1850," *The Journal of American History*, 53 (March, 1967): 679-95; Cremin, *American Education*, 148-85.

⁴³ Timothy L. Smith, "Slavery and Theology: The Emergence of Black Christian Consciousness in Nineteenth-Century America," *Church History*, 31 (December, 1973): 497-512; Vincent Harding, "Religion and Resistance Among Antebellum Negroes, 1800-1860," in John M. Mulder and John F. Wilson, *Religion in American History: Interpretive Essays* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1978), 270-87.

⁴⁴ James M. McPherson, *The Abolitionist Legacy: From Reconstruction to the NAACP* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1975), 143-60, and *passim*, recounts the evangelical legacy, both black and white.

⁴⁵ Loveland, *Southern Evangelicals*, 213-6. Cf. P.J. Staudenraus, *The African Colonization Movement, 1816-1865* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961).

⁴⁶ McPherson, *Abolitionist Legacy*, 161-295, spells out the long story. See above, note 23; and Cf. Timothy L. Smith, "Progressive and Americanism Education, 1880-1920," *The Harvard Educational Review*, 31 (Spring, 1961): 168-93.

⁴⁷ Ronald S. White, Jr., and Charles Howard Hopkins, *The Social Gospel: Religion and Reform in Changing America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976).

⁴⁸ Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *Religion and the Rise of the American City: The New York City Mission Movement, 1812-1870* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1971). Cf. Robert H. Bremner, *From the Depths: The Discovery of Poverty in the United States* (New York: New York University Press, 1956).

⁴⁹ Smith-Rosenberg, *Religion and . . . the City*; and Aaron I. Abell, *The Urban Impact upon American Protestantism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1943).

⁵⁰ Robert T. Handy, "The Early Days of Christian Socialism in America, 1900-1920," *Church History*, 21 (1952): 39-54.

⁵¹ Bernard Semmel, *The Methodist Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 96-110, and *passim*.

⁵² Robert T. Handy, ed., *The Social Gospel in America, 1870-1920: Gladden, Ely, Rauschenbusch* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966).

⁵³ Norris, Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums: Evangelical Social Work, 1865-1920* (Metuchen, New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1977). Cf. Ross L. Finney, *Personal Religion and the Social Awakening* (Cincinnati: Methodist Book Concern, 1913), 1-35.

⁵⁴ Ruth Fritz Meyer, *The Role of Women in the Church From Bible Times Up To and Including a History of the Lutheran Woman's Missionary League . . .* (St. Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 1967).

⁵⁵ Leroy Edwin Froom, *Movement of Destiny* (Washington, D.C.: Seventh-Day Adventist Publishing House, 1971).

⁵⁶ Flyer, dated October, 1895, in Bresee Archives, Point Loma Nazarene College, San Diego, California.

⁵⁷ Gary S. Smith, *The Seeds of Secularism*, 142-45.

⁵⁸ Bratt, *Dutch Calvinism in Modern America*, 73-4.

The Black Contribution to Evangelicalism

by James Earl Massey

The evangelical faith has meant, and continues to mean, much to Black Americans. At this time when Evangelicalism has re-emerged as a potent presence in American life, I want to discuss what Black Americans have contributed to this mosaic-like spiritual grouping and movement.

It has been difficult to trace those contributions. Almost since the beginning of the black presence, in this land, blacks have been receiving from a biblically-based message, testing and proving the viability of that message, sharing their spiritual experiences, and passing on the evangelical heritage with concern, creativity, and gusto.

I

Foremost among the many contributions blacks have made to evangelicalism is the *development of black evangelical churches*.

In speaking about "black evangelical churches," I am referring to those congregations and denominations which took their rise in history under the evangelical witness and work of alert and intense black preachers. More often than not, these were servants of the Lord who found no full welcome in white churches because of racist barriers against open fellowship.

Black religious separatism was not initially something that evangelical blacks desired. Historian Albert J. Raboteau, assessing the black experience in American Evangelicalism during and after slavery, commented:

The opportunity for black religious separatism was due to the egalitarian character of evangelical Protestantism; its necessity was due, in part, to the racism of white Evangelicals.¹

But something more must be said. The separateness forced upon black evangelicals became a vehicle for the full assertion of black independence and black pride. The very fact that blacks became and remained Christian in the face of racist barriers against them was proof that the essence of Christianity was not the white man's creation or property. When black believers designated their groupings as "African Methodist" or "African Baptist," it was their way of affirming themselves while staking their claim in a distinctive system of spiritual life. The existence of black churches allowed blacks a spiritual home, a meaningful social setting, and a political base from which to engage the forces of a racist society.²

The majority of black churches across our nation are rooted in the evangelical faith. There are some critics who seek to dispute this fact. Having identified some evident weaknesses within black churches—i.e., a seeming self-preoccupation, a lack of historical perspective regarding the wider Church, and the presence of a strong folk religion culture at work in black

belief—some critics have questioned whether an adequate biblical frame of reference still informs and controls black faith.³

The truth is that a strong commitment to the gospel message still pervades the majority of black church groups. The black churches still insist on a biblically-based faith, still teach that the revelation of God is in Jesus, and that Scripture is the Word of God for all of life. There is still strong concern among black believers to accent the saviorhood, lordship, and "onliness" of Jesus Christ. The biblical message is still being proclaimed in black pulpits about the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit, the expected return of the Lord, and final judgment of history by a just God. These faith tenets I have mentioned are some of the theological factors which mark evangelicalism.⁴ Black evangelicals are not deficient in their theology, even though they often differ with white evangelicals over what should be understood as the social implications of the faith.

II

A second contribution blacks have made to evangelicalism is a *musical tradition that encourages self-expression in worship*. It is a tradition that not only honors biblical faith but personal experiences of life as well. This musical tradition allows the whole self to be expressive in the public worship of God.

This tradition of personal expressiveness in worship dates back as early as the slavery era, when black slaves created such Spirituals as "Nobody Knows De Trouble I See," "Steal Away to Jesus," and "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?" to name a few,⁵ but it became increasingly evident to others through the traditional Gospel music that developed and flourished in the black urban churches. The many compositions of the Rev. Charles Albert Tindley (1851?-1933) fall into this category. Tindley was a famous black United Methodist preacher and song-writer, and his soul-stirring musical works became widely known and used. Tindley's style and focus on personal experience heavily influenced the later development of the sacred Gospel Songs under such composers as Thomas A. Dorsey (b. 1899), the "Father of Gospel Music." This later style was characterized by a piano (or organ) improvising on the melody and harmonics of a song while the singer(s) improvised on the words.⁶ Tindley's work also influenced Lucie Campbell (1885-1963). Campbell wrote "I Need Thee Every Hour" and "He'll Understand, and Say 'Well Done!'" Still further development in the Gospel Music tradition took place under Sallie Martin (b. 1896), who wrote "Just a Closer Walk With Thee," and W. Herbert Brewster, Sr. (b. 1899), who wrote "Surely, God Is Able." Martin and Brewster added to the tradition by giving it a stronger flavor from secular rhythms, a less formal use of religious themes, a more entertaining flair, and the use of gospel groups that catered to "Paid Admission" audiences.

While these additional changes in the Gospel Music style after the 1940s still involved words about personal religious

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experience, they had carried the tradition to a point quite removed from the hymn-like style Tindley established in his Jesus-centered songs.

Charles A. Tindley's songs have been incorporated into white denominational hymnals and songbooks. It is not unusual to find white evangelical soloists singing such songs as "Nothing Between," and white choirs doing "Beams of Heaven."⁷ Interestingly, both of these songs illustrate the ever-present focus in black Christian worship upon Jesus as religious *subject*, on the one hand, and as religious *object* of faith, on the other, with concern on the part of the singer to be companioned and assisted by him in life's struggles. The refrain in "Beams of Heaven" affirms this:

*I do not know how long 'twill be, Nor what the future holds
for me. But this I know, if Jesus leads me, I shall get home
some day.*

The evangelical world would be musically poorer apart from the rich and engaging musical contribution from Black Americans.

Tindley's "Nothing Between" is an affirmational statement of faith and an admonishment to the singer(s) to remain true and faithful to Jesus. The first stanza begins:

*Nothing between my soul and the Savior, Naught of this
world's delusive dream, I have renounced all sinful pleasure,
Jesus is mine; there's nothing between.*

and the refrain admonishes:

*Nothing between my soul and the Savior, So that His blessed
face may be seen, Nothing preventing the least of His favor.
Keep the way clear! Let nothing between.*

Tindley's song "Stand By Me" is a prayer addressed to Jesus, asking his companionship and assistance as the changing seasons of life make their demands.

Far more could be said about the way black church music encourages self-expression to God and fellow believers. The acknowledged contagion of this expressiveness stands documented in the continuing popularity black singers and gospel choirs enjoy in inter-racial gatherings. But far more important than such popularity, it must be said—and without fear of over-simplifying a now-complex music culture in the wider Church world—that the present sacred concert culture within which The Gaithers, Sandi Patti, and other whites shine like stars owes more than a little to the black musical tradition. This is so at the level of the free vocal style, the lively instrumental accompaniment, and the devotional focus on Jesus. The evangelical world would be musically poorer apart from the rich and engaging musical contribution from Black Americans.

III

A third major contribution Black Americans have made to evangelicalism is *an active witness against racism in the Church* and an insistent call for white believers to become more socially responsible and active.

In 1973, historian Earle E. Cairns wrote:

Contemporary Evangelicals, who for a time ignored their responsibility as Christians in Society, are becoming increasingly aware that . . . they have a responsibility to put the principles of Christ into action . . . in the social order in which they live.⁸

Although Cairns did not dwell at length on what had stimulated that awareness, we must remember that he wrote after the Civil Rights Movement had prodded major changes on the social scene during the decades of the 1950s and 1960s. To be sure, some change in evangelical social views was stimulated by Carl F.H. Henry's writings in *Christianity Today* and in strategic books such as his *Aspects of Christian Social Ethics*.⁹ Sherwood Wirt also called attention to several clear issues for response in his *The Social Conscience of the Evangelical*.¹⁰ But we must not overlook the fact that both Henry and Wirt, among others, wrote after much sensitizing about the American social scene had been initiated by socially active black leaders. The "increasing awareness" among evangelicals about social responsibility as Christians was stimulated either directly or indirectly by the clear ethical demands victimized blacks had been calling into attention across the nation.

I am reminded about something that happened in this vein

during a world convention of evangelical leaders during the late 1960s. While attending the World Congress on Evangelism in Berlin, Germany, in November 1966, delegates heard many position papers which treated aspects of the Congress theme: "One Race, One Gospel, One Task." But as the Congress continued across those ten days, we blacks discovered that no attention had been devoted in any of the position papers to the first part of the theme, "One Race," nor had any papers on it been distributed for private reading. The Congress delegates had been drawn together from across the world, literally, and the vast assemblage—representing the largest ecumenical and evangelical gathering of the Church since Pentecost A.D. 33—reflected great diversity of backgrounds, nationalities, geographical locations, and color distinctions, and yet no major statement about the oneness of the human race had been given.

We black American delegates discussed this among ourselves and finally gained an audience with Carl F.H. Henry, the Congress Chairman, to question the evident omission (interestingly, it later came to our attention that some delegates from India, Africa, and South America had also noticed the omission). When we had finished talking with Dr. Henry it was evident that the aspect of the theme had been taken for granted; the planning committee had not assigned anyone to treat it. Dr. Henry apologized on behalf of the planning committee, and he asked us if we would be willing to work at developing a summary statement about "One Race" which would be included in the final report to be distributed to the world press as an outcome of the Congress. A number of us agreed to help develop that statement on race: Jimmy MacDonald, Howard O. Jones, Bob Harrison, Ralph Bell, Louis Johnson, and myself.¹¹

We worked into the late hours of the night, but we managed to finish with a clearly focused statement on race. We called attention to the fact that racism hinders efforts to evangelize. We wrote forthrightly about human equality as a biblical principle following the oneness of the human family under God as Creator. We stressed the imperative of agape love in our dealings with all humans, and the need to reject racial and national barriers which forbid full fellowship and cooperative ministry in the Church. As it turned out, the section we helped to prepare about the worldwide problem of racism was un-

doubtedly the strongest statement evangelicals had ever made on that subject until that time.¹² But given the concern for evangelizing the human race in the present century, we knew that the time had long since passed for making such a clear and forceful statement. We did not offer any distinct strategies for dealing with racism, but our concern at that point was not to prod decision about strategy; it was to give a basic statement that declared our biblical understanding of racism as a social evil, an unjust pattern in society, and a barrier to cooperative evangelism.

It might be helpful to mention a few of the more noted evangelical black leaders who have helped to promote change in race relations within evangelicalism.

A strong commitment to the gospel message still pervades the majority of black church groups. The black churches still insist on a biblically-based faith, still teach that the revelation of God is in Jesus, and that Scripture is the Word of God for all of life.

1. Howard O. Jones, associate evangelist with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association since 1958. To understand the responsible level at which Jones has helped in the struggle, one need only read his book *White Questions to a Black Christian*.¹³ The questions Jones treated in that book were those asked him on the "race question" during evangelistic crusades, at Bible conferences, during missionary conventions, college and seminary engagements, and those sent to him in response to his radio ministry. The motive behind the writing was to provide "a bridge of communication between the races." The book gained a wide hearing and went into several editions.

2. Tom Skinner, national evangelist, whose book *Black and Free* chronicled his movement from a street gang leader in Harlem to a converted spokesman for Jesus across the nation and into other parts of the world.¹⁴ When several hundred black evangelical young people were attending the 1970 Inter-Varsity Missionary Convention at Urbana, Illinois, it was Tom Skinner who used his scheduled address there to interpret their militancy and the need for the rest of the Church to understand it in a positive light.

3. William E. Pannell, an activist-interpreter-evangelist, whose book *My Friend, the Enemy* vividly set forth his personal story of how the Civil Rights Movement helped him to understand how his membership in a majority white church group culture obscured the meaning of his black heritage.¹⁵ Pannell is now a Professor of Evangelism and Director of Black Church Studies at Fuller Seminary.

4. John Perkins, whose Voice of Calvary Ministries in Mississippi, and whose books *Let Justice Roll Down*¹⁶ and *With Justice For All*¹⁷ have marked him as a master planner for racial betterment and church witness. Will Norton, Jr.'s cover story on Perkins in the January 1, 1982 issue of *Christianity Today* was aptly done and properly titled: "John Perkins, The Stature of a Servant."¹⁸

5. William H. Bentley, a Chicago-based minister-theologian who has given steady leadership to the National Black Evangelical Association (founded in Los Angeles in 1963), and has actively sought to promote a distinctly biblical, theological, and social framework of study within which the black perspective can be adequately reflected. During his presidency of the Association, Bentley has stirred the members toward theologizing about social action. In his published history of the NBEA published in 1979, Bentley explained the origins and focus of the organization:

Because as evangelicals, we have been taught, often

without adequate appreciation of our own social, political, economic, and religious realities, or with insufficient understanding of our capabilities and gifts—to view ourselves as others see us, the first step toward answering the question of who we really are must come from the awareness of the frame of reference we are to locate within in order to know ourselves. In this we do not deny the correctness, within limits, of the view of ourselves others have of us. We cannot see ourselves as others see us. But the point made is that we cannot allow the *determination* of who we are to be placed into, or remain as the case may be, outside ourselves and in the hands of others, no matter who they are.¹⁹

The concern was to understand blackness as a given distinction and God-given distinctive, gaining a proper self-understanding out of which to serve and relate with dignity. "Fellowship and Ministry—these are the poles around the Association resolves."²⁰

William H. Bentley's theological leadership among black evangelicals has been recognized by the wider evangelical world, and it was he who accepted the assignment to write the chapter on "Black Believers in the Black Community" for the book *The Evangelicals*, which was edited by David F. Wells and John D. Woodbridge.²¹ In that chapter, Bentley correctly explained black evangelicalism as a very distinct phenomenon originally rooted in the theology and cultus of the Bible school movement which had trained many of the black evangelicals. The chapter goes on to explain why blacks had dared to differ with white evangelicals over social matters, and why blacks found it necessary to re-define the issues for which white definitions were inadequate. The development of Black Theology is a case in point, and so is the involvement of black evangelical scholarly-pastors who have been active in black caucuses mounted to help effect change in denominational systems where blacks have been in the minority position.

IV

This has been a rather limited survey, treating only three areas of major contribution from among several which more space would have allowed to be added. I have reported with some pointedness about the development of black evangelical churches, the continuing effects of the black church music tradition on the Evangelical music scene, and the prodding work of black evangelicals to help white evangelicals become socially responsible. It was necessary to treat this last contribution at some length because at the very time in the mid-1970s when evangelical Christianity was growing faster in America than any other "brand" or religious movement,—a group of more than forty million by 1977,²² its influence at the social level of American life was not one of strength.

There is more which should be surveyed, i.e., the impact on the evangelical pulpits of the black preaching tradition,²³ insights from black urban churches about ministering in the city, to cite two more. But at this stage I must voice the plea of the writer of the Letter to the Hebrews: "For time would fail me to tell . . ." (11:32b).

¹ "The Black Experience in American Evangelicalism: The Meaning of Slavery," in Leonard I.

Sweet, ed., *The Evangelical Tradition in America* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1984), p. 183.

² On these benefits, see Gayraud S. Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism* (Garden City: Anchor Press, Doubleday, Inc., 1973), esp. Chapter IV, pp. 103-135.

³ See the early criticisms from James M. Washington, *Black Religion* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964). In his *Politics of God*, a later work (1967), Washington altered a few of his initial criticisms of the black churches, and also in his more recent "The Peculiar Peril and Promise of Black Folk Religion," in *Varieties of Southern Evangelicalism*, ed. by David E. Harrell, Jr. (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1981), pp. 59-69.

⁴ See the explication by Donald G. Bloesch, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology*: Vol. I, God, Authority, and Salvation (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), Chapter II ("The Meaning of Evangelical"), pp. 7-23.

⁵ See Eileen Southern, *The Music of Black Americans: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1983 Sec. Ed.), esp. pp. 172-177, 197-200.

⁶ *Ibid.*, see pp. 451-453.

⁷ For the text of these and other Tindley songs, see Ralph H. Jones, *Charles Albert Tindley: Prince of Preachers* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1982), App. B, hymns. See also *Gospel Pearls* (Nashville: Sunday School Publishing Board, National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., 1921), one of the earliest "ecumenical" collections containing black church songs.

⁸ Earle E. Cairns, *The Christian in Society* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1973), p. 162.

⁹ Carl F.H. Henry, *Aspects of Christian Social Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964).

¹⁰ Sherwood Wirt, *The Social Conscience of the Evangelical* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968).

¹¹ Personal reports about the Congress were published in books written by two of this group. See Bob Harrison, with Jim Montgomery, *When God Was Black* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1971), pp. 145-146; James Earl Massey, *Concerning Christian Unity* (Anderson: Warner Press, 1979), pp. 121-126.

¹² The full text of the Congress Statement is available in *One Race, One Gospel, One Task*, Vol. I, Carl F.H. Henry and Stanley Mooneyham, editors (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1967), pp. 5-7.

¹³ *White Questions to a Black Christian* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975).

¹⁴ *Black and Free* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1968).

¹⁵ *My Friend, the Enemy* (Waco, TX: Word Books, Inc., 1968).

¹⁶ *Let Justice Roll Down* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books).

¹⁷ *With Justice For All* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1982).

¹⁸ *Christianity Today*, January 1, 1982, pp. 18-22, with his picture featured on the cover.

¹⁹ William H. Bentley, *National Black Evangelical Association: Reflections on the Evolution of a Concept of Ministry* (Chicago: 1979), p. 67.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

²¹ (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975).

²² See *Time Magazine*, December 26, 1977, feature story, pp. 52-58.

²³ The three preaching textbooks by black author James Earl Massey have had wide use in evangelical theological seminaries: *The Responsible Pulpit* (Anderson: Warner Press, 1974); *The Sermon in Perspective: A Study of Communication and Charisma* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976); *Designing the Sermon: Order and Movement in Preaching* ("Abingdon Preacher's Library") (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980).

The Authority of the Bible: What Shall We Then Preach?

by Paul J. Achtemeier

Let me begin with a passage of Scripture from Paul, and it concerns preaching. He writes to the Roman Christians: "Now how are people going to call upon one in whom they have not believed? But how are they going to believe in the one of whom they have never heard? But how then are they going to hear unless there is preaching?" (10:14). The importance of preaching is thus established: faith depends on it. But that passage also made clear earlier how preaching is to be shaped: to summon forth faith in Christ as Lord (see v. 9). Thus, preaching must be authoritative if it is to summon people to faith in Christ, and to be authoritative it must let God's own call to faith be heard through its words. What we are to preach, therefore, is the authoritative Word of God.

All that only raises the key and critical problem with which we must deal: where do we find authoritative witness to God's Word, so that we may responsibly conform our preaching to that Word, and so fulfill the mandate Paul put upon preachers? Obviously, to know something about Christ, we must turn to the place where we find witness to Christ, and that is in the Scriptures. Our problem is again solved: to preach authoritatively, we must preach the message of Scripture.

But our solution has raised a new question: how do we know Scripture is authoritative? Again our answer is to be found in the witness of the Bible to Christ. Since Christ is God's Word (John 1:14; note well, Christ, not Scripture, is God's Word), the witness to him will be authoritative because finally what we hear is God's own voice through the Scriptural witness to His Son.

Now another problem: how do we know it is God's voice? In the cacophony of culture, ancient as well as modern, how do we know it is God's voice we find in Scripture, and not the voice of an impostor, or even of Satan himself who, Paul tells us, can pose as an angel of light (II Cor. 11:14)? The solution to that problem must come from God himself, whose own Son, sent for the redemption of sinful humanity, is the center of the witness of Scripture. And the God who does not

leave himself without witnesses has in fact sent his Spirit, to testify to our spirits what is the true voice of God. This has found its classical theological formulation in the phrase *testimonium internum spiritus sancti*; the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit, who helps us in our weakness so we may both in our prayer and in our hearing recognize God's own voice.

How do we know that the Spirit that confirms to us that the voice we hear in Scripture is God's voice and actually comes from God? How do we know it is not some deceitful spirit, to whom we should not give heed? After all, we are warned not to believe every spirit we hear, since many are false; rather, we are to test the spirits, to see whether they come from God or from another source (I John 4:1).

What is the test? It is the confession that Jesus, come in the flesh, is our Lord and Savior (I John 4:2; I Cor. 12:3). But that very same Spirit that moves one to that confession is also the Spirit that is given to the Christian community, indeed that constitutes the Christian community through the variety of its gifts (I Cor. 12:4-13). We know we find God's authoritative voice in Scripture therefore when we hear it within the community which confesses Christ as Lord, the community which the Spirit of God has called into existence, which Paul can call the "Body of Christ." It is within the body of Christ, therefore, that we hear the voice of God who speaks through the Word that is his Son.

It is finally the Christian community, created and sustained by God's own Spirit, who determines what in fact constitutes the authoritative speaking and hearing of the Word of God. Such an exegetical and theological conclusion has confirmation of its correctness in the history of the Christian community, since the determination of the boundaries of the canon of Scripture, and hence of the authoritative witness of God's Son, that is to God's Word, is an act of that very community. It was a decision made over several centuries, and within the context of the life and worship of that community. The authoritative canon is therefore based on the collective confession of faith of the Christian community who, having been called into being and sustained by God's own Spirit, has at the prompting of that same Spirit recognized in those Scriptures the true witness to God's own word, namely his Son. The authority of Scripture, therefore, and hence the authority

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of what we preach, is grounded in the Christian community's trust in the faithfulness of God to speak to us, and to send his Spirit so we may hear and understand what God says to us in his Son. So long as the community is faithful to its own confession of faith in God's Son as his Word, that is, so long as it is faithful to Scripture, it can confidently preach the content of that Scripture as the authoritative witness to God's act of mercy for us sinners in his Son.

The church will sicken and die from sermonic opinions which are not based on the authoritative canon of Scripture.

We are not finished; a few questions remain. How, for example, are we to listen to Scripture, to hear the voice of God witnessing to his Son for our own time and for our own culture? After all, our world is not the world of the New Testament. Few of us converse in Koine Greek, or feel the threat of Roman political power whenever we gather as Christians. How are we to find, and then use the authoritative Scriptures, so that what we preach may also share in that authority and that power?

It is at this point that our difficulties arise, as difficulties always arise at the point where theory intersects with hard reality. The desire to be faithful to the faith of the early Christian community which heard in the canon the authoritative witness to God's word to them in his Son, is a powerful and indispensable Christian desire. Such faithfulness is also necessary if we are to carry out the mandate implied in that passage from Romans with which we began, namely that for our preaching to be effective, it must summon those who hear it to confess of Christ as Lord of their lives. Such faithfulness also implies our confidence in the authority of Scripture, so we base our preaching on it; only in that way will our preaching truly summon to Christ. Anything else is to preach not Christ but ourselves as Lord. The church will sicken and die from sermonic opinions which are not based on the authoritative canon of Scripture.

It is precisely the mandate to summon sinful humanity to the confession of the Lordship of Christ, however, that can get those who preach from Scripture into trouble. For preaching to be recognized as authoritative, the authority of its source must be acknowledged. After all, to deny the authority of Scripture is to deny the authority of any preaching which takes that Scripture as its basis, and so it is quite easy to become preoccupied with insuring that our base of authority is recognized and recognizable. We want to secure the authority of Scripture as the authoritative basis of our preaching, so we may fulfill our missionary mandate. It is in the course of doing that that we tend to forget that even within the Christian community, we continue to walk by faith, and not by sight. We tend to forget that the authority of Scripture is not given into our hands to defend and use as we see fit. Its authority remains the Word of God, that is, his Son, to whom Scripture points.

We easily go astray when we seek to assure ourselves and others of that authority of God's Word, instead of letting that Word take its own course. How we would like to walk by sight at least one or two steps, at least in the matter of the authority of Scripture. How we would like at least a little post-parousial vision in our pre-parousial world of faith. Yet to seek such post-parousial certainty in the pre-parousial age is as likely to be successful as were the disciples, according to the Gospel of Mark, in their attempts to find post-resurrection certainty about Jesus during his pre-resurrection life. Their

quest led not to certainty but to misunderstanding so destructive that Jesus could only label it satanic (Mark 8:33). If Mark is correct that it was God's will that such post-resurrection certainty about who Jesus was was not possible to obtain during Jesus' pre-resurrection life (cf. 6:52, with its divine passive, implying God has "hardened their hearts," that is, prevented them from understanding), then to seek comparable certainty now about the authority of Scripture through theories about

the origin or composition of the text would also be unproductive. To press too far is finally the sin of idolatry, in this case seeking to take responsibility for Scriptural authority out of God's hands and to ground it in ways we find useful or even necessary.

The Historical-Critical Method: Two Propositions

All of that raises the question of how we are to listen to Scripture so its authority is preserved, without trying to make it an instrument of sight in a time when only faith is possible. To answer that question, I want to say something about a current method employed in studies of the Bible, the "historical-critical" method. I want to do that by means of two propositions. First: It was precisely the ongoing attempt to understand Scripture that made the rise of the historical-critical method inevitable, if not necessary. Second: The historical-critical method must now be redefined in such a way that it becomes a valid and useful tool for listening to the Scriptures in a way appropriate to their authoritative status.

A variety of historical influences came together to launch what is regularly called the age of critical study of the Bible. First, there was the way the Bible was being used in theology. In the age of Protestant Orthodoxy, which began about the mid-seventeenth century and continued as a dominant way of doing theology in to the mid-to-late eighteenth century,¹ Scripture was regarded as basically a collection of sentences, each having theological meaning in and of itself, a meaning which could be adequately determined apart from the literary context in which the sentence was found. The sentences could thus be used in any order, and indeed a basic task of theology was to arrange them in a systematic order, so the theological intent of Scripture might be unfolded in a coherent way. This demanded that all sentences bearing theological freight be regarded as having equal significance, and that that significance be regarded as remaining, regardless of any context into which they might be placed.

Second was the growing knowledge of the natural world, and a concomitant confidence on the part of secular sciences in their ability to reach final truth about the world. In the process, much of the cosmology and biology of the Bible was recognized as no longer conforming to new discoveries.

A third factor, which originated with the Enlightenment and its motto *ad fontes* ("back to the sources"), had to do with the increasing study of the sources of the ancient world, many of which were becoming available as a result of the beginnings of biblical archaeology. Discoveries of ancient, non-biblical Semitic texts showed that myths of creation and flood were common in the period of the composition of the Old Testament, leading to the perception that if the Bible shared the conceptual and linguistic world of its time, it should be treated as any other literature produced in that time. Again, discov-

eries of papyri from the period of late Greek antiquity showed that the Greek of the New Testament was not a special Greek written by those whose native language had been Hebrew or Aramaic, nor was it the language written by those inspired of the Holy Spirit. New Testament Greek was shown to be not special at all, but rather to be common language (Gk. *koine*) spoken by common people as the *lingua franca* of the ancient world of that period. These discoveries gave further impetus to the idea that one ought to approach the biblical literature in the same way one approached other literature from the same periods.

It was the confluence of these and other factors that led to the rise of the "historical-critical" method of study of the Bible. It meant scholars had to look with the same critical eye at the content of the Bible as they looked at the content of any documents from the same period, and subject them to the same canons of truth to which any other ancient writing was subjected. The confidence of secular science now dictated that what was unacceptable in *any* ancient writing (for example errors in history or natural science) was to be regarded as unacceptable in *all* ancient writings, and hence had to be explained in terms of its mythic origins or else explained away. The historical imperializing inherent in the dominant philosophy of the modern world, namely Hegelianism, dictated that what was old was wrong and the product of ignorance; the task of the modern world was to correct, not to learn from, earlier periods of history.

which need to be taken seriously in their interpretation. One does not treat poetry, for example, as one treats history, or a fable as one treats prophecy. Thus, the major service of the historical-critical method was to rescue us from imposing on ancient literature the suppositions we bring to contemporary literature, and from assuming ancient peoples thought just as we do, and had the same questions we do, and applied the same canons of truth that we do. It effectively demonstrated that the Bible was ancient literature, and came from a conceptual world different from ours.

In application, the historical-critical method eventuated into biblical "Introduction," which, when I went to Seminary, was the content of the required New Testament courses. Introduction in that sense freed Scriptural study from its imprisonment within the theological systems of Protestant Orthodoxy, and allowed it to assume its place within ancient writings among which it was produced. Yet just as one does not need repeated introductions to people, one does not need to continue freeing the Bible from an imprisonment it no longer suffers. A prisoner with a saw does not spend his time sawing all the bars of his cell into smaller and smaller pieces. Once the bars are sawed, it is time to get on with something else.

The same thing is true of the historical-critical method in its original formulation: once it achieved its task of allowing us to see Scripture as ancient documents, its task was finished. In its original configuration, therefore, the historical-critical method was necessarily a transitory phenomenon.

I want to urge that we retain the intention of the historical-critical method, but redefine it to make it more appropriate to a less imperializing attitude toward the past.

One can see all these attitudes to the biblical text being applied to the canonical Gospels, for example, in the lives of Jesus written during the latter two-thirds of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A look at A. Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, will demonstrate that. There it is evident what it meant that one had to apply the canons of historical truth to the content of the Bible, and subject it to the same critical scrutiny to which one would subject, say, the writings of the elder Pliny or the younger Seneca in their descriptions of the world, and of the gods.

In sum, the "historical-critical method," conscious of the historical periods within which biblical literature originated, applied to that literature the critical methods of study derived from examination of other documents and traditions of the same period, informed by a (Hegelian) attitude that as history moved forward, truth was disclosed which had been unavailable to earlier periods, and it sought to find the (reliable) "truth" behind the (basically unreliable) "forms" of biblical literature.

It is not my intention to condemn out of hand that method of biblical study. The results of the historical-critical method, for example, allowed scholars to recognize that biblical literature responded to the same kind of analysis of intention, authorship, readership, date, and provenance as did any other ancient literature of comparable type. It also allowed scholars to recognize different kinds of literature within the Bible; for example, poetry (Psalms), fable (Judg. 9:8-15), prophecy (Amos, Isaiah), history (I Sam.-II Chron.), dialogue (Job), novel (Jonah), letters (the Pauline corpus), "Gospels," (there is still much discussion of their genre; Luke for example seems to be a *bios*), and even a kind of account of the future (Daniel, Rev.).

With the recognition of different kinds of literature there came the realization that each type had different intentions

This brings me to my second proposition, namely, that the time has come to redefine the historical-critical method so it can continue to be a valid method of biblical study. The need for it surely continues; it is the need to protect Scripture from all attempts at domesticating it, as it was domesticated by Protestant orthodoxy. A good current example of that continuing need is the invidious system of apartheid, which basically has theological roots, and which resulted from the uncritical identification by the Boers with Israel, South Africa with Canaan as the promised land, and the indigenous population as the Canaanites. In that perspective, one reads the stories of the conquest in just the way as a part of the South African white population continues to do, seeing itself as the chosen people upholding God's righteousness against the threat of admixture with the Canaanites. Fundamentally, therefore, apartheid represents a hermeneutical error, and it displays the mischief that can result from an uncritical application of ancient traditions to a contemporary situation.

Therefore, I want to urge that we retain the intention of the historical-critical method, but redefine it to make it more appropriate to a less imperializing attitude toward the past, on the assumption that our task is to learn from that past, not to correct it.

First, let me suggest that we understand the term "historical" in the historical-critical method to mean the continuing necessity to recognize that the Bible is the product of another time, and that this must be taken into account whenever we attempt to use it to solve contemporary problems. It points to the distance between our situation and that of the text. Our world is different at least in degree from the historical world of the Bible, and we must keep that in mind. To ignore that fact means inevitably to misinterpret the Bible.

As a direct consequence of that, I would suggest that we regard the term "critical" in the historical-critical method as continuing to point to a critical attitude on our part, but a critical attitude to what *we* think a given passage of Scripture means. We are not to assume that what seems obvious to us as modern people is necessarily the meaning of that passage when seen in its total historical and literary context.

The point of such a "historical-critical" method is to protect the text from us through our own self-critical attitude toward what we find in this text. All ancient artifacts are fragile; they must be given special care or they will be destroyed. That is also true of the biblical text. History has shown, and continues to show, that interpreters can carry on a form of cultural imperialism that will blind us to what the text in fact can tell

us about the ways of God with humanity. In that case, the authority of the Bible for our task of preaching will be ignored, as we resolutely preach ourselves, rather than Christ as Lord, and as we bend our precious biblical heritage into forms we are sure it ought to have assumed.

What shall we then preach? We are to preach Christ as Lord, as the only authority for a God-starved world, and in a way that allows the text to speak its word of judgment and grace to us who preach, as well as to those to whom we preach.

¹ For a summary of this kind of theology, the best handbook for the Reformed positions is Heinrich Hepp, *Reformierte Dogmatik*, new ed. Ernst Bizer; Kreis Moers: Buchhandlung des Erziehungsvereins Neukirchen, 1935); for the Lutheran positions see Heinrich F.F. Schmid, *Die Dogmatik der Evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche*, 7th ed.; (Guetersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1893).

The American Hour, The Evangelical Moment

by Os Guinness

Raymond Aron once remarked that few people are contemporaries of their own generation. Usually behind the times and largely gaining our understanding second-hand, most of us find it hard to keep up with what is happening and harder still to make sense of it. And the modern explosion of information only makes the problem worse. Most people therefore find themselves strung out somewhere between the extremes of the "Happiness-is-a-small-circle" philosophy and the phenomenon of Daniel Boorstin's "Homo-up-to-datum," the one irresponsible and the other both idolatrous and illusory.

How are we as followers of Christ to steer a course between these extremes and become unriddlers of our times? The challenge is to turn from the modern preoccupation with "know yourself" and to direct the alternative, "know your moment," toward the biblical task of "reading the signs of the times" and "interpreting the hour." In an era calling forth such claims as "an opportunity unprecedented in the twentieth century" for evangelicals (Ron Sider) or "the greatest opportunity since the Reformation" (Richard Lovelace), this goal is obviously vital.

Well aware of the perils of prediction, whether spiritual or secular, and renouncing all pretensions to be a prophet or futurist, I offer the following observations as one Christian's attempt to assess one aspect of the extraordinary times in which we live. The thrust of the argument is carried in raising three sets of questions—three preliminary ones, three main and three concluding.

Whose Moment?

For Christians the form of this first preliminary question must always be, "Whose?", and, "For Whom?" Quite different from current terms such as "window of opportunity" or being "on a roll," a biblical moment is never chosen or interpreted at will. It is essentially God's moment and a matter of his sovereign initiative.

Yet it is God's moment for someone, and one question today is, For whom? After his visit to the U.S. in 1921, G.K. Chesterton wrote, "So far as democracy becomes and remains Catholic and Christian, that democracy will remain demo-

cratic. Insofar as it does not, it will become wildly and wickedly undemocratic." Six-and-a-half decades later, this comment appears prophetic rather than simply partisan or an instance of Chestertonian cleverness.

With Rome as the center of gravity in the Christian world, the Roman Catholic Church has become the largest community in Christendom and the largest single denomination in the U.S. Considering such strengths as its ancient tradition, its hierarchical structures, its aesthetic richness and its cogent (if somewhat delayed) defense of democratic pluralism, there is little wonder that many observers, such as Richard John Neuhaus and William Miller, have declared that this is "the Catholic moment."

Yet alongside this estimate, the present period is surely also an "evangelical moment." For, culturally speaking, it is no accident that evangelicalism has given rise to the strongest social, political and religious movements in the late Seventies and early Eighties while also representing the oldest, closest religious ties to American life and history. Through its capacity to rise to the challenge of this moment, the evangelical community will reveal its character and strengths or weaknesses today.

What Stage?

For Christians, an accurate answer to this question is virtually an impossibility. Since ignorance is insurmountable, humility is a necessity as well as a virtue. And because of the dire hunger today for a sense of meaning and belonging, false predictions are proliferating on all sides.

Yet no Christian is let off the hook. For running beside the biblical record of those who missed their moment is the relentless insistence on their responsibility for doing so. Further, the pages of history continue the biblical record right up to our day. So the challenge for faith and obedience is to recognize and seize the moment, however difficult that may prove. Speaking as an Englishman, and conscious of the sad genealogy of convictions in English evangelicalism between 1830 and 1900, this point is poignant as well as strong.

The answer to what stage has been reached depends of course on prior questions as to the character of the moment. But to preempt later discussion, I am arguing that the present developments are in the later stages of their unfolding. While still a remarkable and genuinely open opportunity, the present moment shows signs that it may be closing.

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Why Significant?

The claim that this period is a crucial moment for evangelicalism must be distinguished from two kinds of similar claims. On the one hand, it is not to be confused with mere trendspotting labels, such as *Newsweek's* celebration of 1976 as "The Year of the Evangelical." If it amounts to a *kairos* moment at all, the present moment is so only because of the perspectives and priorities of the Kingdom of God.

On the other hand, though close in spirit to estimates such as those of Richard Lovelace and Ron Sider mentioned earlier, it differs slightly because pivoting on an assessment of the turning point itself rather than on that of its consequences.

Repeatedly misunderstood or misrepresented merely as a non-issue or a nuisance factor, the religious issue is key to current cultural clashes because it underlies the principles and patterns by which personal lives and public life are ordered.

The crux of the claim is as follows: On the one hand, American culture is at a turning point, primarily (although not solely) because of its changed relationship to faiths. Compared with their role in the past, the influence of faiths is too little and too little positive. On the other hand, American faiths are at a turning point, primarily (although again not solely) because of their changed relationship to culture. Compared with its role in the past, the influence of culture is too much and too negative.

The reemergence of evangelicalism in the last decade is therefore greatly significant. Currently the strongest religious movement while historically the oldest, the evangelical community faces an "evangelical moment" that is part of the wider "American hour." The faithfulness of the community and the fortunes of the nation are, for the moment, intimately linked.

What Is The Context Of This Claim?

The first main question concerns the context of this claim and therefore the significance of the wider "American hour." Just before he retired as Secretary of State, Dean Acheson remarked to a prominent Austrian, "Looking back, the gravest problem I had to deal with was how to steer, in this atomic age, the foreign policy of a world power saddled with the constitution of a small, eighteenth-century farmers' republic."

Today this remark could apply equally well in many areas, because it raises a recurring issue: How does the U.S. currently stand in relation to its origins? Few other Western nations give so proud and prominent a place to their origins, but if current analysis is correct, the question of the present's relationship to the past is being raised sharply in the Eighties and in ways which mean that the next decade's answers may be decisive for many years to come.

Doubtless a large part of "turning point talk" is pure hype, but when this is removed, three recurring claims about a turning point stand above all others: first, that the U.S. is experiencing social changes, shifting from an industrial society to an information society; second, massive political changes, shifting from the old Democratic alignment to the new Republican alignment; and third, massive international changes, adjusting to world realities after Vietnam.

What is more striking, though, are aspects of the turning point that are ignored in serious national discussion—and none more so than the fact that the religious issue is central to the grand cultural clashes of the last generation. Repeatedly misunderstood or misrepresented merely as a non-issue ("purely

private and should remain so") or a nuisance factor ("all those misguided millions believing what nobody believes any more"), the religious issue is key to current cultural clashes because it underlies the principles and patterns by which personal lives and public life are ordered.

In fact, a deeper consideration of the U.S. in the 1980s reveals how important the faith factor is. Not only do the deepest national issues (such as the status of "Americanism" or the strength of the "public philosophy") have a critical religious component, certain of the most distinctive national institutions (above all, the First Amendment) require a critical religious contribution. So misunderstood and misrepresented

yet so vital is it that religion amounts to the wild card factor in the American future.

What Are The Likely Consequences?

The second main question concerns the likely consequences for the faith and for the nation which grow out of the present time of transition. What follows is not a prediction, but an outline of the four broad directions which may conceivably be taken. In the first two, the common assumption is that in the future religion will not prove socially decisive, the first outcome assuming that this will cause no problems to the nation and the second one that it will. In the last two outcomes, the common assumption is that religion will prove decisive in the American future, the third outcome assuming that this might be harmful and the fourth that it might be beneficial.

The future, of course, may have none of the neatness of these categories, but they at least provide a theoretical test bed for examining various options and possibilities.

1. *The triumph of secular liberalism*: This outcome does not depend on either the disappearance of religion or the dominance of secularism, both being unlikely in the American context. Instead, it sees secularism growing ever more dominant in the public square. Despite its front-runner status, this scenario probably carries the seeds of its own destruction, because it is doubtful whether secularism can replace religion as the bedding for traditional American values.

2. *Crises and decline*: This outcome requires no grand catastrophe nor period of lurid national decadence. All it envisages is the steady erosion of the spiritual and moral foundations of the social order, in a manner and at a rate which no post-religious substitute (such as prosperity, law or technology) can prevent.

3. *Semi-religious authoritarianism*: This outcome assumes that, in order to counter the sort of crises perceived in the second outcome, the attempt will be made to reassert "traditional values" by giving them a religious base—religion being used not because it is true, but useful.

4. *Revitalization via revival and reformation*: This outcome assumes that American assumptions, ideals and institutions could be revitalized profoundly yet peaceably by genuine revival and reformation. A hope which at first sight appears to be the last resort of the marginal pious—"praying well is the best revenge"—is actually a possibility considered seriously on the basis of scholarly, rather than purely believing, considerations.

What Is The Capacity Of Evangelicalism To Rise To The Occasion?

The third main question concerns the capacity of the evangelical community to respond. Will evangelicalism rise to the occasion as its record, numbers and the demands of the present moment (not to speak of biblical obedience) would lead one to expect? At a time when American "exceptionalism" is reckoned to have declined, religion in America is the last great exception to the decline of exceptionalism. And evangelicalism in particular appears in many ways to be thriving as almost never before.

Yet a closer examination shows that at just those places where a culture-shaping faith must be strong, evangelicalism at large is alarmingly weak. On the one hand, instead of demonstrating a powerful *claim to truth*, traditionally the source of the Church's strength in its role as the protagonist of its own culture, popular evangelicalism betrays a widespread loss of a Christian mind that is a fatal handicap to cultural transformation in the modern world.

On the other hand, instead of demonstrating a powerful *challenge to tension*, traditionally the source of the Church's strength in its role as the antagonist to other cultures, popular evangelicalism betrays such a lapse into worldliness and cultural captivity that it is fatally handicapped again.

These two comments are sweeping generalizations that require substantiation outside the scope of this article. They are also offset by many magnificent exceptions, especially in the world of evangelical parachurch movements and the world of evangelical colleges and seminaries. But excellent and exceptional though the latter are, their weakness is their intellectual, social and cultural distance from popular evangelicalism.

Whereas fundamentalism has largely retained its strong sense of social and theological cohesion, evangelicalism has developed so great a gap between its "elites" and its "masses" that it appears and acts as socially disjointed.

Short of revival and reformation, severe weaknesses like these are likely to prevent evangelicalism from making a constructive and enduring response to the present moment. Certain concluding questions sharpen the challenge now facing evangelicals.

Who? Whom? Lenin's famous question poses the central challenge to the evangelical community: Are evangelicals as "people of the Gospel" to be shaped radically by the Gospel, or are they as "the earliest and most American" religious community to be shaped more decisively by American culture?

Will Evangelicals Be Evangelical To Others? Evangelicalism, which is conspicuously lacking as a distinct and separate religious tradition, comes into its own as renewing force within the wider church and wider community. Will evangelicals lose their distinctiveness in seeking to protect it, or will they find it in sacrificing themselves to bring life to the wider church and peace and justice to the wider community?

Will God Be God To Evangelicals? If the American republic both requires metaphysical premises yet rejects any official statement of them, making its own enduring vitality a gamble on the dynamism of its "unofficial" faiths, evangelicalism pivots on the same promise and the same problem. One of the least self-derived and self-sustaining of all traditions, evangelicalism without living, personal faith is nothing. G.K. Chesterton's prophetic comment on the American republic can therefore be translated to apply aptly to American evangelicalism: "Freedom is the eagle, whose glory is gazing at the sun."

North American Evangelical Missions: The Last 100 Years

by Marvin Bergman

Approximately 100 missions scholars and practitioners gathered on the campus of Wheaton College June 16-19, 1986, to assess "A Century of World Evangelization: North American Evangelical Missions, 1886-1986." According to the prospectus for the conference, "It is high time that scholars and practitioners of world missions give the missionary experience of the self-consciously evangelical party of American Protestantism the same careful scrutiny now being afforded to the old-line denominational endeavors."

In part, the conference represented an attempt to bring together scholars—especially religious and cultural historians—to promote a better understanding of the evangelical contribution to the American mission enterprise and its interaction with other cultures; this, in turn, can offer insight into the character of American Christianity and the values of American culture generally. But this kind of understanding can be just as valuable for those who are presently committed to the global mission of Christianity as it is for scholars. Again in the words of the prospectus, "the current concern to know intimately the various 'contexts' and 'situations' in which the Christian faith operates and is communicated can be enlightened by

examples from the past. 'Contextualization' of the Christian message can also be enhanced by a nuanced knowledge of the cultural heritage of the missionary."

Usually one expects the keynote addressed at conferences to be the highlights. Occasionally, as in this case, that expectation is rewarded. Andrew Walls, the director of the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World, kicked off the conference in fine style on the first evening with his address, "The American Evangelical Factor in Twentieth Century Missions." He raised in a provocative way many of the issues that resurfaced throughout the conference. But his broad comparative perspective—both geographically and temporally—and his status as an outsider to the American scene helped bring some of those issues into sharper focus. Perhaps his major contribution was to assure evangelicals that as we move into a new era in missions history, we need not fear cultural determination; after all, when God became man, he became culturally determined man. And this relatively brief, remarkably successful, one-hundred-year period of missionary activity is just a small part of the long history of Christian expansion in which brief periods of cross-cultural exchange are always followed by long periods marked by the development of local forms of Christianity.

The other two keynote addresses dealt with shortcomings

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in traditional approaches to studying missions history and suggested new avenues for research. Ralph Winter's banquet address, "The Student Volunteers, Their Heirs, and the Unofficial Missionary Enterprise," used data gathered and analyzed with the aid of computers to assess the continuities and discontinuities and the relative strength of the Student Volunteer Movement, which provided the impetus for the past century of North American evangelical missions, and its successors, especially InterVarsity Fellowship. But his larger aim was to show the dangers of relying on the documents of missions institutions and the rhetoric of their spokespersons.

Arguably the climax of the conference was the address by Lamin Sanneh, assistant professor of the History of Religion in the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard University. In his address, entitled "Mission, Translation, and the Future Imperative: Charting a Course," Professor Sanneh insisted that it is now time to move away from both of the traditional ways of studying missions: "secular" scholars have viewed the missionary enterprise as an offspring of colonial imperialism, an epiphenomenon of cultural fashion; missiologists have assessed the success or failure of mission activity by using ideological and statistical measures arising from the missions boards. But, Professor Sanneh insisted, scholars should focus not on missionary motivations but on field performance—not on the basis of the number of converts but on the long-term consequences of their actions. This can best be assessed, he suggested, by paying serious attention to translation work, which ran directly counter to colonial imperialism's efforts to centralize power.

For the remainder of the conference, the organizers divided the "century of world evangelization" into three areas: 1880-1920, 1920-1945, and 1945-present. For each period they apparently intended to establish a dialectic between papers that would focus on the American context for evangelical missions and other papers that would present "case studies" of actual missions in the field.

Dana Robert of Boston University and Grant Wacker of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill established the context for the first era, 1880-1920. Professor Robert's paper, "Premillennial Mission Theory and the Origins of Evangelical Missions," focused on A.T. Pierson and A.J. Gordon, especially their development of the missions slogan, "the evangelization of the world in this generation," as a premillennial theme. In fact, Robert reported, one basis of the division of missions in this period into ecumenical, denominational missions and the more evangelical "faith missions," whose desire was to win souls, or at least to preach the gospel to all, was the premillennial basis of the evangelical missions. In her conclusion, Professor Robert echoed the call made by Joel Carpenter in his introductory remarks that it is time for evangelical historical scholarship to turn its attention from battles over the Bible to other concerns such as missions, which is one of the main reasons for the existence of evangelical institutions today. Grant Wacker's paper, "The Liberal Protestant Search for a Missionary Mandate, 1880-1920," focused on the attitudes of liberal Protestants in America toward non-Western religions. After cautioning that the differences between liberal and evangelical missions are often overdrawn—both assumed Western cultural superiority—he turned his attention to the very real differences between them, especially in their attitudes toward non-Western religions. The assumption of the *ultimate* worthlessness of all non-Christian religions, he argued, led evangelicals to ignore the serious study of the rituals, beliefs, and social and cultural origins of non-Christian religions; such study has largely been left to liberals, who have generally been more interested in the effects of

"general revelation" and in the relationship between religion and its cultural context. Then Professor Wacker went on to trace four stages of development of liberal attitudes toward non-Western religions and to issue a challenge to evangelical scholars to become involved in the serious study of "history of religions."

As if to bear out the claims of Lamin Sanneh and others that the conflicts and theories of Protestants in the North American context had much less impact in the field than one might expect, the three case studies in this era, as in the others, bore little relation to the contextual papers. Leslie Flemming, of the University of Arizona, called attention to the importance of women missionaries as role models in her paper, "New Models, New Roles: American Presbyterian Women Missionaries in North India, 1870-1910." Alan Winkvist of Taylor University employed a biographical approach in his study of "Scandinavian-American Missions in Southern Africa and Zaire." And Lillie Johnson Edwards used insights gleaned from theories of sociologists and cultural anthropologists to illuminate an especially interesting case of cross-cultural interaction: "We've Come This Far by Faith: Afro-American Missionaries in Africa."

The division of North American Protestants and their mission activities became even more pronounced in the next era (1920-1945). James Patterson's (Toccoa Falls College) description of "The Loss of a Protestant Missionary Consensus: Foreign Missions and the Fundamentalist-Modernist Conflict" established the context, while Gary Corwin's (SIM International) paper, "Evangelical Separatism and the Growth of the Independent Mission Boards: Some Preliminary Observations from the Sudan Interior Mission," revealed some of the effects. The case studies, "Missions Under the Mandate: German-American Baptists in Cameroon, 1920-1940," and "Through Many Dangers, Toils, and Snares: China Inland Mission, 1920-1945," were presented by Charles Weber of Wheaton College and Alwyn Austin of Toronto, respectively.

Since 1945 evangelicals have come to play an increasingly dominant role in the missionary enterprise. In the first paper in this section, "Pax Americana and the Evangelical Missionary Advance," Richard Pierard of Indiana State University showed how the effects of World War II contributed to an upsurge of evangelical missions after the war. By relating some personal experiences and some lively quotations, he was able to capture the excitement and enthusiasm of the immediate postwar period. But the evolving maturity and changing status of evangelicalism in the North American context, along with radical changes in the world context in succeeding years, have precipitated corresponding changes in evangelical theologies of mission. These were traced schematically in an ambitious paper, "Developments in Evangelical Theology of Mission, 1946-1986," presented by Charles Van Engen of Western Theological Seminary.

The case studies in this section offered some interesting contrasts. "Born Again Taiwan: Evangelical and Pentecostal Communities in the Republic of China, 1945-1985," contrasting established evangelical Protestant missions with an indigenous Chinese church, the True Jesus Church, was presented by an outsider to the evangelical community, Murray Rubenstein of Baruch College, City University of New York. The other two papers were more or less "in-house" treatments of sharply contrasting approaches to missions in Latin America: "Rebels with a Cause: Origins of the Evangelical Revolution in Latin America" by Everett Wilson of Bethany Bible College, and "American Catholic Mission to Latin America" by Edward Cleary, O.P., of Josephinum School of Theology.

The final session of the conference was appropriately de-

voted to "Global Evangelicalism: Third World (or, as most of the participants referred to it, "Two-Thirds World") Theology and the Church's World Mission." C. Rene Padilla, general secretary of the Latin American Theological Fraternity, called attention to "Evangelical Mission Perspectives from Latin America." In "Leadership Training, A Top Priority in Asia," Bong Rin Ro, general secretary of the Asia Theological Association, made an urgent plea for evangelicals to encourage the training of Asians *in Asia* to evangelize Asia. Finally, in his paper, "The Right to Difference: The Common Roots of African Theology and African Philosophy," Tite Tienou of the Alliance School of Theology argued that African theologians have wasted the past thirty years because they have been forced to establish the legitimacy of "the right of difference" for African theology and philosophy rather than actually doing African theology and philosophy. But he feared that as long as the West controls the African economy and educational institutions, the quest for identity will need to continue.

Several tensions surfaced repeatedly during the conference, but were never resolved or even fully confronted because of the highly structured nature of the conference, which crammed twenty papers, a panel discussion, and an audio-visual presentation into less than three days. At the base of these tensions was a tension regarding the fundamental attitude toward the history of missions: should we distance ourselves from the

undeniable participation of past missionaries in various forms of cultural imperialism, or should we celebrate the remarkable but equally undeniable success of the past century of evangelical missions? The problem of confronting this tension was compounded by the diversity of the participants, which was at once the greatest strength and the greatest weakness of the conference. The ISAE should be congratulated for inviting the best historians of evangelical missions regardless of their theological (or atheological) perspective. And gathering diverse participants can, in fact, be one of the best means of confronting the issues this conference raised; but not in such a structured format, where participants tend only to speak past each other rather than engage in real dialogue. The participants never even agreed on who was to be included: Ralph Winter kept pushing in questions from the floor for the inclusion of evangelicals from the "mainstream," ecumenical denominations, not just the separate "faith missions."

Nevertheless, the conference succeeded admirably in launching a serious reassessment of the role of missions in the history of the North American evangelical community—a reassessment that would take into account the diverse actions of missionaries in the field as well as the already established motivations and theories of the mission boards. Since that, after all, was apparently the goal of the conference, it must be considered an overwhelming and welcome success.

Missiology Students Form Society

by Thomas Russell

"As 1886 marked the beginning of a missions movement around the rallying cry of evangelization, 1986 now marks the beginning of a new missionary dimension, of scholars throughout the world linking to study and advance the kingdom on earth."

George Hunsberger, president of the newly-formed Fellowship of Students Missiology (FSM), made this remark at the first meeting of the society, held last June in Chicago. This meeting was held in conjunction with the annual gatherings of the American Society of Missiology (ASM) and The Association of Professors of Missions. Eight of the group's charter members were present including: George Hunsberger, Scott Sunquist, Garry Parker and Efiog Utak (all of Princeton Theological Seminary), Kathleen Dillman (Golden Gate Theological Seminary), Ruy Costa (Boston University School of Theology), Richard Jones (Toronto School of Theology) and Tom Russell (Vanderbilt University). Several of the group's founding friends offered their advice as well.

At the June meeting FSM members had some intriguing discussions. On Thursday evening, June 19th, the group met with Dr. Matthew Zahnizer of Asbury Theological Seminary and Dr. Zachery Hayes of The Catholic Theological Union, both of whom offered presentations concerning Christology and Pluralism. Zahnizer spoke out of his experience as a missionary to Moslems, and presented Jesus Christ as the only and unique means for salvation. Hayes spoke of a cosmic Christ who is present in the world's religions. Conferees noted how well the speakers complemented each other and how

they were willing to interact with them. Friday morning Ruy Costa offered a paper on the relationship between religion and liberation. All participants were inspired by these interactions and felt the value of FSM fellowship!

On Friday afternoon the group held a business meeting to organize itself. Hunsberger reminded the society of its reason for existence at this time by stressing the need for budding missiologists to be in contact with each other. This contact would provide a locus for scholarly interaction and fellowship. As one FSM member put it, "I appreciate the fact that the FSM gets me in touch with others who have an interest in this field. I am the only one at my school with an interest in missiology and you know, it gets lonely out here!"

Meeting attendees established three purposes for the society. These young scholars affirmed the world mission of the church and stressed their need to provide mutual support and encouragement for each other. They also decided to cultivate relationships with the broader community of missiologists, particularly those of the ASM.

The FSM drew up plans to form a local and international network of missiology students, to publish an annual journal (beginning in January, 1987) and to hold an annual meeting (in conjunction with the annual meeting of the ASM).

Membership in the FSM is limited to students in Master's and Doctoral programs in Missiology and students in other graduate programs with an interest or concentration in Missions. The organization has been delighted to have student members representing Fuller Theological Seminary, Westminster Theological Seminary, Wheaton College, San Francisco Theological Seminary, Southern Methodist University, Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, The University of

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Chicago, The University of Basel, Lutheran School of Theology and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The FSM was thankful to receive the hearty endorsement of the American Society of Missiology, and for its founding friends, including: Charles Forman (Yale), Larry Nemer (Chicago), Joan Eagleston (Orbis Books), Joan Chatfield (The Institute of Religion and Social Change), Arthur Glasser (Fuller Theological Seminary), Gerald Anderson (Overseas Missions Study Center), James C. Wilson (Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary) and Samuel Moffett (Princeton Theological Seminary).

The FSM organized its leadership and appointed committees to write a constitution, and to form an advisory board for both the group and the journal—boards made up of current missiologists. The society also asked Richard Jones, Scott Sunquist and Ruy Costa to begin to plan next year's meeting to be held at Duesquesne University, June 18-19, 1987. Rumors have it that the meeting promises to be very exciting! Attendees at this year's meeting are already looking forward to the opportunity to meet new graduate students in this field and to discuss "hot" topics in current missiological studies. As usual the conference will include a presentation by at least one missiologist and a presentation of a paper by at least one budding scholar. Discussions will follow all presentations. The group will also hold a business meeting. Everyone is looking forward to interacting with members of the ASM.

Anyone Can Get Involved

Area membership coordinators—Ruy Costa, Garry Parker and Tom Russell—are looking for you.

Kathleen Dillman, the FSM Journal editor, is now receiving articles which reflect the cutting edge of your research and reflection. She also has space for book reviews. Dillman is now collecting materials for the January, 1988 issue.

Anyone can join the FSM by paying annual dues of \$10.00, which includes a subscription to the FSM Journal. Anyone who wishes to become a friend of the society can join the FSM for an annual contribution of \$10.00 or more. Secretary/Treasurer Scott Sunquist is receiving all inquiries, dues and gifts at the FSM address: The Fellowship of Students of Missiology, CN 821, Princeton, NJ 08542.

In summing up the importance of the founding of the FSM, organizers have commented:

"This fellowship offers rising missiologists an opportunity to interact with their peers and scholars in the field."

"It affords me a chance to publish!"

"I find it extremely significant that the FSM has a similar zeal, but a totally different frame of reference. Instead of Western missionaries going out to mission fields, the FSM forges a much-needed link between budding missiologists worldwide."

The Case of *Brave New People*: A Shadow and a Hope

by Stephen Charles Mott

Pulled off the market in the face of controversy by its original publisher, *Brave New People: Ethical Issues at the Commencement of Life*, by D. Gareth Jones was republished in a revised edition in 1985 by Eerdmans (224 pp., \$8.95 pb.). The book is significant both on its own merits and in terms of the issue of censorship that surrounds the circumstances of its publication.

Upon its publication by InterVarsity Press in 1984, adverse reviews were published, some of which the author and the publisher argued significantly misrepresented the book. One group in its newsletter urged its readers to write to the publisher stating that because of its position on the question of abortion, the book should not have been published. The publisher found that many who did register their objection had not read the book. At the annual convention of the Christian Booksellers' Association, InterVarsity Press was picketed; and a leader of another group circulated a letter threatening a boycott of bookstores carrying their books. The letter was never received by the publisher, nor did the writer ever personally contact the Press. Some of the literature critical of the book contained such language as "foully dishonest," "satanic," "garbage," "monstrous," "noxious," "unregenerate," and "reprobate." The book was represented as "blatantly pro-abortion" and "eugenics." Guilt by association arguments were used, including comparison of the author with Hitler. His evangelical standing was denied; he was even condemned to

hell (for example, when a critic mentioned "The heat that he will face approximately ten seconds after his death"). I would like to point out that many supporters of a strong position against abortion were embarrassed by much of these tactics; this behavior should not be used as an *ad hominem* argument against the pro life position. Leading evangelical scholars, such as Carl Henry, Kenneth Kantzer, and Arthur Holmes, defended the publication of the book. But for various reasons Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship decided administratively to withdraw the book from the market. The Press, however, wanted to stand behind the book; and many people in the organization were in support of its continued availability.

The question which remains is not to point a finger at this particular organization or publisher, but to indicate why the author should not have been left in such a vulnerable position. Perhaps the nature of the argument on bioethical issues may thus be advanced to a higher plane, and a genuine evangelical pluralism in the evangelical publishing enterprise may be encouraged. There are two books to review: the one which the author actually wrote; and, in terms of its context in the abortion debate, the one which he is believed to have written. First, we will present the argument of the book with minimal commentary, requesting the reader to consider if this indeed is a book which no evangelical press should publish.

Issues in Bioethics

Gareth Jones is an evangelical medical biologist at Otago University in New Zealand. *Brave New People* is not a book

Stephen Charles Mott is Professor of Christian Social Ethics at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

on abortion; the concern is broader. His purpose was to help Christians formulate principles adequate for responding to several issues posed by biomedical technology which relate to human life around the time of its inception. Before discussing the ethical concerns relating to specific issues, he provides a framework in terms of the doctrine of human nature and of general theological and ethical issues presented by technology, particularly medical technology.

Human nature has the tension, Jones argues, of being tinged with infinity in our ability to have thoughts about God and eternity while dwelling in all too fallible bodies. Biomedical technology has accentuated our urge to break "the tension by viewing ourselves either as impersonal biological machines or as personal ethereal spirits" (p. 3). What is required of us is to face the issues of bioethics squarely but to do so in light of our being creatures of God. The creation account of Genesis, including the concept of humanity in the image of God, shows the exalted distinction of God from humankind and consequently an utter dependence upon God which cannot be conditioned by technology. We are an integral part of the natural world, yet in God's image we are beings who have a moral responsibility for the world. Because of our fall, side by side with the benefits of technology are hazards which pervert the good. Our redemption in Christ makes fully human experience possible and provides motivations and aspirations to use technology for good. When technology rather than God is central, not only is essential relationship with God lost, but so also are the moral guidelines for ethical decision making. Technology then affirms only the immediate and physical. If we misuse our responsibility in the area of biomedical technology, the implications are immense. Not only does our natural environment suffer, but we do as well since what is being changed by this technology is not merely the environment but we ourselves.

A significant contribution of the book is that the author carefully evaluates the particular issues in terms of the principles established in this framework. Amniocentesis, the sampling of the amniotic fluid around the fetus, is the primary tool for prenatal diagnosis. The inexorable logic of a technological innovation is that it should be used simply because it exists and it can be used with relative ease. Jones cautions against the routine use of amniocentesis, however. Some specific goal should be in mind for it to be undertaken. There is some risk involved, and for most cases the only intervention possible is abortion. Its original medical purpose can be misused to circumvent having a child of the wrong sex. And even when there is valid concern for a specific condition of risk to the mother, is it ethically justifiable to use this diagnosis if there is not ethical acceptance of therapeutic abortion? Similarly, he rejects random use of genetic screening; it bestows upon the genetic scientist too much control over the lives of people. Such elitist control contradicts the responsibility and self-control which is a theological character of human nature.

Open spina bifida is a condition in which infants are born with a protruding spinal cord covered by a membrane. A high proportion die before two years. One criterion for performing operations to reduce disability in these infants excludes those likely to be paralyzed, incontinent, or mentally retarded. An opposing criterion is to operate on wounds reparable surgically on all such infants likely to live more than a few days on the grounds of not adding years to their lives but life to their years. Jones favors the latter philosophy on grounds of his theological view of the dignity of human beings, while seeing the former approach as having undue reliance on technical criteria which reduce moral value to conformity to biological norms. Similarly, he rejects experiments on embryos which have been

preserved for in vitro implantation (see below). Rejecting the utilitarian arguments of great potential human good from such research, Jones sees the experiments as denying respect for embryos' significance as potential human beings.

In vitro fertilization fertilizes a human egg outside of the body and reimplants it in a woman's uterus. Jones ethically evaluates this process in terms of his theological view of the normative character of the human family. Helping a married couple have a child of their bodies and as an outcome of their marriage strengthens natural biological roots within a family, serving an important therapeutic purpose since medicine deals with a whole human relationship beyond mere diseases. In vitro fertilization should not be used, however, when the more human form of a natural fertilization could be used, such as through restorative surgery, because that would give technology a place beyond its supplementary role. By this family criterion this process also should not be used when the egg, sperm, or uterus are not those of the married couple. Similarly, this theological view of the family governs Jones' position regarding forms of artificial insemination, where semen is directly introduced into the woman's uterus. When it involves the artificial introduction of the husband's semen into his wife's uterus, it is a commendable therapy in their longing for children; but when used in a separation by death or distance, its impersonal and artificial side may be highlighted too heavily. On the other hand, when the donor is a third party, the technological inroads separate too radically marriage and parenthood. Since an equality exists among human beings in the perspective of the radical distance of all humanity from God, the eugenic program of a bank of semen of Nobel Prize winners bears the further moral impediment of wrongly elevating creative scientists and their genes.

Cloning presents similar concerns. In this process, which has occurred with animals but not yet with human beings, the nucleus of a woman's egg would be replaced with the nucleus of the cell from another person, who would then be exactly reproduced when the cloned egg matures upon reintroduction into the woman's womb. Here a "No" must be said to that which is possible through technology. It may create ethical consequences beyond our present knowledge and society's ability to handle them, it violates human dignity in not seeing new life as important and free as so to develop in its own characteristics, and it exalts a human being rather than God as the model for human life.

Jones' View on Abortion

As Jones turns to abortion inasmuch as it relates to this ethical consideration of medical technology and therapy, he provides a fuller background because of the complex and controversial nature of the topic. Conception, which constitutes for many a clear and obvious beginning of both human life and personhood, is not the beginning of human life. It is the continuation of human life in general. Human life is present, potentially or actually, in all the stages from ovum and sperm to birth. Conception also is less distinct than often thought. For as long as two weeks after fertilization, the embryo, or zygote, is capable of splitting to form two individuals. During this time the cell divisions merely produce a cluster of equivalent cells; only after a few days do the cell divisions give rise to a distinction of the embryo proper from what will form the placenta. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists defines conception as the process of the implantation of the fertilized ovum in the wall of the uterus, completed at the end of two weeks. One of the leading ethicists in support of the very restrictive position on abortion, Paul Ramsey, holds that individual life begins in the blastocyst stage of 60-100

cells. Helmut Thielicke, who also defends the inviolability of fetal life, views possession of the circulatory system and brain as establishing the fetus as a human person. Of course there are other distinct stages in the development of human personality: the first signs of nervous system functioning at six weeks; more sophisticated nervous system development at twelve weeks; quickening around twenty weeks; and visibility around twenty weeks.

The Bible indicates that the fetus belongs within the human community and receives God's care, but it does not impart knowledge about the precise state of fetal life, including the significance of the unborn relative to that of adult human life. Jones (in a section not in the first edition) also notes Augustine's position that the soul did not come to the fetus until the moment of quickening, Gregory of Nyssa's distinction of the fully and potentially human, and the distinction of fetus animatus and fetus inanimatus in the Roman Catholic Church until the late nineteenth century. Jones, however, rejects the position that the moral status of the embryo changes at the point of implantation. Human material always deserves respect. Jones' position is always to regard the embryo or fetus as a potential person.

According to this *potentiality principle*, a potential person is an existing being which, while not yet a person, will become an actual person during the normal course of its development. A human fetus is such a potential person. This principle takes seriously the continuum of biological development, and refuses to draw an arbitrary line to denote the acquisition of personhood. At all stages of development the fetus is on its way to personhood and, if everything proceeds normally, it will one day attain full personhood in its own right. It is part of a continuing process, the end-result of which is the emergence of an individual human being characterized by full personhood.

Inherent in a potential person is high probability of future personhood. With this goes a claim to life and respect, a claim that in very general terms may be proportional to its stage of fetal development. The claim is always present but, just as the probability of an older fetus becoming an actual person is much greater than that of a very early embryo becoming a person, it becomes stronger with development until, at birth, the potential person is so similar to an actual person that the consequences of killing it are the same as killing a young person (p. 156f).

A corollary of the continuum-potentiality argument is that there is no developmental point at which a line can be drawn between expendable and non-expendable fetuses, that is between non-personal and personal fetuses. It may be preferable to carry out abortions earlier rather than later during gestation, but that is a biomedical and not an ethical decision. Under all normal circumstances, a fetus has a right to full personhood (p.163).

The moral character of human nature mandates accepting responsibility for the consequences of sexual intercourse freely undertaken. Abortion on the grounds of convenience is morally abhorrent. "Only the most extreme circumstances can provide ground for abortion, which should be undertaken only in response to otherwise unresolvable dilemmas" (p. 176f. [not in the first edition]). When the mother's physical health is in jeopardy, her actual humanity is of more value than that of the unborn's potential for it. Practically all ethicists agree to

abortion in this situation, "converting all absolute stances into relative ones" (p. 177). In the revised edition, Jones discusses abortion in the cases of rape and incest. In rape the rights of the actual person, the mother, again take precedence over the rights of the potential person. In the case of incest, he agrees with Norman Geisler that we should not allow evil to blossom under the name of a potential good.

Jones' interest in abortion concerns abortion for genetic reasons—when there is fetal abnormality. He allows abortion in the extreme situation of severe fatal deformity combined with a family situation in which a host of adverse social conditions may lead to an inability to cope. Moreover, in such a case there must be no alternatives such as institutionalization or adoption (which are sometimes prevented by feelings of guilt by the mother over relinquishing the child). The deformity must be extreme so that the fetus has no potential personal qualities. Down's Syndrome or pregnancies affected by German measles do not qualify, therefore. But relevant cases might be found with an anencephalic fetus (in which major brain centers are lacking), the rare Lesch-Nyham syndrome, or Tay-Sachs disease. The criterion is the normativeness of the family in that even in these extreme cases abortion is permissible only where the family cannot cope with the challenge.

On the other hand, when the decision to abort becomes merely one of the mother's decision, the integrity of the family and the reciprocity of its members is violated as well as the wholeness in her life. Decisions to abort because of defects of the fetus violate the dignity of humanity and reduce human worth to biological criteria of wholeness. Although responsibility entails making ethical decisions rather than merely allowing natural forces to have their way, malformed fetuses are not generally the result of human irresponsibility; and we should avoid the temptation of undue activism to eliminate or rectify fetal deformity. Here we are reminded of our less than godlike status.

Brave New People and the Abortion Debate

In placing the controversy over *Brave New People* in the context of the abortion debate, we are reminded of the intimate relationship of justice and truth. The critics of the book who tried to stifle its publication have a praiseworthy commitment to justice for human life as they understand it. But a commitment to justice must also be a commitment to truth and respect for the processes by which truth is disclosed. Ability to share ideas broadly through the printed page is an important process of truth. Pressure upon publishers who print viewpoints which differ from our own is not a respect for the process of truth.

Publishers need not print the works of all viewpoints; certain publishers represent certain communities, including faith communities. Evangelical publishers may legitimately seek to serve those authors who belong to the evangelical community. But Gareth Jones not only belongs to such a community, but his work manifests clear understanding and commitment to the doctrinal standards of the evangelical movement, including the forms of religious knowledge. His book is a careful application of the principles of evangelical doctrine to a sphere of human behavior for which he has understanding. The only significant objection to his book must be found in the consequences of his thought, not in its foundations, which are evangelical. His temperate response to his opponents is a further sign of genuine Christianity (I Jn. 3:10) not obvious in this context, I fear, in some of his opponents. The damage of voluntary groups stifling the expression of members of their community can have a negative impact on truth comparable to public censorship. A characteristic of the prophet is one

who criticizes the accepted positions of the majority or of powerful minorities in his or her community. Justice needs the voices of prophets, and we must be careful that we do not yield to the pressures of powerful groups to stifle them. The community then can judge for itself who are the true prophets.

The abortion controversy is strangely marked by volatile emotions. High ethical stakes are combined with the ambiguities which lie at the very foundation of all positions in defining the nature of unborn human life. Excess zeal for the truth of one's position and defensive hostility against opposing views may reflect, as H. Richard Niebuhr noted about the Fundamentalist movement, not an excess of faith but rather a deficiency of faith, even in proponents highly motivated by piety and justice. Consciousness of ambiguity at the foundations of one's argument can lead to efforts to prevent the ambiguity from rising to the surface. Obstructing the publication of contrary viewpoints is a form of prevention, as is pressure to make one's own position the official position of various institutions (Wheaton College is one of the evangelical organizations which recently have rejected such pressure). Vilification of opponents and misrepresentation of their position are other forms of preventing examination of the weaknesses of one's own position.

In the face of such threatening ambiguity one may seek a false security by magnifying the religious character of one's position. Then the adversaries oppose not only truth but God. All the zeal of religious defense then can be used in defense of the particular position. Thus Jones, despite all other evidence to the contrary, receives the accusation of not being an evangelical or a Christian; and he or his position is described with the terms of satanic and reprobate. Jones may appear particularly dangerous because he does not fit the stereotype of the human centered, individualistic opponent that the critics' teaching presents.

The lack of the discernment of genuine ambiguity also arises in a bipolar view of the world, in which as Jones notes, his "critics recognize only two positions on abortion: the absolute protection of all fetal life, and abortion on demand." If a position does not fit the former, it must fit the latter; and if the holder of the position does not admit this characteristic, he or she is being superficial, inconsistent, or devious (p. xiii).

Ambiguities on Both Sides

The process of truth, however, demands that all ambiguities be brought to the light and examined. And there are important ambiguities in the position represented by Jones' critics. The following items are not presented as arguments against the critics' position on human life and abortion, but as areas requiring serious public discussion:

1. Scripture does not deal with the topic of abortion. The effort to use Scripture to establish the beginning of human life at conception has important difficulties in light of valid hermeneutical principles regarding due attention to the nature, function, and purpose of the passages involved, whether the materials be poetic or historical. Furthermore, a different theme in Scripture associating human life and spirit with breath would seem to connect personhood with birth at the latest or at the earliest with the development of the respiratory capacity near the end of the second trimester; but this argument has similar hermeneutical problems. The one passage which deals with the unborn in a legal context, Exodus 21:22-25, has been exeged differently so as to give the fetus either equal or unequal protection. In fact there are cases of the same evangelical Old Testament scholar having published articles defending each interpretation. Unfortunately, the text is unclear as to whether a miscarriage or an induced premature birth is in-

involved and to whom the "permanent harm" applies. There thus is need for public discussion of what are the most basic assumptions from an evangelical point of view; and if the most basic assumptions need public probing, certainly then do the consequences drawn from them. The different arguments for the beginning of human personhood appear in reality to be natural law arguments; while this is valid, the holders should be aware of the more finite basis of their position. Some proponents of the critics' position in the light of this ambiguity have disparaged the importance of the question of when personhood begins. This position is weakened, however, if the strong deontological claim from personhood beginning at conception is replaced by an argument that no human intervention should take place because of a traditional fatalism about the mysteries of the reproduction process.

2. When those who hold the position that the fetus is a full human person from the time of conception justify abortion to save the life of the mother, they are, in terms of their position, defending the taking of an innocent life. This appears to violate a basic tenet of Christian social ethics, and it could open the door to further weighing of innocent human life against innocent human life.

3. An ethicist recently argued that there is no life after death on the grounds that science shows that consciousness is connected to brain waves. Is not the same biological reductionism present when it is argued that personhood (or soul) begins at conception because "science shows that human life begins at the moment of conception?"

4. The reluctance to deal with the difficult exceptional cases where the rights of the fetus conflict with the rights of the born is a further ambiguity. Often the statistical rareness of such cases is pointed out. The strong condemnation of Jones' case is thus hard to understand because the very limited exceptions that he allows also add minutely to the number of abortions.

5. There appears to be a lack of sophistication regarding social-psychological factors. For example, the argument for adoption as an alternative can be a rationalistic posture insensitive to the difficulty of giving up a child once bonding through birth has occurred. Similarly, there is insufficient understanding of the trauma of carrying the offspring resulting from rape or incest.

The critics' position on abortion might still be the best position even with these ambiguities. We are not making a critique of that position but rather making a critique of a critique. A view of the fallibility of human reason and the unique character of divine revelation demands greater humility with respect to our positions and continual self-criticism. Preventing the possibility of the expression of other viewpoints does not encourage such re-examination.

Jones' position also has significant ambiguities. Is it coherent to speak of different degrees of the actuality of personhood (with consequential different worth when confronted with the claims of the born) and still speak of that life being a person throughout the reproductive cycle? Can one be a person without the full status of personhood? If the basic claims of those in a family outweigh those of a fetus with which it cannot cope, why then does therapeutic abortion also depend upon the fetus being devoid of the potentiality of personhood? Jones speaks about the process of the actualization of personhood continuing into young adulthood. A possibility of undercutting the life claims of infants is thus created, although he himself does not use the conceptual framework in that way. Likewise, when human personhood is defined by empirical categories, there is a possibility created, although not supported by Jones, of persons with severe disabilities after birth

being denied the full protection as human beings. The significance of birth requires firmer attention than he provides, because of the absence of biblical or theological grounds for any doubt of the presence of full human status after birth. Thus there is an epistemological question that causes the issue of abortion to differ from such issues as the Jewish Holocaust, South Africa, or slavery in which there is no possible doubt if the nature of human life involved.

The Need for Open Discussion

The abortion question is full of assumptions and issues which need full discussion. Truth must be pursued because the stakes involve basic claims of life and community. If a position is true, open discussion and probing by those sensitive to Scripture, theology, and the realities of human life can only strengthen it.

Will the opposition to this book discourage others from speaking openly on these issues? It appears rather that a diversity of evangelical viewpoints is again appearing. Frank Anthony Spina, Old Testament professor at Seattle Pacific University, in this journal called for an advance from the options which have been dominating the abortion debate. A broad presentation of options is made available in a recent

book by Robert N. Wennberg, a philosopher at Westmont College: *Life in the Balance: Exploring the Abortion Controversy* (Eerdmans, 1985). Perhaps now reappearing, after a seeming silence in the debate following upon the Roe vs. Wade United States Supreme Court decision, is the diverse yet sound thinking on medical ethics supplied by evangelicals several years ago, such as in *Birth Control and the Christian*, edited by Walter O. Spitzer and Carlyle L. Saylor (1969), and the articles on medical ethics in the *Baker Dictionary of Christian Ethics*, edited by Carl Henry (1973).

Out of the shadow of the attempts to stifle this book comes the hope that many committed to God's truth and justice will delve into these concerns and have the courage to speak openly. The title "Brave New people" originally was a take-off on the "Brave New World" of biological and technological reductionism of Aldous Huxley's novel. It represented those who in the face of that challenge frankly pursue the bioethical questions from a biblically informed perspective. Whether or not one agrees with all of his position, appreciation should be offered to both Jones and Eerdmans for their contribution to the discussion of these issues. Our hope is that through further open and honest exchange, God might mold brave new people better prepared to deal with the emerging issues of bioethics.

Abortion: Four Reviews

Life in the Balance: Exploring the Abortion Controversy

by Robert N. Wennberg (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1984, 192 pp., \$7.95). Reviewed by Richard H. Bube, Department of Materials Science and Engineering, Stanford University.

There are few books on the controversial ethical issues—especially a complex issue such as the abortion debate—that grip the reader's interest and call for continuous stimulating interaction as well as this book by Robert N. Wennberg, Professor of Philosophy at Westmont College in Santa Barbara, California. Time and again the author cuts through the confusions of rhetoric, the misleading implications of naive thinking, and the temptation to present an emotional, ideological position, to provide the reader with a thought-provoking and well-balanced analysis of the various theories and ethical positions that have been proposed to deal with the abortion issue. By publishing this book together with the recent re-issuing of D. Gareth Jones' *Brave New People*, Eerdmans has made a major contribution to the abortion debate. Both books deserve serious reading and consideration by all Christians.

In three initial chapters Wennberg sets the stage for the discussion to follow, in order to achieve his purpose of providing a systematic moral evaluation of the abortion issue, combining the most effective contributions available from professional philosophy with a theological tradition that is orthodox and biblically based. Growing out of a course on "The Morality of Killing," given at Westmont College, the book argues that "biblical and theological considerations do not narrowly limit the position open to us," and seeks to formulate its arguments in a form useful not

only to evangelical Christians but also to the secular community.

He points out that considering the implications of an ethical theory is one of the first steps in evaluating it. In particular, if a person is morally compelled to reject the implications of a particular theory, then it is also necessary to reject the theory that leads to those implications. Similarly, if one is led to act in a certain way in response to authority, one must be sure that the action does not conflict with one's "persistent and deeply felt moral convictions." In all such considerations, however, the Christian community must consistently maintain that abortion is a moral issue, not simply a social or utilitarian issue.

Wennberg explores the principal factors that have contributed to making an abortion such a serious social problem today: (1) great improvements in safety with decrease in seriousness of the procedures, (2) a number of significant reasons for which women may be led to seek an abortion, and (3) the fact that abortion involves ending the life of what is at least a potential person. The author promptly avoids some of the confusing circumlocutions that confound discussions of abortion. He is clear from the start that the fetus at any stage is indeed alive, and is unquestionably a case of human life; certainly abortion terminates a human biological life.

In several places in the book the author emphasizes the difficulty of maintaining any essential difference between a fetus before birth and an infant after birth. Both are "subcortical" organisms, i.e., it is not until the tenth day after birth that the neocortex, that part of the brain responsible for the higher mental functions, shows signs of change. Thus the fetus and the infant have similar claims to life since both are subcortical creatures, but at the same time efforts to build a case on

fetal behavior like thumb-sucking, feeding response, etc. are not the final evidence often argued, since the same responses can be found in an anencephalic, which has no chance of developing into a person.

No discussion of abortion can be complete without an evaluation of such questions as, "Is the fetus a person?" and what is the role of the "soul" in these considerations? Although acknowledging that the answers to these questions may play a significant role in these considerations, the author also suggests that they may not play the ultimate role often ascribed to them, i.e., "the abortion issue would not be settled by a simple determination of whether the fetus is a person." One of the problems in using the concept of "person" revolves around whether one who has the potential for rationality is intended, or one who has the actuality of rationality.

To be sure, the biological basis for personal life is developing as the fetus grows, but personal life itself does not emerge in the womb at all, nor will it begin to emerge until some time after birth, when the socialization process begins. . . . If an acquired rational capacity is the mark of personhood, then infants are not persons. Thus whereas both fetuses and newborn infants possess *biological* human life, neither one yet possesses *personal* human life. (p. 35).

In the development that follows, Wennberg essentially equates the terms "human person" and the "image of God," and presents a useful analysis of what is meant by speaking of a fetus "having a soul" and concludes that one may well conclude that a soul is not some immaterial part of a human being, and that the contention that souls are intrin-

sically immortal is essentially non-Christian. This portion of his discussion, particularly in view of the "gradualist" position he later advocates, would be assisted if he did speak continually of souls as something persons "have," but rather of something that persons "are," systems properties of the whole human being. His conclusion is that "the question of whether fetuses have immortal souls is essentially irrelevant to the abortion debate."

The author then considers in detail the various theories that have been advanced to relate the "right to life" to some decisive moment such as conception, implantation, human appearance, viability, beginning of brain development, attainment of sentience, and birth. Such "decisive moment theories" are in contrast with "gradualist" theories, which claim that becoming a human person with a strong right to life is a gradual process extending over an appreciable period of time. In the course of this discussion, Wennberg deals forthrightly with such key biblical passages as Psalm 139:13-16 and Jeremiah 1:5, often supposed to provide key insights into the nature of the fetus and the permissibility of abortion, and concludes that "these verses, then, do not teach—either directly or by implication—that the zygote or fetus is a person, an individual fully in the image of God."

The author also deals effectively with the "fallacy of the continuum," the argument that since a newborn infant clearly has the right to life, and since there is no clearcut moment of conception, then it follows that "there is no difference between a newborn infant who has a right to life and a newly fertilized ovum." His treatment of each of the "decisive moments" is always to the point, clearly setting forth the positions on each side and driving to the heart of the matter.

Three chapters then examine the major principles that have been proposed to provide guidelines for abortion considerations: the actuality principle, the potentiality principle, and the species principle. The way in which he unravels the complexities of each of these principles, deftly showing their strengths and weaknesses, is nothing short of beautiful. As a reviewer I am tempted to describe many of the vital insights, but, alas, review space is short and I must leave this enjoyment to the reader. When all is said, the actuality principle (the right to life comes only when full personhood has been actualized) leads inevitably to the conclusion that infants do not have the right to life, a conclusion totally incompatible with the Judeo-Christian tradition. This consideration leads to the key conclusion:

Indeed, the only way to have a morally permissive position on abortion is to deny that infants have a right to life, for as soon as one holds that infanticide is intrinsically objectionable, abortion will inevitably be rendered problematic and morally risky (p. 91).

The potentiality principle affirms that "a right to life belongs not only to persons but to all who in the course of the normal un-

folding of their intrinsic potential will become persons." After carefully laying out a path between the various problems associated with this principle, Wennberg finally arrives at what he calls "the gradualist variant of the potentiality principle." It is also not free from all problems, but it moves in the direction that seems most consistent to the author.

It holds that the right to life gradually becomes stronger as the newly fertilized ovum develops into a newborn infant, that there is no decisive all-or-nothing moment, that just as there is a continuous and gradual line of physical development from conception to birth (and beyond) so there is a continuous and gradual development in the right of life. This means that as the pregnancy progresses the reasons required to justify an abortion have to become increasingly more substantial (pp. 112, 113).

Finally the author considers the species principle, which specifies the same strong right to life to all members of the human species. This he concludes, after his usual careful analysis, to be deficient since it gives full moral standing to those "with no potential whatsoever for personal existence."

Wennberg then examines the various considerations necessary for actually making a decision concerning abortion. These include the degree of the woman's responsibility for the pregnancy, the extent of the burden the woman will have to bear as a result of her pregnancy, and the degree of fetal development. He then explores the possible grounds usually advanced to argue for an abortion. Throughout he is careful to be clear as possible about what we mean by "the right to life" and on what this right depends.

He recognizes that moral decisions concerning abortion are not synonymous with legal decisions and provides a penetrating and helpful analysis of the difference between these two kinds of decisions. Certainly the political debate focuses on whether abortion should be legalized or criminalized. He explores a dimension of the problem not often discussed:

It would seem, then, that the advocate of restrictive abortion legislation not only has to show that the fetus has a right to life but also has to show that the right to life includes the right to use another's body for life-sustaining purposes against that person's will (p. 155).

This leads him to a careful analysis of Judith Jarvis Thomson's "Case of the Famous Violinist" and its relevance for abortion questions. One of his conclusions is that the illustration "serves to undercut an assumption that often leads to an uncompromising anti-abortion position—namely, the assumption that if fetuses have a person's right to life, then abortion is murder." From this approach the author argues strongly that we ought to

use moral persuasion to decrease the incidence of abortion, but not legal coercion.

Finally Wennberg provides a summary and some reflections on the various dimensions of the issue. He holds that conception marks "the beginning of moral standing, the beginning of a right to life, the beginning of a unique center of emerging value." This right to life increases in strength as the fetus grows and develops, following the gradualist thesis. Such a position does not demand moral neutrality with respect to abortion, but rather is fully consistent with a view that sees abortion as morally objectionable. He rejects the common argument that "abortion involves a conflict between the woman's right to bodily self-determination and the fetus's right to life," because the fetus's right to life does not entitle the continued use of another's body to sustain that life. While recognizing that the moral argument is often kept socially alive because of the debate on the legal argument, still Wennberg feels impelled to conclude that we must uphold both the morally objectionable nature of abortion and the right of the pregnant woman to make the abortion decision.

It is clear that a genuine concern for the issues involved in abortion leads one to recognize the intricate complexity of a justifiable and authentic evaluation of those issues. The author is well aware that he has provided no simple set of answers. But this is exactly the best thing he can possibly do: by cutting away the false arguments and the misleading caricatures, he opens the way for Christians dedicated to following Christ in faith to face the issue in their own lives, in the lives of others, and in the society in which we live.

This review was written originally for the Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation.

***Rachel Weeping: The Case Against Abortion* by James T. Burtchzell (Harper & Row, 1984, 381 pp., \$10.95). Reviewed by Christine D. Pohl, MATS student in Social Ethics, Gordon-Conwell Seminary.**

In a collection of five essays, Burtchzell carefully analyzes the abortion controversy. He compares aspects of the abortion issue with the language, presuppositions and actions of the Nazi Holocaust and of the Dred Scott Decision on the status of American slaves. He further compares and connects abortion with infanticide. His title essay examines studies done by Linda Bird Francke and Katrina Maxtone-Graham on women and men who had direct experience with abortion. Burtchzell uses their recorded interviews to isolate certain recurring themes running through decisions to abort. He examines, challenges and occasionally demolishes the major pro-choice arguments.

The length and detail of this book by a Roman Catholic scholar at Notre Dame make it appropriate for well-educated lay persons or students. Burtchzell's skillful presentation is restrained yet profoundly moving. Although the basic comparisons of abortion to

the Holocaust, slavery and infanticide are familiar, the author moves beyond superficial observations to note very disturbing fundamental similarities. His conclusions from the study of the interviews are both perceptive and unsettling. Especially interesting are his comments on the use and misuse of language in the debate. His strong pro-life bias is evident throughout the book and occasionally results in repetition and overstatement of the position. However, any minor weaknesses are far outweighed by the exceptional quality of the writing and the insights Burtchaell brings to the issue.

Abortion and the Christian: What Every Believer Should Know

by John Jefferson Davis (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1984, 125 pp., \$4.95). Reviewed by Frank Anthony Spina, Professor of Old Testament, Seattle Pacific University.

John Jefferson Davis takes on the complex problem of abortion by calling attention to the current American *Zeitgeist* (we have evolved from traditionalism to permissiveness), rehearsing the ethical options available (Fletcher's situationalism, Geisler's hierarchicalism, Brown's absolutism), providing information about the medical realities (abortion is far more dangerous than commonly believed), working in biblical texts (personhood exists from conception, therefore abortion is unbiblical), advocating abortion only when the mother's life is threatened (which is rare), and calling for a constitutional amendment (the Human Life Amendment).

Doubtless many who read this book will want the author's arguments to succeed. But will thoughtful Christians be any less frustrated when, in any end, they are still faced with the simplistic and largely ideological options of "pro-choice" or "pro-life?"

It seems there would have been no problem had not America veered from "traditional" values and replaced them with "permissive" ones. But this is argument by "labeling;" nothing is right or wrong because it is traditional instead of permissive. Sexism, racism and materialism are traditional in our society! Davis allows that abortion is a complex moral issue with psychological, social, medical and political dimensions, but he hardly seems to take that seriously. What is complex about a point of view that abortion is wrong except when the mother's life is threatened? The psychological, social and political factors which make the abortion question an anguishing one are largely swept aside. Thus, were it not for the "personal goals and career plans" of women, abortion would not be so problematic. The "complexity" seems primarily to be a function of women balking at the agenda males have set for them.

Nor is it clear how a review of the medical dangers involving abortion is helpful. If David is correct about this, might not one conclude either that we need medical procedures or that abortion will be ethical when it becomes less dangerous?

In my opinion, Davis is weakest when appealing to the Bible. To be sure, he cannot be faulted for emphasizing the biblical concept of *imago dei* or the many texts which underscore the sanctity of life. Nor should one quarrel with his contention that life is life in the biblical tradition, whether pre- or post-natal. The problem is rather that he strains so much to make the biblical case that he loses credibility; in addition, he glosses over the complexity of the biblical witness.

Are we really to believe that the disciples dismissed the children huddling around Jesus because they did not regard them as persons "in the whole sense?" How much are we to make of poetic statements about pre-natal life in the Psalms, or of John the Baptist leaping for joy in the womb?

More importantly, does establishing that the Bible teaches the sanctity of life conclude the discussion? How are we to incorporate those texts in which life, even innocent life, is sacrificed to some larger purpose (e.g., Joshua)? Or, why is it presumably legitimate for Christians to derive a "just war" position from the Bible notwithstanding its pro-life slant (are there any just wars in which innocents, including children, are truly safe?), but for them to be limited to a single absolutist position on abortion? There are biblical statements which strongly suggest pacifism, yet that has always been a minority position with the Church, even among those who would be adamantly against abortion. Davis cites the biblical text, but does not *engage* it.

As a fairly predictable contribution to the so-called pro-life side, Davis does little to advance the abortion debate beyond the current options, which continue to be unsatisfactory to a great number of Christians. It will probably take a "paradigm shift" to move beyond this impasse, something which Davis does not provide.

Our Right to Choose: Toward a New Ethic of Abortion

by Beverly Wildung Harrison (Beacon Press, 1983, 334 pp., \$9.95). Reviewed by Esther Byle Bruland, Ph.D. student in Religion and Society, Drew University, co-author of *A Passion For Jesus, A Passion For Justice*.

Procreative choice for women is the centerpiece of this scholarly and impassioned work. Beverly Harrison sets forth perhaps the most rigorous ethical thinking to date to enter the abortion debate from the pro-choice perspective. In this recent work she both responds to pro-life claims and lays the foundation for what she calls a new ethic of abortion which has women's well-being as its main focus.

Harrison characterizes herself as a mixed theorist, combining utilitarian-consequentialist considerations with deontological concerns. Her major approach, however, is that of feminist liberation theology. Her work is self-consciously revisionistic, rejecting what she refers to as patriarchal, misogynistic approaches. Much of Scripture is thus set aside; rather, the ethical bases of Dr. Harrison's work

are derived from feminist-liberationist notions of justice, rights, and the good society.

This book is cast in terms of a power struggle—the struggle of women to control their procreative potential. History is viewed in terms of women being defined and confined by their reproductive capacities. In this scenario, women have suffered subservience not only to male-dominated social relations and structures, but also to their own fertility. Harrison cites historical evidence of abortion and infanticide as aspects of this struggle of women to cope with their fertility.

Harrison envisions a society characterized by procreative choice as one in which the resort to abortion is minimized. Safe and reliable contraceptives would be available to prevent unwanted pregnancy; women would take active responsibility for managing their fertility; and for those women choosing to bear children, there would be adequate economic and social supports, including daycare and fair pay.

This vision is one of the most salient aspects of the book, particularly for those who do not share Harrison's pro-choice perspective. She indicates a point of potential agreement between pro-choice and pro-life advocates concerning policies that would enhance the options open to women and so minimize the resort to abortion as a form of birth control.

Harrison, however, would retain elective abortion as an option. She insists that to deny access to legal abortions is to deny women their status as fully capable moral agents. She would shift the onus of restricting abortions from the state to pregnant women themselves. To do otherwise, according to Harrison, is to invade their bodily integrity (she apparently does not consider abortion to be such an invasion).

Toward the end of the book, Harrison turns to evaluate the morality of the act of abortion itself. She refutes the belief that human life begins at conception as a naturalistic fallacy, i.e., a transmutation of scientific findings into moral norms without ethical deliberation. She sees humanity as socially rather than biologically determined. Her question then becomes, at what point ought we to *impute* human life to the fetus? She concludes, rather arbitrarily, that while a fetus may be considered "a form of life" during early gestation, we should not consider it "a human life" until it reaches viability. In her ethic, abortions are a necessary form of birth control of last resort; early abortions are far preferable to late abortions, but the will of the pregnant woman should take precedence up until birth.

Indeed, "will" and "want" play an important role in Harrison's ethic. Control is pivotal. Her approach is so concrete and matter-of-fact that a sense of awe and welcome for the miracle of new life is absent. Rather, pregnancy is treated as a problem that can be solved.

Harrison's focus on will and control is inconsistent, however. While calling for the moral agency of women to be respected, she says little about their agency in regard to sex-

ual activity. She regards the Christian sexual ethic as patriarchal and misogynistic. In her view, abortion as an issue should not be tied to a sexual ethic. Procreative choice has to do with fertility, but not chastity.

Harrison makes an important contribution in envisioning a society characterized by procreative choice in which the anguish women often experience in connection with their fertility and the resort to elective abortion are minimized. Her concern for the well-being of women and her desire that every birth be welcome are genuine. Harrison rightly stresses the material, social, and emotional hardships incurred through unwanted pregnancies. She fails, however, to acknowledge the psychological, emotional, and spiritual damage suffered by women (and their mates) as a result of choosing abortion. Nor does she acknowledge the loss of choice experienced when women are pressured into having abortions. Her concern for women's well-being, though genuine, does not go far enough. It must extend to the welfare of the fetus and to the intangible aspects of women's lives.

BOOK REVIEWS

Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective 2 vols. by James M. Gustafson (University of Chicago Press, 1981, 1984, \$25.00 (vol. 2)). Reviewed by Donald G. Bloesch, Professor of Theology, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary.

In this work, James Gustafson, professor at the University of Chicago Divinity School and one of the most articulate and probing ethicists of our day, presents the case for a radically theocentric ethics. He readily acknowledges his indebtedness to H. Richard Niebuhr, his teacher at the Yale Divinity School, who tried to make a place in theology for God's majesty and power. He also shares Niebuhr's appreciation for Ernst Troeltsch, the theologian of historicism, who maintained that our religious beliefs and moral values are inextricably bound up in the web of history and culture. But while Niebuhr made a valiant effort to transcend relativism by a commitment to "the absolute faithfulness of God-in-Christ," (*Christ and Culture*, p. 239), it is an open question whether Gustafson can avert this peril.

Because he approaches ethics from a contextualist or historicist perspective, it follows that there are no absolute, timeless truths but only historically and culturally conditioned insights that need to be tested scientifically. Indeed, he claims that not only culture but also nature is a source of moral wisdom. This is why it is necessary to draw on both the natural and social sciences in any assessment of theological and ethical assertions.

The author's approach is theocentric because he holds that human values and goals must be subordinated to trust and wonder in the God whom he defines as "the ultimate ordering power in the universe." God does not exist for the sake of humanity, but humanity can serve this power who both bears down on us and sustains us.

At the same time, Gustafson is also admittedly naturalistic. He sees God not as a transcendent personal being who intervenes in nature and history but instead as an impersonal power (or powers) that works through the processes and patterns of nature and history. His court of appeal, moreover, is not divine revelation but human experience that is tested by the scientific method. The credibility of theological assertions rests on their consistency with the evidence about the universe provided by the natural and behavioral sciences. Revelation is simply the awakening of religious sensibility to the mystery and wonder of Nature; it definitely is not the communication of meaning by a living God who confronts people personally in a divine-human encounter.

Given this radical departure from biblical faith, it is not surprising to find Gustafson using "God" and "Nature" interchangeably, though he resists identifying the Orderer of nature with the works of nature. His position is remarkably akin to that of ancient Stoicism, which practically divinized Nature. It seems that Gustafson's God is the soul or spirit of the world rather than the Creator and Lord of the world. Like the Stoics, he calls for a courageous resignation to and cooperation with the powers that are at work in the cosmos. He speaks highly of natural piety, which is characterized by awe, reverence and gratitude for what is. The physical orderliness of Nature becomes the paradigm for the moral order of humanity.

In this scenario, biblical authority fades into significance. The Bible is a source of support for Gustafson only as a record of the religious experiences of a particular people in history. We can learn from this record how people in another day responded to the awesome powers that shape the cosmos, but we cannot be bound to their myths, which are the product of a particular historical matrix and are now shown to be outdated, though not irrelevant. Gustafson almost completely ignores the Old Testament, though he does appreciate Jesus as exemplifying "theocentric piety and fidelity." At the same time, he rejects the Jesus Christ of orthodoxy—the preexistent Son of God made flesh—as well as the resurrection of Jesus from the grave. He also denies any kind of life after death and is content to face the future with the courage to live and endure in a world of uncertainty.

The God that Gustafson upholds is inaccessiblely remote, and this has led some of his critics to accuse him of deism. Yet his God is not detached from the universe but is actively at work within it reshaping and remodeling it. All we can know about this God, however, are "signs" or "signals" of the divine ordering of nature. We cannot even be assured that this God is one whose essence is love, for Gustafson points to the destructive as well as the beneficent powers at work in nature.

The goal of ethical action seems to be the common good, but the precise content of this good is arrived at through a partnership of religious tradition with the natural and behavioral sciences. Even then, it is a good that

pertains only to our particular period in history, and it may well change when circumstances change.

What Gustafson has given us is a refurbished natural theology that makes a place for law, even for rules, but not for the gospel, which celebrates God's act of reconciliation and redemption in Jesus Christ. For Gustafson, the foundational criterion for ethical action is the Book of Nature as seen through the eyes of the empirical sciences.

The author identifies with the Reformed tradition because of its emphasis on the sovereignty and glory of God, but he admits that he is very selective in what he chooses from it. He appreciates Calvin's perception of the inseparability of Nature and God (though he misreads this), but he rejects Calvin's Christology and high view of biblical authority.

Karl Barth is seen more as a foil than as a positive support. In contradistinction to Barth, he tells us that his model is not "one of God personally relating to human beings as persons in the spheres of their moral activity" but rather "one of powers that are impersonally ordering the world of which human activity is a part."

Gustafson can be commended for perceiving the importance of the historical and cultural context in ethical action, but he has gone too far by losing sight of the transcendent ground for Christian moral decision. In his view, there is no sharp distinction between the natural and moral order. Revelation is reduced to insight into the divine ordering of human experience; piety is reinterpreted as awe and wonder before the mystery of Nature; theology is transmuted into an enterprise that ventures to say some things about God on the basis of an examination of our affective responses to the world; God is no longer transcendent Lord and Savior of the world but "the power and ordering of life in nature which sustains and limits human activity." At the price of being relevant to the world of science and philosophy, Gustafson depersonalizes the God of Scripture and ends with a philosophical construct that may well arouse the curiosity of the world but certainly not command its allegiance.

Unmasking the New Age by Douglas R. Groothuis (InterVarsity Press, 1986, 192pp., \$6.95). Reviewed by Ronald Enroth, Professor of Sociology, Westmont College.

The brochure describes a weekend workshop which will enable participants to deepen their capacity to serve others. The approach of the workshop emphasizes "a trust in intuitive or inner wisdom" and "a connectedness to universal life force or spirit." Another four-day seminar, "The Art of Empowerment," is billed as "a mode of facilitation/guiding/healing that is highly empowered, profoundly growthful, and full of joy."

Such invitations to experiences of human "transformation" are indicative of the proliferating influence of New Age thinking in contemporary society. On the surface these opportunities for human betterment seem in-

nocuous enough. However, after reading *Unmasking the New Age*, one will have a clearer picture of how such activities are part of a new world view which is fast gaining popularity in the Western world, a "grand vision" of personal and planetary transformation which is based on the release of human potential—the "divine within"—and other non-Christian assumptions.

This comprehensive and well-organized book begins with an excellent introductory chapter which provides glimpses of the diverse aspects of the New Age movement and which identifies the primary distinctives of New Age thinking: the notion that "all is one"; that "all is god" (pantheism); the divinity of humanity; the need for awareness of the divine within through a change in consciousness; the view that all religions are essentially one; and, finally, a vision of cosmic evolutionary optimism.

Groothuis then proceeds to map out the roots of the new world view from its inception in the counterculture of the 1960s. He sees New Age thought supplanting secular humanism to form a "new cosmic humanism" which has been especially influential in both the ecology movement and radical feminism. "By inflating human potential to cosmic dimensions, cosmic humanism has captured much of secular humanism without being ensnared by its narrow, repressive elements."

The bulk of the book is devoted to a careful analysis of the influence of New Age thinking in holistic health, psychology, science (especially physics), and politics. The chapter on psychology represents a more reasoned approach than that of the popular New Age critic, Dave Hunt, although Christian professionals will be disappointed with Groothuis' brief discussion of hypnosis, which amounts to a restatement of the controversial positions taken by Hunt and the Bobgans that hypnosis invariably involves an occult connection.

Unmasking the New Age presents a welcome alternative to the view, popular in many evangelical/fundamentalist circles, that New Age groups represent a political/economic/spiritual network or conspiracy intent on overthrowing the existing social order. Little concrete evidence for such a conspiracy can be documented. Groothuis observes that while a case can be made for a general conspiracy of evil in the world, "the New Age movement is better viewed as a world view shift than a unified global conspiracy."

The chapter entitled "New Age Spirituality" addresses the revival of neo-paganism in Western culture, especially the renewed interest in goddess worship and shamanistic practices. The author helps us understand that while the obvious occultism of such phenomena does not yet have broad appeal, the same basic assumptions underlying the neo-pagan manifestations are invading our corporations, schools, and even the U.S. military under the guise of "growth seminars," self-improvement programs and "confluent education." In making that important link, Groothuis provides invaluable assistance in the continuing and crucial task facing modern Christians—the development of discernment skills.

Groothuis concludes by challenging Christians to become culture watchers, to evaluate what they encounter, and to act on the basis of information received. I cannot think of a better stimulus to watching, evaluating, and acting than to read this timely book.

The Bible and Liberation: Political and Social Hermeneutics

edited by Norman K. Gottwald (Orbis, 1983, 542 pp., \$18.95). Reviewed by PHEME PERKINS, Professor of Theology (New Testament), Boston College.

A revision of *A Radical Religion Reader* (1976), this volume of twenty-eight articles includes an impressive number of the major statements on sociological study of biblical material published since that time. This new emphasis along with four articles on women in the Old and New Testaments provides a balance to the Marxist orientation of the earlier material. Because the editor is himself a major contributor to the sociological approach to Old Testament traditions, he has chosen selections that are established statements and are of uniformly high quality.

Several of the articles deal with Gottwald's approach to the sociology of Israel. He explains the method and includes an address on the task ahead. Reviews of Gottwald's work are included along with a major schematic statement by Walter Brueggemann, "Trajectories in Old Testament Literature and the Sociology of Ancient Israel." Robert Wilson's essay on prophecy in ancient Israel uses anthropological material to suggest that the relationship between the prophetic tradition and society must be seen as more complex than that of advocate for social change. Some prophetic works may speak from the margins of society. Others may serve to stabilize and hold together the social order. Henri Mottu's ideological analysis of the struggle between Hananiah and Jeremiah (Jer. 28) uses a Marxist approach to describe the conflict of prophetic visions. A slightly different use of Marxism appears in Joseph Haddad's treatment of Hosea. Finally, for the Old Testament student the collection includes fine essays on women in Israelite society by Phyllis Bird and Carol Meyers.

Several of the New Testament essays deal with the methodological question of applying social sciences material to the NT. Bruce Malina argues for the use of anthropological insights as a corrective to our cultural biases. He warns us, however, that there is no unified social sciences model. His essay describes three major options: (1) structural functionalism treats expected interactions and relationships between persons; (2) conflict models focus on coercion, power and interests of conflicting groups in a society; (3) sociology of knowledge or "symbolic anthropology" treats societies as shapers of powerful and long-lasting perceptions through their symbols, whether in language or rite. Essays by Gerd Theissen, John Gager and Robert Smith treat the problems of describing the

"social class" of persons in the early Christian movement and the various approaches that have been taken. Robin Scroggs also has a review essay on sociological research and the New Testament.

The New Testament material which claims the NT for a "radical theology" is divided between essays from George Pixley and John Fairman Brown that argue for a liberation understanding of Jesus' preaching and ministry and two recent pieces from the feminist camp by Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Luise Schottroff on women disciples in earlier Christianity.

Finally, and probably least interesting to biblical students, there are several essays describing Marxist approaches to the Bible or the use of the Bible in liberation theology. Essays by Sergio Rostagno and Kuno Fussell defend the legitimacy of Marxist class analysis in biblical study. Carlos Mesters, Arthur McGovern and Juan Luis Segundo describe different facets of South American liberation theology.

Obviously, there is too much in this reader to be encompassed in a single course. But the essays it contains might serve as secondary reading for a number of different courses from OT and NT sources to courses in Political Theology, Women's Studies or Social Ethics. The editor has taken great care to balance the material among different interests. In the end, the strongest segment of the book remains the work on the Old Testament.

Money, Sex and Power: The Challenge of the Disciplined Life

by Richard J. Foster (Harper & Row, 1985, 260 pp., \$13.95).

Sex, Money and Power: An Essay in Christian Social Ethics

by Philip Turner (Cowley, 1985, 135 pp., \$7.95).

Reviewed by Douglas J. Miller, Professor of Christian Social Ethics, Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

One would be hard pressed to list any more significant and controversial facets of human experience than money, sex and power. Richard Foster, a popular Quaker writer, and Philip Turner, an Episcopal academic, broach their subjects in diverse ways and with contrasting input, but come to remarkably similar conclusions. Foster is more oriented to the lay reader with his always fascinating anecdotes, occasional flashes of insight and convincing blend of traditional and avant-garde theology. His creative spirit and genuinely compassionate approach will both delight and stretch most Christians.

Turner, on the other hand, is less open and tolerant than Foster to contemporary trends. Moreover, this reviewer became somewhat entangled in his lengthy and often ponderous discussions of alternative positions against which he developed his own ideas. These foils seemed too artificial, even unreal; and one wonders whether the advocates would ever see themselves in the narrow pictures Turner paints of them. I felt he was more defensive than stretching.

I found Foster's discussion of sexual morality most engaging. His sensitivity to the questions of divorce, oral sex, masturbation and fantasy was refreshing. His courageous stand on the equality of women is to be applauded. I felt his own inner agony as he sympathetically dealt with the sexuality of singles. Nevertheless, I was deeply disappointed in his treatment of homosexuality. While he does exhibit unusual compassion for the plight of gays, his theological views on this subject are grounded upon a discredited exegesis of Scripture, a static hermeneutic, a jaundiced Barthian anthropology, and just bad ethical reasoning. His presentation will do little to halt the spreading fire of bigotry against this vulnerable outgrouped minority.

Turner's book, being more academically oriented, will better suit those who wish to examine the ethical dimensions of money, sex and power. He attempts to reconstruct a new model for doing Christian ethics that rejects the social indifference of mysticism, but weaves its way between the narrowness of sectarianism (which sees social action limited to the church only) and the over extension of "neo-Constantinianism" (which sees social action primarily in changing social structures). Change must begin in the church and flow out to the broader world.

While Turner's position has some credence, his approach seems almost "Christ against culture," especially in his restatement of the more traditional church views. For instance, he tries to salvage the hierarchical relationship between husband and wife—although he does qualify this by disclaiming male domination. But this seems hollow once one justifies the scheme. Furthermore, in his section on money, his claims that liberation theology by-passes the poor, that the poor sometimes abuse the rich, that only God can eliminate poverty, and that "inner freedom" is what really matters seem to be but restatements of the common apologetic for continued injustice and oppression.

The fundamental problem of both books is the lack of a consistent hermeneutic. This permitted Foster to justify capitalism on the basis of Jesus' parable of the talents, and Turner to discuss slavery in the Bible simply within the context of obedience, goodwill and forbearance without further moral comment. Both authors seemed unable adequately to bridge the historical gap between the biblical text and the contemporary context. In the final analysis, ethical questions for Christians rest heavily upon one's hermeneutical axioms.

Joy in the New Testament
by William Morrice (Eerdmans, 1984, 173 pp., \$8.95). Reviewed by Larry R. Helyer, Associate Professor of Religion, Taylor University.

The fruits of an Aberdeen dissertation are here distilled by William Morrice, New Testament Tutor and Librarian at St. John's College, Durham, England. Fastening upon a keynote of the Christian message, the author

Letters to the Editor

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carefully summarizes the reasons why "joy is more conspicuous in Christianity than in any other religion and in the Bible than in any other literature."

For the aspiring graduate student, the book is a model of a sound biblical theology. Divided into two parts, the book explores the vocabulary of joy in Part One. In eleven short chapters, each root word in its various grammatical forms is surveyed from the classical period through that of the Septuagint, Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, and New Testament. Morrice usually concludes each word group with a summary of nuances and comments on the theological significance of the discussion.

Realistically, students untutored in Greek will probably not persevere with Part One. What it does, it does well; but a nuts and bolts analysis of linguistic phenomenon will attract primarily specialists. Part Two, on the other hand, consists of a more engaging discussion of the contribution each biblical writer makes to the development of the concept of joy (Jesus' teaching is dealt with first as a separate chapter in Part Two). This section of the book contains passages which not only fill the head, but warm the heart.

Here are some gleanings from Morrice's study: "Luke 15 [the three parables about things lost] is the most joyful chapter in the whole of the gospel of joy"; "We can sum up and characterize the Johannine contribution to the New Testament conception of joy by picking out the phrase 'the fulness of joy'"; "Christianity for Paul was a religion not only of grace but also joy"; "The joy of Paul comes to its climax in the letter to the Philippians"; "The source of Paul's joy is always the redemption won for men by Jesus Christ. So it comes about that 'joy in the Lord' is the most adequate way of summing up Paul's contribution to the Christian conception of joy"; "The paradox of joy in suffering . . . comprises the main contribution of Peter to the Christian conception of joy according to the New Testament"; "The letter of James stresses the possibility and even the duty of joy in the midst of trials and temptation"; "The writer of the Book of Revelation declares that the joy of the opponents of Christianity is short-lived . . . the joy of the redeemed is eternal"; "Finally, Christians should always live as on the threshold of joy."

The author's scholarship is evident and he expounds his subject with an eye to the critical issues raised by New Testament studies. For those who are interested, Morrice is chary of Matthean authorship of the gospel of Matthew, of Pauline authorship of the pastorals, and of Petrine authorship of 2 Peter. Otherwise, he follows a generally traditional approach toward the NT documents.

I would say that, in general, Morrice does a good job popularizing his dissertation. For those looking for a thoughtful exposition of the findings of a *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* or *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* for the complex and often joyless days in which we live, this book is highly recommended.

Jesus, the Compassion of God
by Monika K. Hellwig (Michael Glazier, 1983, 159 pp., \$12.95). Reviewed by Christian D. Kettler, Ph.D. student, Fuller Theological Seminary.

Contemporary Catholic theology is usually a tradition of which evangelical Protestants are often all too ignorant. This is obviously an unfortunate state of affairs. Interaction with a theological tradition other than one's own cannot help but bring a freshness and vigor to one's own theology. Monika Hellwig, professor of theology at Georgetown University has provided a short, yet stimulating introduction to the world of contemporary Catholic Christology which will be beneficial both to those who desire a survey of the mood of contemporary Christology, as well as to those who wish to engage the author in a discussion of her theme of Jesus as the "compassion" of God.

Part One is entitled "The Task of Christology." Hellwig differentiates between two methods of doing Christology: The first is based on speculation by inference from one's experience of Jesus. The second is also based on one's experience of Jesus, but is to be preferred because it is a direct interpretation of the experience itself. A speculative approach tends to degenerate into rigidity and dogmatism, and not allow for the validity of differing viewpoints. The author states her preference for the second option in her declaration that the intent of the volume is "to reflect on Christian claims for Jesus by the method of interpreting and thematizing the Christian experience of salvation and hope arising from the impact of Jesus within the community of faith and in the world and in its history at large" (p. 18).

This approach includes honest questions posed for the traditional method of doing theology. The basic question of what difference does Jesus make must be dealt with in the context of Christian experience. When traditional symbolism hinders the relationship between humanity and Jesus, it must be amended. This is true concerning Chalcedon, or, more specifically, the wrong interpretation of Chalcedon which overemphasizes the deity of Christ at the expense of his humanity. Tradition should not be bypassed, but we

should also be free to see the impact of Jesus upon the political, social, and psychological issues of our day, issues which were foreign to the age of Chalcedon.

Hellwig sounds a clarion call for a return to the "sources" of Christology. She finds these sources in the church's experience of God in worship and prayer. A change from the early church's emphasis upon worship and prayer as the source of Christology to a later emphasis upon correct doctrinal formulation has only been resolved in the twentieth century by such theologians as Karl Rahner and the liberation theologians, who again acknowledge the contemporary believer's experience as a source for Christology. It is a mark of a mature theology which "takes one's own experience seriously" (p. 60), according to Hellwig. Therefore, while the history of the individual life of Jesus is of undoubted importance, it is incomplete if it is not studied along with "the history of the impact of the Risen Christ as it continues up to and in the present" (p. 71).

In Part Two, the author presents a "Proposal towards a Constructive Christology" which considers the preaching, the death, and resurrection of Jesus as a basis for understanding him as the Compassion of God. At each of these points, Jesus' compassion is made manifest in the experience of those who believe in him. This is not simple pity, but includes help, movement toward others, solidarity with the poor and oppressed, and a total sense of involvement. Where the experience of the believer does not reflect a particular point of tradition, one should be free to jettison such an idea, e.g., the pre-existence of Christ.

Part Three considers briefly, but insightfully the tough issues of "The Believer's Christ in a Pluralistic World," which includes Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, Marxism, and Gandhi. Buddhism is appreciated for addressing the problem of salvation, but Hellwig views the compassion of Jesus as much more than a negation. Judaism and Islam are found wanting because of their emphasis upon the extrinsic law, not the law of freedom. Marxism's analysis of social situations are accepted, but need to be augmented by a Christian anthropology in terms of relationship and love, not simply the worker and his work. A quite positive appreciation of Gandhi follows, whom Hellwig considers to be one who "has personified the divine Compassion in our time to an extraordinary degree" (p. 155).

This volume is not meant to be an exhaustive Christology, but does raise interesting issues with the author's forthright declaration of a theological method based on Christian experience. This is certainly to be applauded in one sense. A Christology which does not take seriously the reality of Christian experience does not take seriously either the humanity of Christ or our own humanity. Nonetheless, Dr. Hellwig's book raises some critical questions about such a methodology, a methodology which is dominant in theology today. How does one critique Christian experience or elements within our Christian experience? If we believe that God has spoken a word which originates from outside our

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existential needs and desires, how can that Word critique us if Christian experience is the foundation of our theology? Furthermore, has not Kant taught us about the problem of *interpreting* our experience? Do we not need an interpretation which originates beyond ourselves, in God himself, what T.F. Torrance would call "the epistemology of the Holy Spirit" (in his *God and Rationality*)? Is this not the meaning of the Incarnation, in which God provides both the revelation *and* the response in the divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ? Hellwig mentions at one point the need "to enter into the compassion of (Jesus') experience" (p. 108). Unfortunately, the author does not build upon what could be a most fruitful relationship between the humanity of Christ and our humanity.

Notwithstanding these criticisms, this is a well written volume which will be very useful to all those interested in trends in contemporary Catholic Christology, whether they be Protestant or Catholic, teacher or student.

Why Believe in God?

by Michael Goulder and John Hick (SCM Press, 1983, 111 pp., \$3.00). Reviewed by Clark H. Pinnock, Professor of Theology, McMaster Divinity College.

An interesting trend in British theology these days is the rise of radical theology. The *Honest to God* modernism of two decades ago has flowered again in the new scepticism of certain Anglican clergymen. Recently there was a call for the resignation of the Bishop of Durham for calling the resurrection of Jesus a conjuring trick with bones. At least in Goulder's case a man has had the decency to renounce his orders, not wanting to join Don Cupitt in the ranks of the ordained atheists society.

This book is a dialogue between Goulder, a man who has lost all his faith in God, and Hick, a man who has lost most of it. It is difficult for the reviewer to know whom to cheer for—whether the atheist who is at least honest, or the quasi-theist who clings to at least a remnant of precious belief. Goulder puts his finger on the problem when he says that Hick has given away most of what he has but stopped short of giving it all away.

The first chapter is interesting because in it the atheist Goulder gives his testimony how

he moved from evangelical conversion at Cambridge (in the CICC no less) to unbelief as a priest in the Church of England. Hick of course has also moved from an evangelical faith to theocentric syncretism. Although this tends to confirm my Arminian beliefs (people *do* fall from grace), it also troubles me and I ask myself, what do evangelicals have to do to conserve our talent once we have it?

The book began in a jointly taught course in Birmingham in which the chapters were pairs of lectures given by these two gentlemen. If you want the bottom line here, why Hick does believe in God, rather than not believe in Him, then the answer is religious experience. The testimony of the world's religions suggests that there is a limitlessly higher and better Reality to come into contact with, and Hick pictures it in a Christian way: "God is gracious and opens to us the richness of his eternal life." It is curious how, having gotten away from Christocentrism, Jesus Christ remains the chief inspiration of Hick's theism. It is difficult to imagine where he could have gotten that sentence from the religions at large, so to speak.

Since Hick bases theism entirely upon religious experience, it is not too difficult for Goulder to cast doubt upon its value for proving that there is a God. For if religious experience *alone* is the proof for God, belief in God is rationally shaky. For evangelical apologists like me, it would be important to buttress this appeal to experience with other kinds of arguments. Here I could refer to the fine book by Stuart Hackett, *The Reconstruction of the Christian Revelation Claim* (Baker, 1984).

So this is not a great book in itself, but an example of the travail of the alienated liberal theologians.

Micah: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Micah

by Delbert Hillers (Fortress, 1984, 116 pp., \$22.95). Reviewed by A. J. Petrotta, Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies, Sterling College.

If one had undertaken a study of the book of Micah a decade ago, one might have gotten the impression that the critical questions regarding this "minor" prophet were more or less settled since there were no current critical commentaries. A quite different picture is evident today—not only are there several critical commentaries, but the commentators scarcely agree on any of the critical questions. Delbert Hillers' recent volume in the Hermeneia series is an excellent addition to the growing interest in Mican studies.

The central debate in the study of Micah concerns the composition of the book. The older literary critics found authentic Mican material largely in the first three chapters, the "judgment" section of Micah. The bulk of chapters 4 through 5 and 7:8-20, the "hope" sections, was said to come from the post-exilic time; the remainder of chapters 6 and 7 were similarly thought to be later than Micah's time (though not all agreed on this).

The current debate over composition is carried out along form-critical and especially redaction-critical lines. Two observations can be made from these studies: first, in spite of the common assumptions and methodology, little common ground is agreed upon in the results of the redaction-critical studies. That is, studying the growth of the book and assigning sections and snippets of text to different times and different groups of tradents is confidently argued, but which snippet, and what time and group, are not commonly agreed upon. Second, in spite of the newer methodology of redaction-critical approaches, the constrictures of the literary criticism of a century ago continues to dominate the discussion. This is especially true regarding the authenticity of the hope oracles in the book.

Two questions arise: Does the disparate results of the redaction-critical approach stretch the credibility of the method beyond what it is able to support? Simply because they disagree is no reason in and of itself to discard the method, but the hypothetical nature of the method and the disparate results combine at least to raise the question of its appropriateness to the material. Perhaps we are asking the wrong questions, or stopping short in our inquiry. Is there not a fundamental tension, if not outright difference, between the methodology and assumptions of the older literary critics and the redaction critics? If this is true, the difference should somehow show in the results, yet the redaction-critics have not moved significantly beyond the literary critical results of the previous generation of scholars.

Hillers, however, breaks ranks with the redaction-critics by positing a single situation for the composition of Micah. Hillers locates this situation in a particular social context; specifically, "a unifying explanatory approach is sought which has recurred over and over in human history, a movement of 'revitalization,' a 'millennial' movement" (p. 4). This millennial movement looks to an "imminent, radical reordering of life on earth" (p. 4). An effort is made by the oppressed, so Hillers argues, to alter radically the state of affairs in order to bring about a more satisfying situation in which there is peace and plenty for all.

Hillers finds support for this theory from the book of Micah itself, from Isaiah, and from archaeological evidence. Two factors that cause these millennial movements are economic deprivation and the demise of authority. These factors are common in Micah (cf. e.g. 2:1-2, 9; 3:9-12; 6:9-11; etc.), and similar complaints can be found throughout Isaiah. Historically, Uzziah and Hezekiah carried out extensive armament and fortification programs. This greater influence on the populace by the centralized government is borne out by potsherds found with the inscription *lmlk*, "to the king." Thus the socio-political situation was ripe for this revitalization movement. The elements of this movement include the removal of foreign elements, a "time of troubles," the reversal of social classes, the idea of a righteous ruler, and the vision of a new age (cf. pp. 6-7).

The approach, though vastly different from the approaches outlined above, is not, however, a return to some pre-critical exegesis. The difference lies in Hillers' conscious effort to avoid the diachronic approach in which a reconstruction of the book is sought through explicating its literary history (Hillers does make redaction critical comments at certain junctures in his study, but an effort is made to avoid such observations). Though he criticizes the paucity of common results of the redaction-critical method, he does not reject the method for this reason; rather, he adopts a synchronic approach for the promise this approach affords for the exegete.

Regarding the authenticity of the hope oracles and the exegesis of difficult passages in the book (two other perennial problems for

commentators), Hillers is rather conservative. An example is the famous passage in 4:1-4 (paralleled in Isa. 2:2-4). After a brief rehearsal of the options—Micah, Isaiah, or a third, anonymous prophet—and a response to the arguments against Micah authorship, he cautiously relates this to the overall thesis of the commentary that the book arose out of a revitalization movement. The possibilities are that Micah wrote it as part of the vision of the new age; that Isaiah wrote it and it was added to Micah as fitting with his thought; or that the passage is from an anonymous prophet. In other words, he is conservative regarding what he can confidently affirm—there is not enough evidence in the text to say without doubt or without lingering problems who wrote it and when, but he does

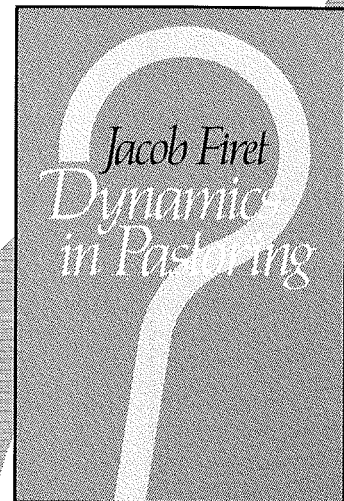
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not reject Micah authorship out of hand.

On matters of text he is similarly cautious. Micah 4:1-4 does not pose the problem for translators that other passages in Micah present, but it is representative of Hillers' method and approach regarding textual matters. For example, in 4:1 Hillers omits "of the house of" before Yahweh, thus agreeing with the LXX. He further notes that Isa. 2:2 agrees with the Micah parallel, and that the LXX there has "the mountain of the Lord and the house of God," which appears to be a conflated reading (pointing to early variants for this phrase). The additional word in the MT (*beit*), might have been added on the basis of 3:12 or 4:2. What is the witness of the other versions? Does the LXX translator have a penchant for altering his text or conforming his text to stock phraseology? Is there influence on the LXX translator from other passages in the LXX? What about the LXX translator of Isaiah—is he faithful to his *Vorlage* as a general rule? Hillers may have asked all these questions in his study, but no mention of this is made in the commentary.

This commentary can be highly recommended to advanced students for its mature and stimulating exegesis, and for the creative approach Hillers takes. The approach is not without its problems: the social location of a revitalization movement is far too specific to gain many adherents; the text itself is not able to support this thesis any more than it can the redaction-critical approaches it seeks to overcome. However, the synchronic approach to the book has merit and should be pursued for the insights it may yield.

One might have wished for more comments on the text, the characteristics of the versions and their relationship to one another and the MT, or even some interaction with the history of the interpretation of Micah. Yet there is no one among us who could not learn from the brevity of this commentary. One cannot but be amazed at how much insight and punch Hillers packs into his brief comments. Anyway one looks at it, this is a refreshing commentary.

BOOK COMMENTS

Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology
edited by David G. Benner (Baker Book House, 1985, 1223 pp., 39.95).

The Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology is clearly the most comprehensive work in psychology to date from a Christian perspective. David Benner has pulled together nearly all of the evangelical scholars in the field of psychology to produce over 1,000 articles spanning the entire field of psychology. By far the greatest number of the articles focus on more applied areas such as personality, psychopathology, psychotherapy and the psychology of religion. More experimentally oriented fields like developmental, social and physiological psychology are purposely given much less space since the book is written primarily for "pastors and others in various kinds of ministry."

The Encyclopedia is a goldmine of information for the pastor and student of theology

and Christian ministry. Nearly all major schools of psychology and psychotherapy are presented as well as the major mental and emotional disorders. The reader can quickly find basic information, for example, on Sigmund Freud, Carl Rogers, Albert Ellis, Hobar Mowrer and a host of other influential psychological theorists. Reviews of Christian writers like Bill Gothard, Jay Adams and Lawrence Crabb are also included as well as summaries of major maladjustments such as depression, neurosis, psychosis, personality disorders and obsessive-compulsive disorders. Brief descriptive or definitional summaries of psychological terms such as reinforcer, hallucination and narcissism and descriptions of specific counseling techniques

like catharsis and interpretation are other very helpful portions of this volume.

The distinctly Christian features of this Encyclopedia lie in two areas. The first is its conclusion of a number of articles addressing spiritual issues such as guilt, forgiveness, confession, sin, faith and doubt. The second is a closing section in many articles which offers a brief biblical critique or Christian perspective on the theory or issue at hand. Unfortunately the quality of these biblical perspectives ranges from very thorough and biblical through very simplistic and proof-texted.

The theological sophistication and orthodoxy of the authors also varies along a relatively broad perspective as does the schol-

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arly depth of the articles. This makes the Encyclopedia of less use for scholars and students looking for authoritative or comprehensive statements of issues than it is for Christian students and professionals from disciplines related to psychology who want a good introduction to a particular theorist or topic. This is not meant to minimize the immense value of the book for its primary audience. Pastors and students of theology will find it an excellent, and perhaps indispensable, introduction to most of their questions about psychology and counseling. I recommend it highly.

—Bruce Narramore

Is Human Forgiveness Possible? A Pastoral Care Perspective

by John Patton (Abingdon Press, 1985, 189 pp., \$10.95).

John Patton offers an integrative approach to defining Christian forgiveness. Drawing upon biblical, theological, and psychological categories, he views "forgiveness" more as a discovery of our humanity than an imperative exercise, the consequence of which is self-serving, personal power acquisition. His emphasis on the real (though often hidden) roles of shame and power in relational forgiveness is a welcome alternative to traditional forgiveness models which too often encourage a destructive hubris more than Christian love.

Patton draws on his clinical experience as a pastoral counselor and his careful, theoretical study of important figures such as Heinz Kohut and Gershen Kaufman, to offer a contemporary interpretation of what Jesus meant by forgiveness. The hermeneutics of such a task are always problematic, and Patton's integrative approach is more instructive on psychological models than it is on biblical interpretation. But, admittedly, this is not a work on hermeneutics. The book will be valuable for Christian pastors and counselors who seek theoretical constructs for their practical ministries. The use of specific case histories will be helpful to those uninitiated in the rigors of psychological theory. All in all, *Is Human Forgiveness Possible?* is a thought-provoking challenge to the traditional concept of Christian forgiveness.

—David Murchie

The Passion According to Luke: A Redaction Study of Luke's Soteriology

by Jerome Neyrey, S.J. (Paulist Press, 1985, 232 pp., \$8.95).

Modern Lukan scholarship generally focuses on questions of sources and historicity, claims Jerome Neyrey, associate professor at the Weston School of Theology in Cambridge, MA. To these approaches he proposes two additions. First, he views Luke as "a genuine author who edited and revised older traditions as well as composed fresh narratives about Jesus" (redaction criticism). Second, convinced that "Acts is the goal and com-

pletion of Luke's theology," he utilizes Luke's other composition in the hermeneutical task. The result is a fresh investigation of Luke's passion narrative in which the distinctive theology of Luke's story is brought to light.

Neyrey's exegesis centers on five episodes, handled in five separate chapters: Jesus' farewell address (22:14-38), his struggle in Gethsemane (22:39-46), the trials (22:63-23:25), his statement to the Jerusalem women (23:27-31) and the crucifixion scene (23:39-43). The final chapter draws out the significant soteriological implications of this exegetical work.

The book, although somewhat technical, is carefully written, challenging and helpful. Even evangelicals who view higher critical methods with suspicion will glean from Neyrey insights both into Luke's passion texts and New Testament soteriology as a whole.

—Stanley J. Grenz

From Luther to Tillich: The Reformers and Their Heirs

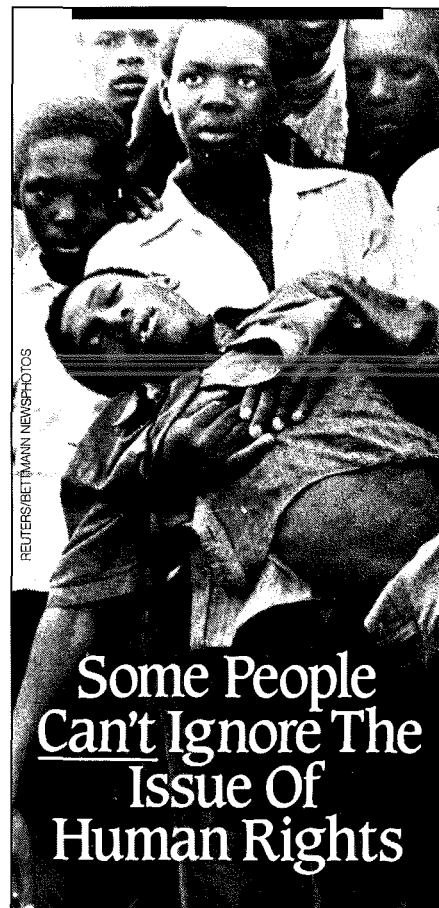
by Wilhelm Pauck and edited by Marion Pauck with an introduction by Jaroslav Pelikan (Harper & Row, 1984, xxiii + 223 pp., \$19.95).

This posthumous collection of previously published essays stands as a tribute to the life work of an exemplary scholar. The subtitle alludes to Pauck's concern to refute the Barthian idea (shared by many evangelicals) that liberal theology and classical Protestant theology are virtually unrelated, that the former is an illegitimate child of the latter. Pauck's work often linked the two kinds of theology, and his own agenda inspired the work of another generation of scholars like David W. Lotz (who contributed the subtitle) and Brian A. Gerrish.

Whether one agrees with this or not, however, one will yet profit by all of these essays. Four deal with the Reformation: The first speaks of the essence of "Luther's Faith" in a masterpiece of concision; the second two lift up the largely ignored Reformer Martin Butzer (Bucer) as important in his own right and in understanding both Luther and Calvin; and the last is an essay that helped other scholars recognize Philip Melancthon as a deeply influential Lutheran theologian.

Evangelical students in particular, though, will be helped by Pauck's treatment of nineteenth- and twentieth-century theologians outside of the heritage acknowledged by most evangelicals. Pauck describes two crucial ideas in Schleiermacher's thought (his conception of history and of church history); he surveys the astounding career and carefully nuanced thought of Adolf von Harnack; he introduces two important theologians little-known to evangelicals, Ernst Troeltsch and Karl Holl; he briefly criticizes Barth's *Dogmatics*; and he provides a major introduction to one of the thinkers of recent times most foreign to evangelicals, Paul Tillich.

Each of the essays model fine writing as they inform. Not all will wish to purchase the book at its hardcover price (although li-



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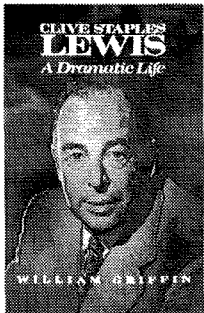


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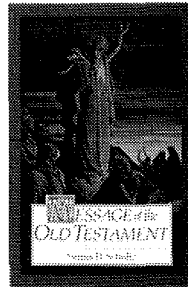


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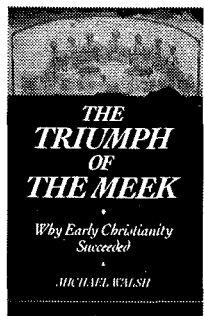
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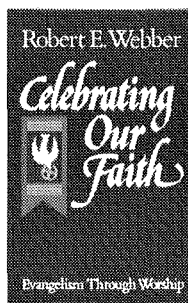
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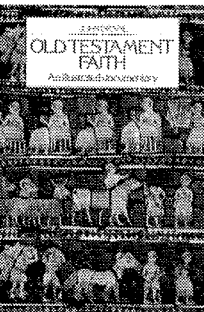


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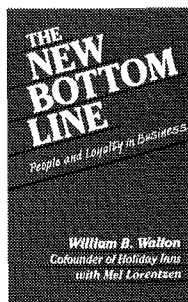
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braries definitely should get it), but students of theology should keep this book in mind: its essays provide much help in entering into the thought of a number of important theologians.

—John G. Stackhouse, Jr.

Equals Before God

by Sherryl Kleinman (University of Chicago Press, 1984, 133 pp., \$15.00).

Written by a sociologist, this is a case study of a theological seminary in the Midwest. All names of persons and places are pseudonyms, but the work is based on an actual school. It is Protestant and unmistakably "liberal." The issue specifically under consideration is the response of students, faculty, and administration to the deprofessionalization of ministry which has been taking place in recent decades. The forces behind the latter process are depicted as both sociological (societal and cultural) and theological (the effect of what is called "the new theology"). The loss of a professional sense leads to identity crises, and the seminary seeks to deal with them in various ways described by the author. There is a search for a "humanistic role" in what is accepted as "humanistic religion" (i.e. religion oriented to this world). The development of a strong set of community attitudes and relationships plays a prominent part in the efforts at a solution. The special concerns of women are discussed in a later chapter.

The book is a good description of some of the problems being encountered by some seminaries and clergy in "mainline Protestantism" today. But the way forward proposed in "Midwest Seminary," as it is called, is doomed to failure. Without faith in the gracious God revealed in Jesus Christ, and without a sense of mission stimulated by the conviction that the Gospel is profound and wonderful Good News for all humankind, identity in ministry will be inescapably unstable. This volume can be read both as a warning and as a sign of hope. The sign of hope is that the warning has now in many cases been heeded. By the grace of God today "Midwest Seminary" would be the exception rather than the rule even in those circles where once the "new" theology flourished.

—George Peck

Where Gods May Dwell: On Understanding the Human Condition

by Stanley D. Gaede (Zondervan Publishing House, 1985, 186 pp., \$7.95).

Stan Gaede in *Where Gods May Dwell* has written a very significant book which deserves serious consideration by Christian social scientists and by the larger community of Christians who are interested in social science issues.

The author's goal in the first half of the book (6 chapters) is to evaluate the assumptions underlying what presently passes as "objective social science." Gaede concludes

that "value free" science is committed to a naturalistic world view which leads to a body of scientific knowledge arrogant in method, theory, and application by requiring that God must be irrelevant in any scientific explanation. As he evaluates the assumptions of practice of contemporary social science, Gaede relativizes the relativizers.

The second half of the book (7 chapters) attempts to describe one individual's perspective on social science which is built on Christian assumptions regarding the form and substance of ultimate reality and the nature of human relationships. In this section, Gaede lays out a prescientific set of assumptions based upon a biblical understanding of the nature of human relationships—of how God created individuals with a capacity to prop-

erly relate to nature, other human beings, and with Himself. Having explicitly stated his assumptions regarding the nature of normative human relationships, Gaede formulates a position which attempts to resolve problems created by the following sociological dialectical relationships: freedom and determinism, individualism and communalism, anomy and alienation, order and conflict, and explanation and reductionism.

Gaede's thinking relative to a Christian approach to the social sciences is explicitly and appropriately value-laden, integrative with regard to the biblical record and social science knowledge, and appreciative of both the social scientific task and of the human being who is the subject of this investigation. *Where the Gods May Dwell* is neither dog-

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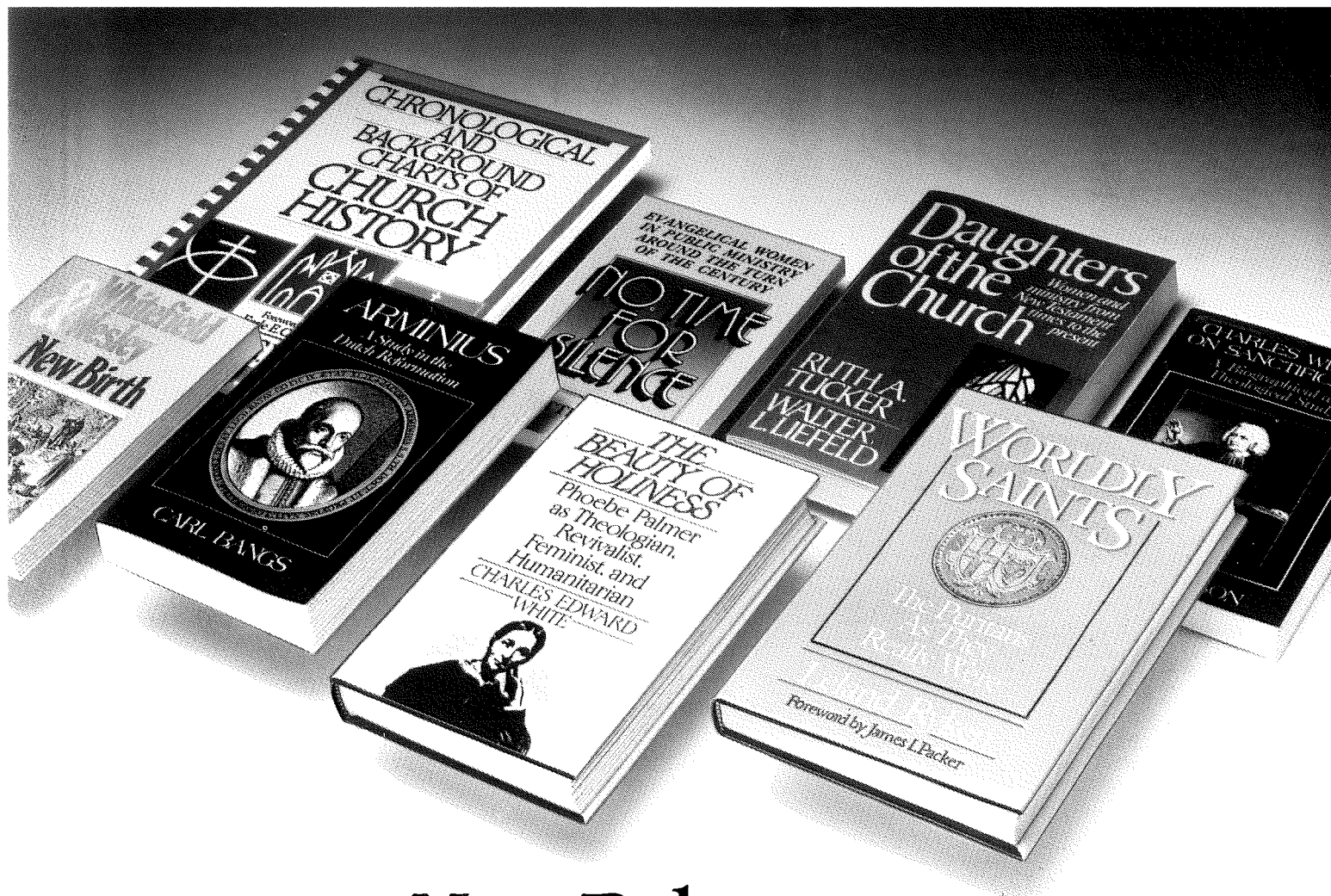
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matic, imperialistic, nor overly pessimistic or optimistic. Rather, it is challenging and thought provoking for social scientists who believe that Christianity should make a difference in the way they think and act.

—Michael R. Leming

The Vindication of Tradition
 by Jaroslav Pelikan (Yale University Press, 1984, 93 pp., \$10.95).

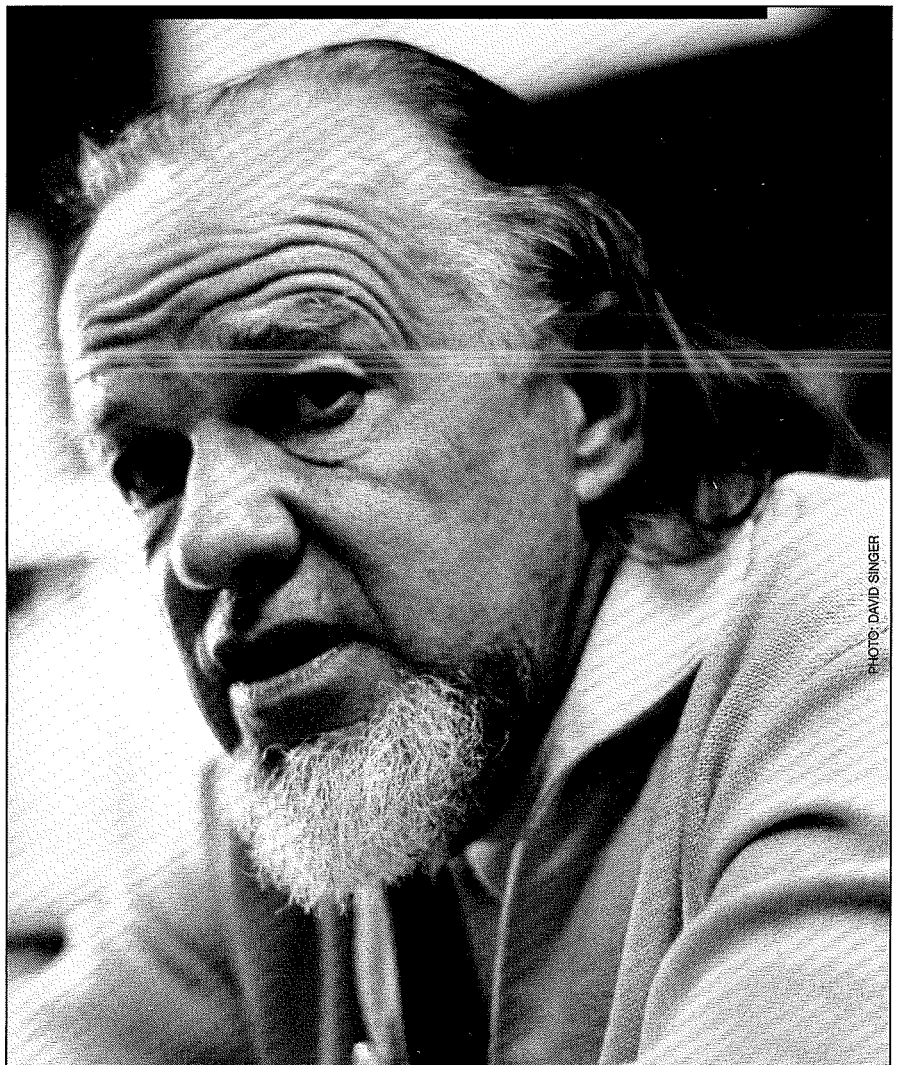
Jaroslav Pelikan has exerted a wholly salutary force on the study of the Christian past through his productive tenure at Yale University and even more through the compelling arguments of his magisterial *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (four of whose five volumes have now been published). But he is also a scholar of wider interests, as his lectures on Bach during that composer's tercentenary and as the contents of this book indicate.

The chapters of *The Vindication of Tradition* were delivered as the National Endowment for the Humanities' Jefferson Lectures in 1983. They constitute a bracing challenge to include "the dead in the circle of (contemporary) discourse" (p. 81). Although Pelikan speaks here about the subject in general, his remarks have particular relevance for Christians, both because of his larger work and because of the intrinsic force of his argument for believers. Pelikan shows how a post-scientific age is beginning to recognize the need for tradition, how tradition ("the living faith of the dead") is to be distinguished from traditionalism ("the dead faith of the living," p. 65), and how the dichotomy that some draw between fresh insight and stale history is a delusion. This is a much needed and inspiring volume.

—Mark Noll

Wholistic Christianity
 by David O. Moberg (Brethren Press, 1985, 228 pp., \$11.95).

Drawing on years of experience as a sociologist of religion and an Evangelical, Moberg challenges the divisions which characterize Christians. He calls for the church to express the entire Gospel and realize the goal of wholistic Christianity. After showing how the cultural context encourages the divisions among Christians, Moberg proposes sociological imagination as a resource which will help Christians discover wholeness by acknowledging both sides of any dualism. While contemporary Christianity contains a number of areas of conflict, four basic commitments guide Christians in moving toward wholistic Christianity. Moberg identifies these as commitments to (1) the triune God, (2) an emphasis upon the Bible as the authoritative guide, (3) loving God with all the mind, and (4) the body of believers. Practical suggestions for Christians as they deal with change and fragmentation conclude the book. Moberg's commitment to the Church expresses itself by his refusal to polemicize against non-



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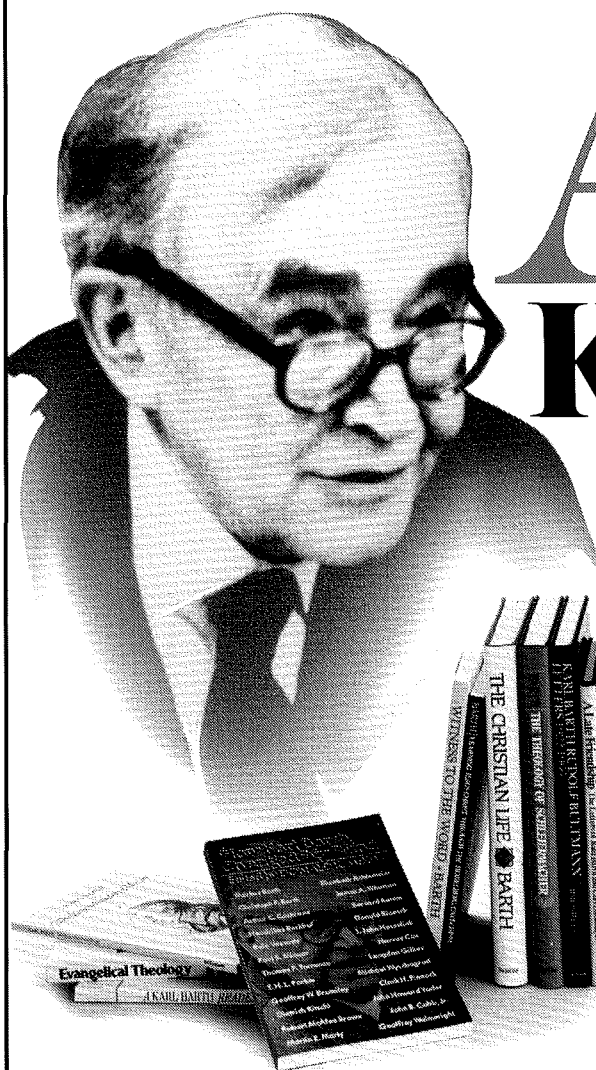
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evangelicals and by his writing in a manner which is appropriate for people without specialized study in sociology or theology.

This book provides a warning to all Christians and a timely challenge to those who identify the Gospel with one theological, political, or ecclesiological position. In his warning, Moberg offers evangelicals a specific expression of the growing concern among sociologists of religion about the dangers of individualism. While Bellah and others in *Habits of the Heart* fear for the impact of individualism on government, Moberg confronts the risk to the Church. Overall, the organization and structure of the book are clear. But the book's impact may be hindered because the flood of data at times makes some chapters appear disjointed. With regard to clarity, Bellah's book serves as a helpful supplement both because it is written more clearly and because its concerns and analyses are broader.

—John Culp

Thine is the Kingdom

by Paul Marshall (Marshall Morgan, and Scott, 1984, 169 pp., \$5.25).

The overall strength of this work comes to the fore in Marshall's relating the person and work of Christ's Kingdom inauguration to concrete political questions. His mastery of the contours of redemptive history, as expressed through his evangelical use of the Scriptures, is unfolded as he substantiates God's overarching call for justice and stewardship. He has chosen and clearly demonstrates, furthermore, how such a call can be linked neither to a conservative or a liberal agenda, or, for that matter, to a Marxist or capitalist mission. In so doing, Marshall shows how the Bible can politically inspire us in a way that avoids recipe-type politicking on one hand and mere (abstract) principle-giving on the other hand. He does all of this with a scope that surpasses mere moralizing!

The cohesive profundity of this book is its essential simplicity: he amply demonstrates, without falling prey to fundamentalist rhetoric, how politics, for *all* people, is a deeply religious reality. Thus, the book can be read, because of its style and content, by a wider audience owing to its definition of religion as the basis for human self-understanding.

Some of the outline and content may confuse some readers, however. His introduction seems to presuppose the rest of the work. His occasional reference to British politics seems more like a distraction, even to the experienced ethicist. His greatest oversight comes not in what he has said, but comes in what he has left unsaid. At times his comprehensiveness leads him into vague generalizations. Typical of this problem in his definition of a Christian notion of justice and stewardship vis-a-vis various secular options (cf. p. 55). This could have been his strongest section.

I believe that this work should initiate evangelical discussions of the topics, detractors and generalities notwithstanding.

—Bob Wauzzinski

The Apostolic Imperative: Nature and Aim of the Church's Mission and Ministry
by Carl E. Braaten (Augsburg Press, 1985, 206 pp., \$10.95).

A crisis of meaning is occurring in every sphere of human experience, so the Church must re-think its mission and ministry. In a readable style, Braaten takes on this task as a Lutheran and ecumenist. Although diverse, the Church can again be effective. Any conceptions of mission and ministry which are true to the Apostolic witness can be correlated and coordinated into a unified effort "under the conditions of modern ways of thinking."

Part one emphasizes the Christocentric criterion of mission. As "Theology of the Cross" and a dynamic-economic model of the Trinity guide Christian mission into humble service, socio-political concern rather than quietism results. But, today's religious pluralism requires that the principle be revised to emphasize the eschatological unity which the resurrection of Christ makes possible in the Kingdom of God. This expectation of the approaching Kingdom can provide common ground for dialogue with Judaism.

Part two fills out the theological issues of missions and evangelism. A "wholistic" approach embodying the concerns of Evangelicals, Ecumenists, Roman Catholics, Lutherans, and ultimately the Eastern Orthodox, will have the best chance at stemming the tide of secularism in our neopagan society. Furthermore, the stress must be on *praxis* but not of the Marxist variety. Instead, it must grow out of the eschatological implications of God's kingdom grasped in the primacy of the Christ event.

Part three summarizes how different Christian traditions draw upon the Apostolic witness for their ecclesiological structure. This common source leads Braaten to suggest that related offices and ministries within each tradition should pursue their goals ecumenically.

Braaten's ideas are conceptually bold, but

this reader is left hesitant by at least two pervading weaknesses: an uncritical optimism which fails to examine the costs of reducing a theology of mission and ministry down to its least common denominator; and the methodological ease by which suggestions are based upon Apostolic foundations when in fact no such foundations are ever exegetically examined or demonstrated.

—Robert G. Umidi

The Authority of the Bible and the Rise of the Modern World

by Henning Graf Reventlow (Fortress, 1985, xx + 668 pp., \$42.95).

This is a pleasing English translation by John Bowden of a book first published in 1980 as *Bibelautorität und Geist der Moderne, Die Bedeutung des Bibelverständnisses für die geistesgeschichtliche und politische Entwicklung in England von der Reformation bis zur Aufklärung* by the professor of Old Testament at the University of Bochum in West Germany. It is a massive, wide-ranging effort to demonstrate that roots of modern biblical criticism are properly found in England well before the better publicized appearance of such views on the continent in the eighteenth century. To Reventlow, the "Humanism" of the sixteenth century provides the key. This "Humanism" was not anti-Christian, but did display several characteristics which paved the way for English Deism and critical attitudes toward Scripture. As examples, Reventlow cites Martin Bucer's division between the Word and Spirit (in contrast to Luther) and Bucer's great authority in England at the mid-sixteenth century; the Puritan distaste for ceremonial which led to a predisposition against the cultus of the Old Testament; and the English latitudinarian attempt to derive a Law of Nature apart from Scripture which established an independent reference point for judging the statements of the Bible. Reventlow feels that these trends culminated in "the heyday of English deism" around 1700 when "advanced" thinkers systematically grounded their inquiries into science, ethics, politics, and the Bible itself in principles derived from con-

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Neil Bartlett, *Production Manager*

ceptions of nature rather than Scripture.

Reventlow's argument is especially thought-provoking for the way in which he traces later developments in attitudes toward Scripture, which most modern evangelicals would oppose, to the attitudes of earlier Protestants, which modern evangelicals affirm. Without making his own opinions crystal clear, Reventlow yet distinguishes between the magisterial reformers (i.e., Luther and Calvin) as theologians who used the Bible organically in a comprehensive conception of the Christian life, and more radical Protestants who in exalting the Bible over against other authorities also isolated it and exposed it to new perils. This argument, as indeed many others in the book, deserves closest consideration. The book's 212 pages of notes will greatly aid further researchers who may find it useful as they pursue the weighty matters of this book to consult other, more tightly focused studies of the same era like Gerard Reedy, *The Bible and Reason: Anglicans and Scripture in Late-Seventeenth Century England* (1985) or Barbara Shapiro, *Probability and Certainty in Seventeenth-Century England* (1983).

—Mark Noll

Up from Apathy: A Study of Moral Awareness & Social Involvement
by Richard A. Hoehn (Abingdon Press, 1983, 172 pp., \$9.95).

Richard Hoehn wrote *Up From Apathy* to answer the question of why people are socially active. Eighty-seven interviews as well as selected biographies (or autobiographies) and magazine accounts form the basis for Hoehn's book. He chose phenomenology as the methodology and interpretive framework for his work. Hoehn divides his book into eight chapters beginning with an introduction briefly explaining phenomenology and ending with a cursory discussion of pedagogy. In between he reflects on the materials mentioned above while avoiding any particular theological or even religious position. His notes at the end of the book are not extensive.

The question Hoehn attempts to answer suggests an intriguing study. Unfortunately, the book contains major flaws. Even though Hoehn is working from a phenomenological methodology, the absence of any dialogue with theorists such as Piaget, Erikson, Kohlberg or even more recent work seriously weakens his study. The book adds little to the study of moral awareness because no account seems to be taken of previous work in this area. A second serious problem concerns the random use of the interviews. Hoehn evidences no systematic study of his materials and limits the reader to a half-dozen examples of the interviews. The idea behind the book though interesting lacks clarity and documentation.

—James A. Selby

BOOK COMMENT CONTRIBUTORS

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