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A table of contents for *Theological Students Fellowship (TSF) Bulletin (US)* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_tsfbulletin-us.php

TSE BULLETIN

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VOL. 10, NO. 5
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Introducing This Issue <i>Vernon Grounds</i>	3
Singing With The Fundamentalists <i>Annie Dillard</i>	4
American Evangelicalism: Quo Vadis? <i>Vernon Grounds</i>	7
From Truth to Authority to Responsibility: The Shifting Focus of Evangelical Hermeneutics, 1915-1986 (Part II) <i>Douglas Jacobsen</i>	10
The Theology of Acts <i>F.F. Bruce</i>	15
Bibliography on Aging for Pastors and Other Church Leaders <i>David O. Moberg</i>	17
Leadership '88 Conference	20
REVIEW ESSAYS:	
The Chronology of the Apostle Paul <i>James D.G. Dunn</i>	21
Reading the New Testament as a Canonical Text <i>Scot McKnight</i>	22
Childs Responds to McKnight	24
Taking Mennonite History Seriously <i>Dennis D. Martin</i>	25
Early Christians in the Roman Empire <i>Christopher Haas</i>	27
Book Reviews and Comments	29
Vol. 10 Index	46

A Publication of
**THEOLOGICAL
STUDENT
FELLOWSHIP**

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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When our publisher sends me page proofs of a forthcoming *Bulletin*, I find myself impressed with the quality and breadth of its content. That was my reaction (ignoring, please, the article which I have contributed), as I read through this May-June issue. Here, I reflected, is a journal which makes a significant, wide-ranging contribution to evangelicalism. In fact, I decided it would not be inappropriately *gauche* to share with you the encomium which Mark Noll pays to TSF and the *Bulletin* in his book, *Between Faith and Criticism*, which I discuss at some length in my review-essay. He lauds the leadership of TSF for providing through its publications "more exposure to excellent scholarship and more intense concentration on what it means to pursue that scholarship as an evangelical." With, I hope, a proper degree of modesty may I remark that this issue justifies Noll's praise?

I often affirm that, if a fundamentalist is a Christian who subscribes to the fundamentals of the faith—its core convictions, its essential dogmas—I am sincerely willing to call myself a fundamentalist. Any of us who know the culture of fundamentalism first-hand, especially those who have participated in outdoor meetings on campus, will appreciate Annie Dillard's wryly evocative "Singing With the Fundamentalists" (page 4).

One of the crucial issues which Protestantism faces is its view of scripture. In the second part of his very helpful survey, "From Truth to Authority to Responsibility" (page 10), Douglas Jacobsen traces what he perceives to be pivotal shifts in attitudes towards the Bible among American evangelicals. His interpretive account may be profitably compared with Mark Noll's booklength study of so-called higher criticism and its impact on beliefs about God's revelatory Word.

F.F. Bruce is internationally known and respected as a leading New Testament scholar. "The Theology of Acts" (page 15) is an impressive example of how masterfully he handles the inspired text.

As a septuagenarian and a one-time pastor, I appreciated, as I know you will, David Moberg's bibliography on ministry to the geriatric set (page 17). Incidentally, Dr. Moberg and I recently shared in a conference at Claremont College on religion and aging.

Preceding a splendid section of review essays and book notices is an interesting statement issued by participants in another conference which I was privileged to attend. Under the sponsorship of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, the Senior Advisory Council for Leadership '88 met early last December to draft a kind of Pastoral Letter for younger Christians who will be gathering next year, June 27-July 1, in Washington, D.C. While eschewing any claim to apostolic authority, the statement (page 20) sets forth the considered judgment of older evangelical leaders regarding the problems and needs of the Church in the third millennium.

Now let me make an announcement which I confess fills me with regret. This is the last issue of the *Bulletin*. Inter-Varsity is undertaking an evaluation of all its multiple activities in order to determine which do or do not fulfill its central purpose of evangelizing and discipling college students. Since TSF and the *Bulletin* are tangential to that purpose and, in addition, require an annual subsidy, a decision has reluctantly been reached to terminate this branch of Inter-Varsity's ministry. Details regarding unexpired subscriptions are explained in a letter that I have already mailed out. I think these arrangements are equitable and will prove satisfactory.

In God's providence individuals and agencies are raised up generation after generation to communicate the Gospel. They perform that task with an effectiveness and fidelity which only our sovereign Lord can judge. And only He knows when their usefulness is ended. Thus I take comfort in that old realistic epigram, "God buries His workmen, but His work goes on." So God has written *finis* to the brief history of TSF and its *Bulletin*. But by other witnesses and other means the Gospel will continue to be communicated until history's *denouement* and the Kingdom's inauguration.

In that confidence and with deepest gratitude for all who have helped to make the *Bulletin* a strong testimony to the Christian faith, I bid you godspeed through your future years of life and ministry.



Singing with the Fundamentalists

by Annie Dillard

IT IS EARLY SPRING. I have a temporary office at a state university on the West Coast. The office is on the third floor. It looks down on the Square, the enormous open courtyard at the center of campus. From my desk I see hundreds of people moving between classes. There is a large circular fountain in the Square's center.

Early one morning, on the first day of spring quarter, I hear singing. A pack of students has gathered at the fountain. They are singing something which, at this distance, and through the heavy window, sounds good.

I know who these singing students are: they are the Fundamentalists. This campus has a lot of them. Mornings they sing on the Square; it is their only perceptible activity. What are they singing? Whatever it is, I want to join them, for I like to sing; whatever it is, I want to take my stand with them, for I am drawn to their very absurdity, their innocent indifference to what people think. My colleagues and students here, and my friends everywhere, dislike and fear Christian Fundamentalists. You may never have met such people, but you've heard what they do: they pile up money, vote in blocs, and elect right-wing crazies; they censor books; they carry handguns; they fight fluoride in the drinking water and evolution in the schools; probably they would lynch people if they could get away with it. I'm not sure my friends are correct. I close my pen and join the singers on the Square.

There is a clapping song in progress. I have to concentrate to follow it:

Come on, rejoice, And let your heart sing, Come on,
rejoice, Give praise to the king. Singing alleluia- He is
the king of kings; Singing alleluia- He is the king of
kings.

Two song leaders are standing on the broad rim of the fountain; the water is splashing just behind them. The boy is short, hard-faced, with a moustache. He bangs his guitar with the back of his fingers. The blonde girl, who leads the clapping, is bouncy; she wears a bit of make-up. Both are wearing blue jeans.

The students beside me are wearing blue jeans too—and athletic jerseys, parkas, football jackets, turtlenecks, and hiking shoes or jogging shoes. They all have canvas or nylon book bags. They look like any random batch of seventy or eighty students at this university. They are grubby or scrubbed, mostly scrubbed; they are tall, fair, or red-headed in large proportions. Their parents are white-collar workers, blue-collar workers, farmers, loggers, orchardists, merchants, fishermen; their names are, I'll bet, Olsen, Jensen, Severson, Hansen, Klokker, Sigurdson.

Despite the vigor of the clapping song, no one seems to be giving it much effort. And no one looks at anyone else; there are no sentimental glances and smiles, no glances even of recognition. These kids don't seem to know each other. We stand at the fountain's side, out on the broad, bricked Square in front of the science building, and sing the clapping song through three times.

Annie Dillard is a Pulitzer Prize winning author. This article is being reprinted from Yale Review and reprinted with the author's permission.

It is quarter to nine in the morning. Hundreds of people are crossing the Square. These passersby—faculty, staff, students—pay very little attention to us; this morning singing has gone on for years. Most of them look at us directly, then ignore us, for there is nothing to see: no animal sacrifices, no lynchings, no collection plate for Jesse Helms, no seizures, snake handling, healing, or glossolalia. There is barely anything to hear. I suspect the people glance at us to learn if we are really singing; how could so many people make so little sound? My fellow singers, who ignore each other, certainly ignore passersby as well. Within a week, most of them will have their eyes closed anyway.

We move directly to another song, a slower one.

He is my peace Who has broken down every wall; He
is my peace, He is my peace. Cast all your cares on him,
For he careth for you—oo—oo He is my peace, He is my
peace.

I am paying strict attention to the song leaders, for I am singing at the top of my lungs and I've never heard any of these songs before. They are not the old American low-church Protestant hymns; they are not the old European high-church Protestant hymns. These hymns seem to have been written just yesterday, apparently by the same people who put out lyrical Christian greeting cards and bookmarks.

"Where do these songs come from?" I ask a girl standing next to me. She seems appalled to be addressed at all, and startled by the question. "They're from the praise albums!" she explains, and moves away.

The songs' melodies run dominant, subdominant, dominant, tonic, dominant. The pace is slow, about the pace of "Tell Laura I Love Her," and with that song's quavering, long notes. The lyrics are simple and repetitive; there are very few of them to which a devout Jew or Mohammedan could not give whole-hearted assent. These songs are similar to the things Catholics sing in church these days. I don't know if any studies have been done to correlate the introduction of contemporary songs into Catholic churches with those churches' decline in membership, or with the phenomenon of Catholic converts' applying to enter cloistered monasteries directly, without passing through parish churches.

I'm set free to worship I'm set free to praise him, I'm
set free to dance before the Lord . . .

At nine o'clock sharp we quit and scatter. I hear a few quiet "See you"'s. Mostly the students leave quickly, as if they didn't want to be seen. The Square empties.

THE NEXT DAY we show up again, at twenty to nine. The same two leaders stand on the fountain's rim; the fountain is pouring down behind them.

After the first song, the boy with the moustache hollers, "Move on up! Some of you guys aren't paying attention back there! You're talking to each other. I want you to concentrate!" The students laugh, embarrassed for him. He sounds like a teacher. No one moves. The girl breaks into the next song, which we join at once:

In my life, Lord, Be glorified, be glorified, be glorified;
In my life, Lord, Be glorified, be glorified, today.

At the end of this singularly monotonous verse, which is straining my tolerance for singing virtually anything, the boy with the moustache startles me by shouting, "Classes!"

At once, without skipping a beat, we sing, "In my classes, Lord, be glorified, be glorified . . ." I give fleet thought to the class I'm teaching this afternoon. We're reading a little "Talk of the Town" piece called "Eggbag," about a cat in a magic store on Eighth Avenue. "Relationships!" the boy calls. The students seem to sing "In my relationships, Lord," more easily than they sang "classes." They seemed embarrassed by "classes." In fact, to my fascination, they seem embarrassed by almost everything. Why are they here? I will sing with the Fundamentalists every weekday morning all spring; I will decide, tentatively, that they come pretty much for the same reasons I do: each has a private relationship with "the Lord" and will put up with a lot of junk for it.

I HAVE TAUGHT some Fundamentalist students here, and know a bit of what they think. They are college students above all, worried about their love lives, their grades, and finding jobs. Some support moderate Democrats; some support moderate Republicans. Like their classmates, most support nuclear freeze, ERA, and an end to the draft. I believe they are divided on abortion and busing. They are not particularly political. They read *Christianity Today* and *Campus Life* and *Eternity*—moderate, sensible magazines, I think; they read a lot of C.S. Lewis. (One such student, who seemed perfectly tolerant of me and my shoddy Christianity, introduced me to C.S. Lewis's critical book on Charles Williams). They read the Bible. I think they all "believe in" organic evolution. The main thing about them is this: there isn't any "them." Their views vary. They don't know each other.

Their common Christianity puts them, if anywhere, to the left of their classmates. I believe they also tend to be more able than their classmates to think well in the abstract, and also to recognize the complexity of moral issues. But I may be wrong.

IN 1980, the media were certainly wrong about television evangelists. Printed estimates of Jerry Falwell's television audience ranged from 18 million to 30 million people. In fact, according to Arbitron's actual counts, fewer than 1.5 million people were watching Falwell. And, according to an Emory University study, those who did watch television evangelists didn't necessarily vote with them. Emory University sociologist G. Melton Mobley reports, "When that message turns political, they cut it off." Analysis of the 1982 off-year election turned up no Fundamentalist bloc voting. The media were wrong, but no one printed retractions.

The media were wrong, too, in a tendency to identify all fundamentalist Christians with Falwell and his ilk, and to attribute to them, across the board, conservative views.

Someone has sent me two recent issues of *Eternity: The Evangelical Monthly*. One lead article criticizes a television preacher for saying that the United States had never used military might to take land from another nation. The same article censures Newspeak, saying that government rhetoric would have us believe in a "clean bomb," would have us believe that we "defend" America by invading foreign soil, and would have us believe that the dictatorships we support are "democracies." "When the President of the United States says that one reason to support defense spending is because it creates jobs," this lead article says, "a little bit of 1984 begins

to surface." Another article criticizes a "heavy-handed" opinion of Jerry Falwell Ministries—in this case a broadside attack on artificial insemination, surrogate motherhood, and lesbian motherhood. Browsing through *Eternity*, I find a double cross-tic. I find an intelligent, analytical, and enthusiastic review of the new London Philharmonic recording of Mahler's second symphony—a review which stresses the "glorious truth" of the Jewish composer's magnificent work, and cites its recent performance in Jerusalem to celebrate the recapture of the Western Wall following the Six Day War. Surely, the evangelical Christians who read this magazine are not book-burners. If by chance they vote with the magazine's editors, then it looks to me as if they vote with the American Civil Liberties Union and Americans for Democratic Action.

Every few years some bold and sincere Christian student at this university disagrees with a professor in class—usually about the professor's out-of-hand dismissal of Christianity. Members of the faculty, outraged, repeat the stories of these rare and uneven encounters for years on end, as if to prove that the crazies are everywhere, and gaining ground. The notion is, apparently, that these kids can't think for themselves. Or they wouldn't disagree.

NOW AGAIN the moustached leader asks us to move up. There is no harangue, so we move up. (This will be a theme all spring. The leaders want us closer together. Our instinct is to stand alone). From behind the tall fountain comes a wind; on several gusts we get sprayed. No one seems to notice.

We have time for one more song. The leader, perhaps sensing that no one likes him, blunders on. "I want you to pray this one through," he says. "We have a lot of people here from a lot of different fellowships, but we're all one body. Amen?" They don't like it. He gets a few polite Amens. We sing:

Bind us together, Lord, With a bond that can't be broken;
Bind us together, Lord, With love.

Everyone seems to be in a remarkably foul mood today. We don't like this song. There is no one here under seventeen, and, I think, no one here believes that love is a bond that can't be broken. We sing the song through three times; then it is time to go.

The leader calls after our retreating backs, "Hey, have a good day! Praise Him all day!" The kids around me roll up their eyes privately. Some groan; all flee.

THE NEXT MORNING is very cold. I am here early. Two girls are talking on the fountain's rim; one is part Indian. She says, "I've got all the Old Testament, but I can't get the New. I screw up the New." She takes a breath and rattles off a long list, ending with "Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi." The other girl produces a slow, sarcastic applause. I ask one of the girls to help me with the words to a song. She is agreeable, but says, "I'm sorry, I can't. I just became a Christian this year, so I don't know all the words yet."

The others are coming; we stand and separate. The boy with the moustache is gone, replaced by a big, serious fellow in a green down jacket. The bouncy girl is back with her guitar; she's wearing a skirt and wool knee socks. We begin, without any preamble, by singing a song that has so few words that we actually stretch one syllable over eleven separate notes. Then we sing a song in which the men sing one phrase and the women echo it. Everyone seems to know just what to do. In the context of our vapid songs, the lyrics of this one are extraordinary:

I was nothing before you found me. Heartache! Broken people! Ruined lives Is why you died on Calvary!

The last line rises in a regular series of half-notes. Now at last some people are actually singing; they throw some breath into the business. There is a seriousness and urgency to it: "Heartache! Broken people! Ruined lives . . . I was nothing."

We don't look like nothing. We look like a bunch of students of every stripe, ill-shaven, dressed up or down, but dressed warmly against the cold: jeans and parkas, jeans and heavy sweaters, jeans and scarves and blow-dried hair. We look ordinary. But I think, quite on my own, that we are here because we know this business of nothingness, brokenness, and ruination. We sing this song over and over.

Something catches my eye. Behind us, up in the science building, professors are standing alone at opened windows.

The long brick science building has three upper floors of faculty offices, thirty-two windows. At one window stands a bearded man, about forty; his opening his window is what caught my eye. He stands full in the open window, his hands on his hips his head cocked down toward the fountain. He is drawn to look, as I was drawn to come. Up on the building's top floor, at the far right window, there is another: an Asian-American professor, wearing a white shirt, is sitting with one hip on his desk, looking out and down. In the middle of the row of windows, another one, an old professor in a checked shirt, stands stock-still, his long, old ear to the air. Now another window cranks open, another professor—or maybe a graduate student—leans out, his hands on the sill.

We are all singing, and I am watching these five still men, my colleagues, whose office doors are surely shut—for that is the custom here: five of them alone in their offices in the science building who have opened their windows on this very cold morning, who motionless hear the Fundamentalists sing, utterly unknown to each other.

We sing another four songs, including the clapping song, and on which repeats, "This is the day which the Lord hath made; rejoice and be glad in it." All the professors but one stay by their opened windows, figures in a frieze. When after ten minutes we break off and scatter, each cranks his window shut. Maybe they have nine o'clock classes too.

I MISS a few sessions. One morning of the following week, I rejoin the Fundamentalists on the Square. The wind is blowing from the north; it is sunny and cold. There are several new developments.

Someone has blown up rubber gloves and floated them in the fountain. I saw them yesterday afternoon from my high office window, and couldn't quite make them out: I seemed to see hands in the fountain waving from side to side, like those hands wagging on springs which people stick in the back windows of their cars. I saw these many years ago in Quito and Guayaquil, where they were a great fad long before they showed up here. The cardboard hands said, on their palms, HOLA GENTE, hello people. Some of them just said HOLA, hello, with a little wave to the universe at large, in case anybody happened to be looking. It is like our sending radio signals to planets in other galaxies: HOLA, if anyone is listening. Jolly folk, these Ecuadorians, I thought.

Now, waiting by the fountain for the singing, I see that these particular hands are long surgical gloves, yellow and white, ten of them, tied at the cuff. They float upright and they wave, *hola, hola, hola*; and mill around like a crowd, bobbing under the fountain's spray and back again to the pool's rim, *hola*. It is a good prank. It is far too cold for the university's maintenance crew to retrieve them without turn-

ing off the fountain and putting on rubber boots.

From all around the Square, people are gathering for the singing. There is no way I can guess which kids, from among the masses crossing the Square, will veer off to the fountain. When they get here, I never recognize anybody except the leaders.

The singing began without ado as usual, but there is something different about it. The students are growing prayerful, and they show it this morning with a peculiar gesture. I'm glad they weren't like this when I first joined them, or I never would have stayed.

Last night there was an educational television special, part of "Middletown." It was a segment called "Community of Praise," and I watched it because it was about Fundamentalists. It showed a Jesus-loving family in the Midwest; the treatment was good and complex. This family attended the prayer meetings, healing sessions, and church services of an unnamed sect—a very low-church sect, whose doctrine and culture were much more low-church than those of the kids I sing with. When the members of this sect prayed, they held their arms over their heads and raised their palms, as if to feel or receive a blessing or energy from above.

Now today on the Square there is a new serious mood. The leaders are singing with their eyes shut. I am impressed that they can bang their guitars, keep their balance, and not fall into the pool. It is the same bouncy girl and earnest boy. Their eyeballs are rolled back a bit. I look around and see that almost everyone in this crowd of eighty or so has his eyes shut and is apparently praying the words of this song or praying some other prayer.

Now as the chorus rises, as it gets louder and higher and simpler in melody—

I exalt thee, I exalt thee, I exalt thee, Thou art the Lord—

then, at this moment, hands start rising. All around me, hands are going up—that tall girl, that blond boy with his head back, the red-headed boy up front, the girl with the MacDonald's jacket. Their arms rise as if pulled on strings. Some few of them have raised their arms very high over their heads and are tilting back their palms. Many, many more of them, as inconspicuously as possible, have raised their hands to the level of their chins.

What is going on? Why are these students today raising their palms in this gesture, when nobody did it last week? Is it because this gesture always accompanies this song, just as clapping accompanies other songs? Or is it, as I suspect, that these kids watched the widely publicized documentary last night just as I did, and are adopting, or trying out, the gesture?

It is a sunny morning, and the sun is rising behind the leaders and the fountain, so those students have their heads tilted, eyes closed, and palms upraised toward the sun. I glance up at the science building and think my own prayer: thank God no one is watching this.

The leaders cannot move around much on the fountain's rim. The girl has her eyes shut; the boy opens his eyes from time to time, glances at the neck of his guitar, and closes his eyes again.

When the song is over, the hands go down, and there is some desultory chatting in the crowd, as usual: can I borrow your library card? And, as usual, nobody looks at anybody.

All our songs today are serious. There is a feudal theme to them, or feudal analogue:

I will eat from abundance of your household. I will dream beside your streams of righteousness. You are my king. Enter his gates with thanksgiving in your heart; come

before his courts with praise. He is the king of kings.
Thou art the lord.

All around me, eyes are closed and hands are raised. There is no social pressure to do this, or anything else. I've never known any group to be less cohesive, imposing fewer controls. Since no one looks at anyone, and since passersby no longer look, everyone out here is inconspicuous and free. Perhaps the palm-raising has begun because the kids realize by now that they are not on display; they're praying in their closets, right out here on the Square. Over the course of the next weeks, I will learn the the palm-raising is here to stay.

The sun is rising higher. We are singing our last song. We are praying. We are alone together.

He is my peace Who has broken down every wall . . .

When the song is over, the hands go down. The heads lower, the eyes open and blink. We stay still a second before we break up. We have been standing in a broad current; now we have stepped aside. We have dismantled the radar cups; we have closed the telescope's vault. Students gather their book bags and go. The two leaders step down from the fountain's rim and pack away their guitars. Everyone scatters. I am in no hurry, so I stay after everyone is gone. It is after nine o'clock, and the Square is deserted. The fountain is playing to an empty house. In the pool the cheerful hands are waving over the water, bobbing under the fountain's veil and out again in the current, *hola*.

American Evangelicalism: *Quo Vadis?*

by Vernon Grounds

I

Long months ago I received a rather flattering invitation. Would I participate in a conference of older evangelical leaders? Older? Yes, indeed, since I was born in 1914. As for being a leader, well, if in the judgment of the conference sponsors I could still so qualify, I as a semi-retiree would be happy to accept the invitation. So I found myself sometime later sharing in the discussions and deliberations of a group which included many individuals who are well-known in Christian circles. Looking back on our experiences, we pondered the probable needs and possible problems of younger Christians who will be leading the Church in the third millennium. It was an interesting experience. Though not endowed with prophetic foresight, we were in effect functioning as spiritual futurologists. A hazardous undertaking! Since God alone knows what will be happening in the years ahead, any attempt at prognosticating the shape of the events after A.D. 2000 runs the risk of presuming to possess a scintilla of omniscience.

I recalled that conference as I was interacting with James Davison Hunter's *Evangelicalism: The Coming Generation* (The University of Chicago Press, 1987). It is one of those books every self-respecting evangelical must read, as well as anyone concerned about religion *per se*. A sociologist who in 1983 published *American Evangelicalism: Contemporary Religion and the Quandary of Modernism*, Hunter is a probing analyst of Protestant orthodoxy, that species of the genus Christianity to which I personally adhere. So does Inter-Varsity as an organization. Hunter gives a report and an interpretation of the data he accumulated from surveys of students in representative evangelical colleges and seminaries. The statistical findings of his research are set forth in charts that even I with my anti-statistical bias could understand (p. 9ff; pp. 240-248). Included too are *verbatim* comments made by interviewees, candid responses to specific inquiries about beliefs and attitudes. All of this, I am sure, Hunter's fellow sociologists will certify as warranting his guarded forecasts regarding the future of evangelicalism.

Let me mention that, in seeking to ascertain the beliefs and attitudes of today's younger evangelicals, Hunter investigates their thinking regarding theology, work, morality, selfhood,

family, and politics. Taking for granted the correctness of his statistics and the validity of his extrapolations, we are shut up to his tentative prediction: "The world of the coming generation of Evangelicals may bear little resemblance to the Evangelical world of many previous generations" (p. 15). It *may*. Hunter eschews the role of a dogmatic futurologist, heavily qualifying all his projections from the known of today to the unknown of tomorrow. Thus at the outset of his study, he admits that, "One may well wonder whether an attempt is going to be made to predict the future of Evangelicalism." And he informs us that "The answer is a qualified no." While insisting that prediction is "not the central concern here," he nevertheless acknowledges that "there is, then, a qualified sense in which we can speak of predicting the future of American evangelicalism" (p. 14).

And what does Hunter foresee? "American evangelicalism seems to face an uncertain future, a future as ambivalent as its own present nature" (p. 208). Assuredly—I am assuming that Hunter is sure of this—it will not disappear, but it *may* differ significantly from traditional evangelicalism and suffer a decline numerically. Though consistently refusing to dogmatize, Hunter at any rate ventures to assert that "the prospects are not at all bright" (*ibid*). Indeed, he even goes so far as to say that there are "reasonable grounds for pessimism" (p. 203). He holds, essentially, that, as an orthodoxy struggling to maintain continuity with its past and fidelity to its heritage, evangelicalism is inescapably subject to the modifying pressures of its social context. Modernity is bearing down inexorably on this paradigmatic form of orthodoxy as it is on all orthodoxies whether Roman Catholic, Jewish, Islamic, or Buddhist (pp. 214-236). The acids of modernity, as Walter Lippman termed them, include "philosophical (or scientific) and functional 'rationality,' intensive sociocultural pluralism, the bureaucratization of public life, the subjectivization of private life" (p. 182) and other corrosive elements summed up under the comprehensive rubric of secularization. Hence evangelicalism is not only "broadening" (p. 163); it is likewise "weakening" (p. 172) and losing its power of "binding address." In other words, it is less and less able "to communicate its ideals . . . in ways that are inwardly motivating or emotionally compelling" (p. 210). Pervaded by "movement and fluctuation, restlessness, fluster, and even turbulence" (p. 157), it is "a theological tradition in disarray" (p. 32). There are, conse-

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quently, "reasonable grounds for pessimism" regarding the future of evangelicalism.

At the same time, referring to the somewhat wistful speculations of "prominent experts in social science and social criticism" like Daniel Bell, Peter Berger, Robert Nisbet, and Alexandr Solzhenitsyn, who wonder about a religious renewal of culture, Hunter discusses such a possibility. He concedes that it is a possibility. Certainly! "Anything is possible," especially if one is willing to hypothesize "that extra-empirical dynamics could be at play." But it is at best a low-order possibility. Reluctantly, therefore, Hunter registers his agnostic opinion: "the likelihood that contemporary Protestantism will be a prominent and autonomous source of cultural renewal and contemporary society is not very high" (pp. 198-292).

II

At the same time that I was interacting with Hunter's analysis I was reading Mark Noll's *Between Faith and Criticism* (Harper and Row, 1986). Since he has already established himself as a sort of shining luminary in the American theological sky, Noll cannot accurately be called a rising star; and this new work, which is simply superb, will greatly enhance his reputation as a creative and critical historian. At my age, I only occasionally encounter a solid, substantial, scholarly book of an evangelical *genre* to which I react with unconditional enthusiasm. This is one of those mind-stretching rarities. Anyone, especially a student, who wants to understand American evangelicalism can do no better than invest as long as it may take to give *Between Faith and Criticism* a careful perusal. It deserves that by all means, not a casual retinizing.

Traditional evangelicals, though by no means in jot-and-tittle agreement on many subsidiary issues, have defended the Bible's supernatural origin and total trustworthiness while endeavoring to function at the same time as responsible and competent scholars. Noll suggests that their defensive scholarship has passed through four stages. First, they were full partners in the critical enterprise from 1880 to 1900. During this period, as Charles Briggs contended, "The great majority of professional Biblical scholars in the various universities and Theological Halls of the world" were demanding "a revision of traditional theories from the Bible on account of the large induction of new facts from the Bible and history" (p. 17). But the evangelicals, particularly members of the faculty at Princeton Theological Seminary, A. A. Hodge, Charles Hodge, Francis Paton, William Henry Green, and Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, felt no compulsion to abandon the traditional theories. Instead, with commanding scholarship they effectively contended for the validity of those theories in the academic arena. Through their efforts and those of other able evangelicals, the major Protestant denominations refused to countenance the new views. Even a moderate advocate of Biblical criticism like Briggs was officially suspended from the ministry and forced out of the Presbyterian communion.

In the second period, however, from 1900 to 1935, as Noll rehearses the story, there was a sad decline in evangelical learning. Radical change occurred in Protestant beliefs about Scripture. The professionalization of Biblical scholarship put into key faculty positions more and more critics who modified or abandoned traditional theories. Liberalism was now in the ascendancy. Evangelical scholars, increasingly estranged from *academia*, turned to a popular audience. *Pari passu*, *academia* paid less and less attention to their work if it was of high quality as in many cases it indisputably was. To be sure, some evangelical scholars continued to command the attention of their liberal counterparts. Princeton Seminary particularly was a stronghold of traditionalism which not even radical critics

could dismiss as obscurant. Yet, Noll points out, "Princeton scholars were becoming increasingly isolated. Because their work was so forthrightly conservative, it no longer had much of a place in the academic world" (p. 47). One exception was J. Gresham Machen whose two major works, *The Origin of Paul's Religion* and *The Virgin Birth of Christ*, did elicit appreciative responses from liberal quarters. But, according to Noll's account, at this point in time Protestant Biblical scholarship had reached its nadir. It had acquired "a reputation for atavism, anti-institutionalism, and even anti-intellectualism" (p. 57).

Noll pauses in rehearsing the development of Biblical criticism among American evangelicals to pay high and deserved tribute to the British scholars who between 1860 and 1937 developed a believing criticism which effectively held its own against the onslaughts of a more radical criticism. He applauds the outstanding labors of the great Cambridge trio, Fenton A. J. Hort, B. F. Westcott and J. B. Lightfoot, who demonstrated that the most objective and meticulous scholarship could be employed in the cause of traditionalism. They "provided the most powerful model for critical study of the Bible by evangelicals" (p. 72). Later, through the strategy deliberately adopted by far-sighted leaders of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, evangelicals pursued graduate study at the university level and eventually gained significant academic appointments. All of this, when British theological publications were re-issued in the U.S.A., helped tremendously in the revitalization of American evangelical scholarship.

That revitalization, beginning in the mid-1930s, pushed beyond fundamentalism into a new evangelicalism, a term minted by Harold John Ockenga. Fresh and vigorous voices began to argue the case for Christian orthodoxy. Evangelicals—*neo* if one chooses to so designate them—like Carl Henry, Edward J. Carnell, and Bernard Ramm (these are only three of many more who might be mentioned), once more made Biblical Christianity a live-option academically. Roger Shinn could lampoon "the new generation of brainy fundamentalists who have studied at Harvard in order to learn the arguments they will spend the rest of their lives attacking," but evangelicals who had earned their doctorates at Harvard and other citadels of critical erudition could not be brushed aside with a humorous quip. They were prepared to engage non-evangelicals on their own ground with indisputable expertise. As George Ladd, one of the "Harvard fundamentalists" wrote in 1967, these are scholars "whose theological heritage is the older fundamentalism, who are convinced of the truthfulness of the fundamentals of the Christian faith but who do not reflect the basic defensive, apologetic stance of fundamentalism. They acknowledge their indebtedness to critical scholarship. They believe that if the traditional orthodox interpretation of the Gospel is true, it should be capable of defense, not by the negative technique of attacking other positions, but by expounding its own view in critical but creative interaction with other theologies. These modern successors of fundamentalism, for whom we prefer the term evangelicals, wish, in brief, to take their stand within the contemporary stream of philosophical, theological, and critical thought" (p. 121).

In a chapter which calls to mind Hunter's research, Noll documents statistically "The Recent Achievement" of resurgent evangelicalism, an achievement which even liberals have been constrained to acknowledge and applaud, with reservations of course. Noll affirms that "The emergence of an evangelical believing criticism is certainly one of the most significant developments of the recent history of American Biblical scholarship, quite apart from its importance for the internal history of evangelicalism" (p. 163). But Noll devotes

a long section of that same chapter to warning his fellow-evangelicals about the "perils" which they face: (1) the inescapable tendency, given the nature of their ecclesiastical communities, for academic arguments to become matters of public debate; (2) the "immense diversity, both theologically and academically among evangelicals"; and (3) the danger of reducing believing criticism to "a piously veneered replica of naturalistic scholarship" (pp. 166-173).

Noll also points out that evangelicals by and large lack a theology adequate and comprehensive enough to serve as a solid foundation for their Biblical convictions. They likewise lack a sufficiently sophisticated understanding of hermeneutics. Above all, they lack, in the words of David Wright, "a satisfactory doctrine of Scripture for an era of Biblical criticism." We must, Wright urges his co-believers, "work out what it means to be faithful *at one and the same time both* to a doctrinal approach to Scripture as the Word of God *and* to the historical treatment of Scripture as the words of men" (p. 178).

What, then, returning now to Hunter's concern in *The Coming Generation*, may we speculate regarding the future of American evangelicalism? Unlike Hunter, Noll focuses on a single issue, that of Biblical scholarship. Evangelical scholars must "(1) speak out against the irresponsible Biblical interpretations to which the evangelical tradition is heir; (2) resist the distinctively American pressure to equate a Protestant doctrine of the priesthood of all believers with democratic individualism; (3) go beyond strife over Biblical inerrancy to create synthetic theology based on the best Biblical resources available; and (4) prosecute scholarship in the wider world without falling prey to the secularism which is so much a part of that world today" (pp. 193-194).

Noll ends his rich, challenging study on an almost Kierkegaardian note. Evangelical scholars need to "move beyond the external examination of Scripture to an integral appropriation of its message" (p. 197).

III

Well, what about the future of American evangelicalism? Having listened to these two perceptive diagnosticians, what can I add? Nothing really, except my own hunches which lack any statistical support. I recall that even Amos explained, "I was neither a prophet or a prophet's son," disclaiming any insight based on foresight and insisting that his predictive ministry was carried on by God's appointment and enablement. Lacking divine calling and endowment as a foreteller of the future, I can do little but evaluate the statistically-supported prognostications of scholars far more insightful than myself and, in addition, make some hesitant guesses. Sadly devoid of prescience, I am utterly devoid of omniscience. Yet that in no way embarrasses me as a finite creature. It reminds me, rather, of that text in the Letter of James, "Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow." In the realm of history which is the realm of human responsibility, unpredictability must characterize the outworking of events and invincible ignorance must characterize my prevision of the days and years still to dawn.

I do not by any means disparage, however, attempts to lift the veil on the future. A book like Howard Snyder and Daniel Runyon's *Foresight* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1986) makes us aware of ten trends which will possibly affect the destiny of evangelicalism. It certainly has value for educators and administrators. David McKenna's *Megatruth* (San Bernardino, California: Here's Life Publishers, 1987) likewise has value in showing how the Church can respond with spiritual effectiveness to John Naisbitt's *Megatrends*. But, appre-

ciative as I am of these concerned attempts as well as those of Hunter and Noll, I gratefully take the GOK position. GOK? Ah, to unfold the significance of those three mysterious letters, I relate again that hackneyed anecdote concerning a world-famous diagnostician. One morning in a teaching hospital leading a group of interns on Grand Rounds, he stopped at a bedside, scrutinized the patient, examined him carefully, stepped back and solemnly said, "Gentlemen, I'm afraid it's a case of GOK." The interns were puzzled. "GOK? GOK?" Probably some rare disease. Noticing their puzzlement, the diagnostician with a slight smile explained, "GOK means God only knows."

And only God knows the future of American evangelicalism, whether it will continue to flourish or whether it will decline. Like all space-time phenomena, its as-yet-unwritten history is humanly unpredictable. It may suffer the fate of once dynamic Christian movements and organizations. Donald MacKay, noted British physicist and neuroscientist, in an address to fellow-believers, warned against an evangelical triumphalism by citing some instances of spiritual declension in modern Christianity. "Consider then the Free Kirk of Scotland in 1842, resounding with the passionate evangelical orthodoxy of Chalmers. Who would have predicted that by 1893 the same Kirk would be riddled with German liberalism? Look at the Evangelical Student Volunteer Movement of last century. Could its founders have foreseen how it would be gradually transformed into the Student Christian Movement (SCM) that extruded Inter Varsity Fellowship (IVF) into independent existence, and how it would latterly repudiate the very concept of Christian mission that gave rise to it? Or ask Dutch evangelicals what has happened to the Gereformeerde Kerk of the stalwart Abraham Kuyper."¹ The same kind of change for the worse may occur in American evangelicalism. GOK.

On the other hand, American evangelicalism, to use a phrase from the King James Version, may "go from strength to strength." GOK. Unpredictably, responding to the Spirit of God, evangelicals may make Biblical Christianity more spiritually and culturally relevant and powerful than it has ever been. GOK. Think of the astonishing renaissance of Christianity in the Soviet Union, a miracle of not just survival but resurgence which has elicited this comment from Malcolm Muggeridge:

A wonderful sign has been vouchsafed us, one of the great miracles of the story of Christendom. This sign is the amazing renewal of the Christian faith in its purest possible form in, of all places, the countries that have been drastically subjected to the oppression and brainwashing and general influence of the first overtly atheistic and materialistic regime to exist on earth. This is a fact. I should say myself that it is the most extraordinary single fact of the twentieth century. . . . If when I was a young correspondent in Moscow in the early thirties you had said to me that it would be possible for the Soviet regime to continue for sixty years with its policy of doing everything possible to extirpate the Christian faith, to discredit its record and its originator, and that after this there would emerge figures like Solzhenitsyn speaking the authentic language of the Christian, grasping such great Christian truths as the cross, in a way that few people do in our time, I would have said, 'No, it's impossible, it can't be.' But I would have been wrong . . . Recently, we were making a television programme about the anti-God movement in the communist countries and were filming a selection of propaganda posters. The early ones all showed old peasants, old has-been people, but the latest posters showed young people as the ones being

foolishly deluded by religion. So contrary to what might be expected, this fantastic steamroller trying to destroy every trace of Christian faith has failed. All the efforts of the most powerful government that's ever existed in the world, in the sense of taking to itself the most power over the citizenry, has been unable to shape these people into the sort of citizens it wants them to be. Of all the signs of our times, this is the one that should rejoice the heart of any Christian most, and for that matter of anyone who loves the creativity of our mortal existence.²

God, I am constrained to think, delights in surprises, forcing finite foretellers—except when He grants them as He did with the Biblical prophets a God's-eye perspective on history—to admit that the future is unpredictable.

But at least three plus consequences flow from our ignorance. First, that ignorance induces a spirit of humility and moderates any claim to predictive pretensions—or ought to do so. Second, our ignorance is actually an antidote against unwarranted gloom and despair. Thus Martin Marty quotes an affirmation which he heard at a conference, "We don't know enough about the future to be absolutely pessimistic." And since we don't, a relative optimism is in order rather than an absolute pessimism. Third, our ignorance inspires us to take seriously our responsibility for cooperating with God in bringing about a future much more substantially fulfills the petition, "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Writing on "Future Directions for American Evangelicals," theologian John Jefferson Davis of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary gives us some guidelines regarding the shape and thrust of our lives and activities as we move towards and

into the third millennium if as a Christian entity we are to make an increasing impact. "As American evangelicals we must re-affirm our commitment to the complete truthfulness and authority of Scripture, but with a focus not on the agenda set by the historical-critical method but rather on the coming contest with our world religions—with Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam; that to our knowledge of the Holy Spirit as Illuminator, Regenerator and Sanctifier we have the knowledge of the Spirit as Healer and Liberator and Spirit of praise; and that our missionary agenda be re-oriented toward the needs of the hidden peoples, and especially toward the megacities of the third world." Then with the optimism of a postmillenarian which is his eschatological stance, Davis concludes: "This is indeed an exciting time in which to be a Christian. It is an exciting time to be serving Christ in the ministry. I believe that the time of the greatest expansion of the Christian Church in all of human history is just ahead of us. May God help us, individually and collectively, to be on the cutting edge of Christ's Kingdom as we approach the twenty-first century."³ Perhaps not too many of us are that optimistic, but why not say with Robert Browning, "The best is yet to be"? Or to resurrect a watchword of an older evangelicalism, "The future is as bright as the promises of God."

Quo vadis, American evangelicalism? GOK.

1. Donald M. Mackay, "The Health of the Evangelical Body," *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation*, Volume 38, Number 4, December 1986, p. 259.
2. Malcolm Muggeridge, *The End of Christendom* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1980), pp. 38–39, 41–42.
3. John Jefferson Davis, "Future Directions For American Evangelicals," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 29/4, December 1986, p. 467.

From Truth to Authority to Responsibility: The Shifting Focus of Evangelical Hermeneutics, 1915-1986 (Part II)

by Douglas Jacobsen

The Post-Classic Evangelical Generation: The Hermeneutics of Responsibility

The third generation of Evangelical hermeneutics I would like to discuss is the Post-Classical generation. The central metaphor of hermeneutics for this generation seems to be the concept of responsibility. Let me emphasize the words "seem to be" in the preceding sentence, and let me do that for three reasons. First, this new generation of Evangelicals is still in the process of congealing and it is hard to photograph this moving target. Second, Post-Classic Evangelicalism, as it is emerging into the form of a community of biblical interpreters, has taken on a multifaceted and pluralistic form; thus, it is more difficult to isolate a center of hermeneutical concern in this generation than it was for earlier more uniform Evangelical movements. And third, Post-Classic Evangelicalism was brought to birth in a different manner than the two other generations already examined. Post-Classical Evangelicalism was pushed into existence as much as it developed as a pos-

itive reaction to changes taking place in American society. The rise of Post-Classic Evangelicalism, needs, then to be understood in the context of this dialectical process. Let me begin by discussing the positive roots of the movement—its reaction to the historical experience in the years immediately prior to 1975.

Post-Classic Evangelicalism's hermeneutic of responsibility arose partially as a reaction to the preceding fifteen years of American history. That period had seen the demise of America's authoritative status of "policeman of the world." Overseas America was being defeated by (in typical rhetoric of the period) a "third rate nation" (i.e., Vietnam), and at home the country was divided over issues of war, race, and age. The expansive if troubled optimism of the fifties and early sixties was shattered. Americans were asking what had gone wrong. The world which had once seemed so agreeable to American interests and values now seemed inexplicably truculent. Rather than merely pronouncing answers, many Americans were asking questions—profound questions.

The changes that confronted Evangelicals in the mid-seventies were not limited to the political-cultural realm. Amer-

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ica's religious atmosphere was also changing, and once again these changes confronted Evangelicalism with a challenge. By 1975 Evangelicalism could no longer claim public leadership of conservative Christianity in America. A resurgent Fundamentalism challenged Evangelical leadership from within the ecclesiastical ranks, while a popular wave of conservative religious revival (i.e., the Jesus people, etc.) challenged evangelicalism from outside the realm of institutionalized religion. Compounding these developments was the interdenominational charismatic renewal (again a non-Evangelical conservative religious movement) and the increasing impulse of many mainline conservative Christians to stay in their own denominations and fight to restore the prominence of conservative theological leadership within those denominations. By 1975 Evangelicalism could hardly claim a monopoly on evangelical Christianity in America.

Perhaps even more disturbing to Evangelicals than any of these external developments were changes within the Evangelical community itself. On a superficial level, the question was the degree to which many of the large social questions of the period had penetrated the walls of Evangelicalism and had to come to divide that house against itself—issues of social justice, women's rights, homosexual rights, etc. On a deeper level, however, the question was whether or not the intrusion of these specific issues had opened the door to a wholesale invasion of Evangelicalism by the questioning anti-authoritarian spirit of the age. The wall of separation that Fundamentalism had built and that Classic Evangelicalism had enlarged, modified, and civilized seemed to be crashing down. The boundary line of the acceptable community of interpreters—the boundary line between the believing community and the public to be evangelized—seemed to be unclear and/or full of holes.

For years evangelicals had been defending what they took to be orthodox reading of the Bible to various audiences in various ways. Now all of a sudden from both within and without the ranks came unignorable charges that Evangelicalism's orthodoxy was in numerous ways deficient. Evangelicals were charged by others, and they charged each other, with being hypocritical in social ethics, with being captive to the materialistic spirit of the age, with being insufficiently informed about or concerned with worship, with being woefully ignorant of the larger historical traditions of Christianity, with being prejudiced against all non-white non-male non-Western thought, and with being inferior scholars. The list could be extended. It was not only the Evangelical community in the broad sense that was being asked these questions, individual evangelicals felt the pressure in their own individual souls. No better personal account of this can be found than that of Bernard Ramm in the opening lines of his *After Fundamentalism*:

I had just finished a lecture on my version of American evangelical theology. When I was asked by a shrewd listener to define American evangelical theology more precisely, I experienced inward panic. Like a drowning man who sees parts of his life pass before him at great speed (an experience I have had), so my theology passed before my eyes. I saw my theology as a series of doctrines picked up here and there, like a rag-bag collection. To stutter out a reply to that question was one of the most difficult things I have ever had to do on a public platform.

The experience set me to reflection. Why was my theology in the shape it was? The answer that kept coming back again and again was that theologically I was a

product of the orthodox-liberal debate that has gone on for a century. It is a debate that has warped evangelical theology.²⁸

Ramm's experience has been the experience of countless other Evangelicals. None of these individuals, or very few at the most, want to deny any of the old Evangelical orthodoxy, but the old picture just doesn't hang together for them any more. Evangelicalism, at least in its classic form, seems skewed. These people believe it is deficient. Somehow contemporary Evangelicals have to come up with a new model, and many sense it has to be done from scratch. As Ramm expresses well, such a task is not easy, and in the initial stages of such a reconstruction one really can do little but stutter.

While these neophyte Post-Classic Evangelicals were trying to stammer out their first attempts at an answer to the problems they saw, they were quickly confronted by their angry Classic Evangelical older brothers. In the mid-seventies, with the influence of Evangelicalism seemingly waning, the vocal uncertainties and questioning of the emerging Post-Classic generation of Evangelical hermeneutists seemed like nothing so much as treason. Classic Evangelicalism struck back at what they (rightfully in part) saw as an attack on themselves. The most vocal of these defenders of the old way was Harold Lindsell in his *The Battle for the Bible*. That book begins as follows:

I regard the subject of this book, biblical inerrancy to be the most important theological topic of this age. A great battle rages about it among the people called evangelicals. I did not start the battle and wish it were not essential to discuss it. The only way to avoid it would be to remain silent. And silence on this matter would be a grave sin.²⁹

What Lindsell felt forced to break his silence about was the fact that numerous individuals who wanted to claim the name Evangelical no longer looked to him as if they really were Evangelicals. Lindsell, following the typical language of Classic Evangelicalism, made infallibility the verbal rapier of his book, and because of that the book sounds largely like a rehash of earlier debates within Classic Evangelicalism. Beneath that linguistic continuity, however, a new debate was brewing—a debate over hermeneutics.

Lindsell was clear on this point. "Those who advocate inerrancy," he said, "take the Bible in its plain and obvious sense."³⁰ In contrast to these real Evangelicals, Lindsell argued, a new group of individuals had appeared within "the people called evangelicals" who sought to squirm out from underneath the authority of the Bible through the use of "hermeneutics." Lindsell did not necessarily "un-Christian" these people—in fact, at one point he calls them "earnest and sincere men"³¹—but he doesn't trust their motives. He would gladly allow them to believe what they would, but he was unwilling to grant them any claim to "the badge" (his term) Evangelical. His argument is standard fare Classic Evangelicalism. These new breed Evangelicals may still look Evangelical, but it is only a question of time: Ultimately they or their progeny will fall away from the historic orthodox Christian faith. These contemporary so-called Evangelicals have consciously or unconsciously claimed a critical autonomy over the biblical text through their hermeneutical exercises. Once that move is made, any appeal to authority one might want to make is gone, and Evangelicalism, at least as the Classic generation of Evangelicals defined it, is over.

Before proceeding, two questions need to be asked and answered. In his book Lindsell seems to assume that these

new breed Evangelicals are sneaky people. They seem to want to hide their real opinions behind a label that doesn't fit. Why, he asks, haven't these new-breed Evangelicals announced their agenda clearly and in full public view as preceding generations of evangelicals have? Aren't they really only trying to delude both themselves and others that they are not either heretics or on the slippery slope to heresy?

I think the answer to the first question is implicit in the question itself. This is a "post-classic" generation, living in a post-heroic age. It is not out to storm the world with the Bible. It is merely trying to make sense of both the world and the Bible. To ask Post-Classic Evangelicalism to be clear and complete in its ideas may, at this point in history, simply be a request impossible to meet. I would go even further. I think most Post-Classic Evangelicals harbor a certain jealousy of the self-confident authoritative mood of their Classic Evangelical predecessors. That authoritative mood, however, has simply ceased to be an option for this new generation. To a significant degree, the emergence of Post-Classic Evangelicalism can be described as a fall from relative certitude to relative uncertainty, and uncertainty has never been a good ground from which to launch a major offensive on a still prominent religious tradition.

With regard to the second question—are these new Evangelicals heretics?—the basic answer is simple: No, they are not—even Lindsell admits that. However, Post-Classic Evangelicals have made Classic Evangelicals extremely uneasy, and that uneasiness at times has undoubtedly been strong enough for some Classic Evangelicals for them logically to postulate the necessity of a heretical source. Why are there such frictions between these two evangelical groups? My hunch is this: Post-Classic Evangelicalism's authority hermeneutic is in and of itself the most telling critique anyone can make of the earlier movement. The appeal to authority rests on a certain sense of self-evidency. If that self-evidency evaporates, authority becomes no more than shouting in the wind. And that is exactly what many Evangelicals felt like they were doing anyway during the early and mid-seventies—a time when the influence of "official" Evangelicalism was still on the ebb. The rise of Post-Classic Evangelicalism not only rocked the boat, it hit home.

Seen in this light, Lindsell's book stands simultaneously as a last hurrah for Classic Evangelicalism and as a prodding stick that forced Post-Classic Evangelicals to state their case. And, once flushed into the open—once they had been asked that disturbing question by the shrewd listener and had beginning to be nudged to the door by their Classic Evangelical colleagues—Post-Classic Evangelicals did begin to stammer out their answers. Not all of them said the same thing. But all of them seem to operate with the same basic dictate in mind: The age of authority has passed, and a new age of Evangelical responsibility has dawned.

One of the earliest coherent statements of Post-Classic Evangelicalism's hermeneutic of responsibility is Robert K. Johnston's *Evangelicals at an Impasse*. The content of the book revolves around three particular issues of debate within evangelicalism—"women's role in the church and family, social ethics, and homosexuality"—but the heart of the book is hermeneutics. And, in his concern with hermeneutics, Johnston sets his sights clearly against Classic Evangelicalism's hermeneutic of authority:

Beyond my desire to address specific theological issues [i.e., those mentioned above] and to suggest directions in which evangelicals might profitably move, I have attempted to give voice to this book to a more basic and

persistent concern. That evangelicals, all claiming a common Biblical norm, are reaching contradictory theological formulations on many of the major issues they are addressing suggests the problematic nature of their present understanding of theological interpretation. To argue that the Bible is authoritative, but to be unable to come to anything like agreement on what it says (even with those who share an evangelical commitment), is self-defeating.³²

Johnston's critique of Classic Evangelicalism sounds hauntingly like Classic Evangelicalism's earlier critique of Fundamentalism. Unable to agree on the truth they possessed, Fundamentalists backed off into their own corners and later came out fighting. The same scenario was now repeating itself among those critics of Fundamentalism, and the divisive issue was authority. Johnston's suggested cure was to replace authority with a new center—one that would unite rather than divide. That center was hermeneutics, and it was hermeneutics done with a pluralistic sense of responsibility. Johnston's intention was not to do away with all talk of authority, but to provide authority with a substantial and real foundation that would make such appeals meaningful. For Johnston, that foundation is seen as residing in the form of a rough, but responsibly arrived at, consensus within the accepted community of interpreters. Johnston pleads:

...surely a commitment to biblical authority is a commitment to take this common task of theological interpretation seriously—more seriously than we are doing at the present time. It is a commitment to hold together with those who share a similar norm, to carry on mature conversations, to affirm a oneness in the gospel while working together on the theological issues that currently divide. Evangelicals need the collective wisdom of the best minds and spirits working together on the theological task of the church. Problems in theological formulations will prove ongoing, but the interpretive project will have a much better chance of success in the clear air of fellowship than in an atmosphere fouled by competition.

The common interpretive task entails risks, but such is a necessary ingredient of a commitment to biblical authority.³³

For Johnston, this above described sense of comradeship, while necessary in a Post-Classic Evangelical hermeneutic, is not a sufficient criterion of validity in interpretation. We need not only to be responsible to each other, Johnston states, we also need to be responsible to the three "constitutive theological components" that are part of any biblical hermeneutical exercise. These are the Bible, the Christian tradition, and contemporary culture. According to Johnston, it is the renewal of "careful, creative, communal listening to these theological sources" that will provide a fresh start for Evangelical biblical hermeneutics. He explains his ideal as follows:

The word "hermeneutics" (Greek, *hermeneuein*), as used in the New Testament, means to expound or to translate. It is particularly in the latter sense of translation, or "bridging the gap" (Berkouwer), that the theologian is indeed a hermeneutician. Theologians must build bridges with their interpretation between the biblical writers, the church fathers, and contemporary Christians. Their interpretations will succeed only if they are based on the sound analysis of their constitutive theological components.³⁴

Johnston's image of hermeneutics as bridge-building (with

the hermeneutics of responsibility it entails) has recently been echoed by John Stott. In his new book on the art of preaching, entitled *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century*, he states:

It is because preaching is not exposition only but communication, not just the exegesis of a text but the conveying of a God-given message to living people who need to hear it, that I am going to develop a different metaphor to illustrate the essential nature of preaching. It is non-biblical in the sense that it is not explicitly used in Scripture, but I hope to show that what it lays upon us is a fundamentally biblical task. The metaphor is that of bridge-building.³⁵

doing, the message of the Bible will both become clear and our message will become authoritative. The truth of the Bible is not an abstract academic truth about the world, but truth about human relations—both with each other and with God. One of the first indications that this group represented a significant force within Evangelicalism was the Chicago Declaration of 1973. Since that time the influence of this type of thought has only spread. Currently I think it is safe to say that concerns regarding the responsibility actually to live with our interpretations of the Bible has leavened all of contemporary Evangelicalism—it is no longer just an Anabaptist concern.

A different explication of contemporary Evangelical re-

Perhaps the hermeneutic of responsibility runs the risk of relativism, but I don't think that it is a necessary correlate of the position. In due time, the weaknesses of this movement will undoubtedly make themselves known, just as the weaknesses of Fundamentalism and Classic Evangelicalism made themselves evident in the past.

Stott especially places one more overlay of responsibility on top of the two already outlined by Johnston. Post-Classic Evangelicals needs to be responsible to each other, they need to be responsible to the three theologically constitutive sources of the hermeneutician's work, and (Stott's addition) they need to take upon themselves the responsibility to communicate. Communication in this context takes on a rather pointed meaning, I think. Post-Classic Evangelicals do not see that the message of the Bible actually gets communicated—and communicated not just in a simplified manner (i.e., one which maintains an air of authority by avoiding complexity), but in a manner that takes the full multifacetedness of the text and the reader into serious consideration. What Johnston and Stott are both saying is that we can no longer deceive ourselves into believing that we should just read the Bible in a simple and objective manner and then communicate our findings to a passive audience. We are all limited in our perceptions and judgments and because of this we need outside checks on our interpretive conclusions. Rather than always announcing the truth, we need to listen to how our voices echo off the walls of the evangelical community of interpreters with which we have come to align ourselves—of which we find ourselves a part. We need also to listen to other echoes rebounding off those walls. And, we need to enlarge the walls of the house (at least historically speaking) well beyond the narrow confines they currently define.

I think that the picture of hermeneutics presented by Johnston and Stott defines the core of what responsibility is coming to mean in Post-Classic Evangelicalism. There are, however, at least a few other voices that need to be heard if our picture of Post-Classic hermeneutics is to be really well-rounded. Very briefly let me survey just three of these alternative renditions of the hermeneutics of responsibility currently being voiced.

One alternative rendering of Evangelical hermeneutical responsibility comes from evangelical Anabaptism. Perhaps the leading figure in this category is Ron J. Sider, but others could be mentioned (e.g., Donald Dayton, Jim Wallis, John H. Yoder). This version of the Post-Classic Evangelical hermeneutic of responsibility runs roughly as follows: The problem facing Evangelicalism and its difficulty with interpreting the Bible stems primarily from an unwillingness really to do what the Bible says. What we need is not better exegesis or scholarship of any kind, but we need to do what the Bible says. In that

responsibility hermeneutics come from William J. Abraham. Rather than seeking (like Johnston) to overcome the current disunities within evangelicalism, Abraham suggests the opposite. He calls for making a virtue out of our vice of division. The real problem would be to "seek to heal [our] wounds too quickly." Abraham is very pessimistic about the Classic Evangelical approach to the Bible. That experiment, he says, simply has failed. Evangelicalism currently faces "an internal crisis unlikely to be resolved by further tinkering from within." At this point in time, "evangelicals need to turn to radically alternative models of their own heritage."³⁶

Not surprisingly Abraham, himself a Wesleyan, turns to John Wesley to find that radical, yet still evangelical, model for restructuring Evangelicalism. His suggestion is that we should set aside uniformity as a goal, recenter our sense of connectedness on the Bible alone, and take a deep breath of Wesley's catholicity of vision. Then within this perspective, we should strive for the fullest and most nuanced and most traditionally distinctive presentations of the full message of the Bible we can muster. We are family, Abraham says. We are kin. Let us then get about the process of presenting, as best we can from our different perspectives within the large evangelical umbrella, the message of the gospel to a world hungry for spiritual renewal. None of our traditions (e.g., Calvinist, Wesleyan, Anabaptist) is identical with the truth of the gospel. Abraham even allows the possibility that evangelicalism as a whole is misconceived. All "evangelicals have a duty to acknowledge the experimental character of their position[s]. All should recognize the contested character of the heritage, revise the present climate of opinion accordingly, and then proceed to provoke one another to love and good works." The sense of hermeneutical responsibility that Abraham envisions is one of theological and academic excellency in the presentation of our alternative views of the Bible combined with the responsibility to be open to, and non-judgmental of, alternative views. It is the responsibility of undefensive scholarship combined with a responsibility to be about the work of the kingdom in love.³⁷

A third variant which attempts to outline a hermeneutic of responsibility for Post-Classic Evangelicals is presented by Harvie Conn of Westminster Seminary. Conn is a former missionary and brings to his work all the typical traits one would expect from such an individual. He is open to other cultures

and their insights into the scripture, and he does not think Western modes of thought and theology should be crammed down non-Western spiritual mouths. But Conn goes beyond these typical missionary concerns. Not only do we need to act more politely toward the cultures whose members we seek to evangelize, we need to learn from these Christians—and by learning, Conn does not just mean to be encouraged by these peoples' joyful and zealous piety. He means actually to learn—to garner cognitive input from these non-first-world Christians. Responsibility means, for Conn, the development of "multiperspectivalism [as] a style of life, a hermeneutic, a way of thinking." When Evangelicals adopt this style of hermeneutics theology will become, he says, "more of a dynamic process than one virtually completed in the West."³⁸

In many ways Conn's position brings us full circle back to Johnston's from an international perspective. Like Johnston, Conn has a triad that should govern our interpretation of the Bible: the normative position of the Bible, social time and place, and the existential perspective of our humanity as images of God." These three, Conn says, are to be woven together into a "symphonic theology," an artistic creation. Here again Conn's language echoes that of Johnston, or Johnston's echoes Conn's. Whichever came first is no longer the issue, however. Echoes of responsibility in one form or another are currently reverberating off the walls of evangelicalism all around the world. In all these cases there is also the sense that that hermeneutical responsibility must be artistically conceived, skillfully crafted, and workably presented.

Conclusion

It is necessary to ask how this new Post-Classic hermeneutic of responsibility will help Evangelicals function in the contemporary world. At this point this question must be phrased in the future tense, and my speculations will be short. I see primarily four things that this new hermeneutical metaphor might enable Evangelicals to do.

The first relates to international developments. By the end of this decade a majority of the Christians in the world will live in the non-West. If American Evangelicals want to relate in a positive way to this majority of the world Christian population, it will be necessary to divest themselves of even more of their pretensions to biblical hermeneutical objectivity than they have already. The need in the future will be to learn about the Bible from our non-Western brothers and sisters. A hermeneutic of responsibility opens the door to those developments.

A second positive function that this hermeneutic of responsibility might have in the future is to help Evangelicals engage the political questions of the day from a more adequate base than they currently do. If Evangelicals really become willing to pay hermeneutical attention to contemporary culture, that will provide a point of contact with the larger culture that is presently lacking in much Evangelical political theologizing.

Third, I think the humble admission that hermeneutics is difficult work can only benefit a people that claim to be nothing more than sinners saved by grace. Evangelicalism has always made a better ideology of service than of rule. Claims to possess either absolute truth or absolute authority can so easily be bent in a domineering direction. In an age that has more than its fair share of totalitarian-oriented regimes, an American witness of Evangelical service can certainly do no harm.

Finally, I think that a metaphor of responsibility has opened the doors of communication between evangelicals and non-evangelicals to a degree unprecedented since the turn of the

century. This could be either a blessing or a boon, but I think it is an advance nonetheless.

So much for the good. Is there a down side risk in all this? Is there, as the editorial from *Christianity Today* at the start of this article suggested, the potential for cataclysm in these changes? The answer is an obvious yes. But if it is too early to adequately document the strengths of the position, it is too early to delineate its weaknesses. Perhaps the hermeneutic of responsibility runs the risk of relativism, but I don't think that it is a necessary correlate of the position. In due time, the weaknesses of this movement will undoubtedly make themselves known, just as the weaknesses of Fundamentalism and Classic Evangelicalism made themselves evident in the past. For now, however, a new generation of Evangelicals seems content to live with this new hermeneutic and to see where it will gradually lead. After all, the changes taking place do "appear quite imperceptible" when viewed "from day to day." Only "in the span of a generation" will it become apparent where our decisions of today have led us.

¹ I use the term "evangelical" in at least three ways in this article, let me distinguish these uses in the following manner. When I use the term with a lower case "e," I am referring to that long-standing pattern of American Christian religious piety that emphasizes the need to conserve the received formulations of theology and that stresses the importance of warm-hearted religion and the experience of conversion. Evangelicalism when capitalized refers to that primarily northern coalition of religious groups that came into existence at the end of the nineteenth century in reaction to a perceived growing threat of liberalism within the northern churches. The various other Evangelical movements I identify (Evangelical with an "E" and a preceding adjective) exist primarily as historical sub-groups within Evangelicalism, but at times they reach outside Evangelicalism to recover other aspects of the evangelical tradition.

² For John Warwick Montgomery see *Faith Founded on Fact* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1978); for D.A. Carson see his essay "Recent Developments in the Doctrine of Scripture" in D.A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge, editors, *Hermeneutics, Authority, and Canon* (Grand Rapids: Zondervon, Academic Books, 1986); Robert K. Johnston is discussed below, see pp. xx-x.

³ See J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1946), pp. 6-7.

⁴ For this quote and for the best survey of this period as a whole see George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 219.

⁵ For a more detailed discussion of these dynamics see Marsden. For special attention to the question of the separation of the Fundamentalist hermeneutical community from that of the liberal and academic communities see Mark Noll, *Between Faith and Criticism* (New York: Harper and Row, 1986).

⁶ *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to Truth*, edited by R.A. Torrey, A.C. Dixon, and others (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1972; reprint of the 1917 edition published by the Bible Institute of Los Angeles), p. 11.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ R.A. Torrey, *The Christ of the Bible* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1924), p. 12.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. vi.

¹³ J. Gresham Machen, *What is Christianity?*, edited by N.B. Stonehouse (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1951), see Chapter One, "What is Christianity?," p. 22.

¹⁴ J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1946; originally published 1923), p. 7.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁶ See Marsden, p. 216.

¹⁷ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), "Religion as a Cultural System," p. 108.

¹⁸ Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 2nd edition (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), p. 263.

¹⁹ See *Evangelical Action: A Report of the Organization of the National Association of Evangelicals for United Action*, compiled and edited by the Executive Committee of the NAE (Boston: United Action Press, 1942). For doctrinal basis of the organization see pp. 102-3.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

²¹ See "Reinhold Niebuhr's View of Scripture" in E. J. Carnell, *The Case for Biblical Christianity*, edited by Ronald H. Nash (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1969), pp. 97-110.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 46.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 97-8.

²⁴ Carl F.H. Henry, *The Protestant Dilemma* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1949), pp. 22-3.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

²⁶ Dewey M. Beegle, *The Inspiration of Scripture* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), p. 131.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 180-8, passim.

²⁸ Bernard Ramm, *After Fundamentalism: The Future of Evangelical Theology* (New York: Harper and Row, 1983), p. 1.

²⁹ Harold Lindsell, *The Battle for the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), p. 13.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

³² Robert K. Johnston, *Evangelicals at an Impasse* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1979), p. vii.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

³⁵ John R.W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1982), p. 137.

³⁶ William J. Abraham, *The Coming Great Revival* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984), pp. 27-49.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

³⁸ Harvie M. Conn, *Eternal Word and Changing Worlds* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), pp. 337-8.

The Theology of Acts

by F.F. Bruce

Some reviewers of the earlier edition of Prof. Bruce's commentary critiqued the lack of attention paid to the theology of Acts. Dr. Bruce writes, "The commentary remains primarily historical and linguistic, but at least some awareness is shown (it is hoped) in the new edition that there is a theological dimension to the work of Luke."

Among the theologians of the NT Luke does not rank with Paul, John or the writer to the Hebrews, but he is a theologian in his own right, bearing witness to the common faith of the church of his day with emphases which are distinguishable from those of the other NT writers.

1. *The doctrine of God.* God is the creator of the universe (Ac. 4:24; 14:15; 17:24), the sustainer of his creatures (14:17; 17:25b), the disposer of time and space (14:16; 17:26 f.), and the judge of all (17:31). He must not be thought of as inhabiting material structures (7:48-50; 17:24b). He manifested his saving power in the history of Israel (13:17-22) and declared his will and purpose through Moses and the prophets (2:17-21, 25-28, 34 f.; 3:21-25; 4:25 f.; 13:33-35, 40 f., 47; 15:15-18; 26:22 f., 27; 28:25-27), and in due course fulfilled both these lines of revelation by sending Jesus (3:26; 13:32 f.).

2. *The doctrine of Christ.* Jesus, the one sent by God, is the expected Messiah of Israel (Ac. 2:36; 3:20; 5:42; 8:5; 17:3b; 18:5), the son of David (2:30 f.; 13:23; cf. Rom. 1:3). He is Lord (Ac. 2:36; 10:36), the Son of God (9:20), the prophet like Moses (3:22 f.; 7:37), the Servant of the Lord (3:13, 26; 4:30; 8:32 f.), and (once) the Son of man (7:52). It is doubtful if we should think of distinct "christologies" associated with these various titles. Some oscillation between one and another was as natural in the apostolic age as in later generations, since these titles, whatever their origin, were all applied now to one and the same historical person.¹ Jesus is also called the holy and righteous one (Ac. 3:14; cf. 7:52; 22:14), the author of life (3:15), leader and savior (5:31). As the Christ, he was destined to suffer (Ac. 3:18; 17:3a; 26:23), a statement dependent on the identification of the Christ with the suffering servant (cf. the quotation of Isa. 53:7 f. in Ac. 8:32 f.). He was rejected by the leaders of his people and handed over to the Gentiles, by whom he was crucified (Ac. 2:23 f.; 3:13-15; 13:28)—is the absence of any mention of Gentiles in 10:39 a tactful omission before an audience consisting of a Roman centurion and his household? He was buried (Ac. 13:29), but raised from death by God and seen by his disciples (Ac. 2:32; 3:15; 10:40 f.; 13:30 f., etc.), and exalted to God's right hand (2:34-36; 5:31; 7:55 f.). The name of Jesus is sometimes given almost hypostatic status (3:16; 4:30; 26:9), like the name of Yahweh in the deuteronomic writings of the OT (e.g. Dt. 12:5, 11), especially when Jesus is represented as still powerfully at work with and through his witnesses: "there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Ac. 4:12).

He is to return (Ac. 3:20) as God's agent in the judgment of the living and the dead (10:42; 17:31a). He is the true object of faith which brings forgiveness and salvation (2:38; 10:43; 13:38 f.; 16:31; 19:4). He is a proper recipient of prayer; cf. 7:59, where the dying Stephen commits his spirit to the "Lord Jesus" in almost the same terms as Jesus used on the cross when he committed his spirit to God his Father (Lk. 23:46, quoting Ps. 31:5).²

3. *The doctrine of the Spirit.*³ The Holy Spirit was promised by God in advance through the prophets (Ac. 2:16-21); hence he is called "the promise of the Father" (1:4). He was promised afresh by Jesus in resurrection (1:4 f., 8; 11:16); he was received by the ascended Jesus to pour out on his followers, who received him accordingly at the first Christian Pentecost (2:4, 33), as also their converts did when they responded to their witness in repentance, faith and baptism (2:38 f.). He was imparted not only to believing Jews but also, in due course, to believing Gentiles (10:44-47; 11:15), purifying both inwardly by faith (15:8 f.) He was variously received at baptism (2:38), at baptism accompanied by the imposition of hands (19:5 f.), by the imposition of apostolic hands some time after baptism (8:17), before baptism, without warning (10:44; 11:15). His reception might be evidenced by speaking in tongues and inspired utterances in praise of God (2:4, 11; 10:46; 19:6).⁴ He is the witnessing Spirit, bearing his witness (to the crucified and exalted Christ) with and through the witness of the apostles (5:32; cf. Jn. 15:26 f.). The Spirit in the church speaks through prophets, foretelling the great famine, for example, so that the Christians of Antioch may take timely steps to provide for their brothers and sisters in Jerusalem (Ac. 11:28-30). His is the primary authority invoked in the apostolic decree (Ac. 15:28). He directs the course of missionary activity, selecting Barnabas and Saul for a special work (Ac. 13:2) and prescribing the route to be taken (16:6-10). So completely is the church the organ of his vitality that an attempt to deceive the church is an attempt to deceive the Spirit—in other words, to deceive God himself (Ac. 5:3 f.).⁵

4. *The church and its Ordinances.* The church (*ekklèsia*), as has just been said, is the organ of the Spirit of the world. It is he who animates, empowers and directs this society of the disciplines of Jesus.

At first the church is restricted to Jerusalem: the church of Jerusalem remains "the church" *par excellence* (Ac. 5:11; 18:22, etc.). But after the death of Stephen and the ensuing dispersion it expands "throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria" (Ac. 9:31). Luke does not speak, as Paul does, of "the churches of Christ in Judaea" (Gal. 1:22; cf. 1 Th. 2:14) in the plural. But when the gospel is taken to Antioch on the Orontes and accepted by many of its inhabitants (especially by its Gentile inhabitants), the church of Antioch (Ac. 11:26; 13:1; 14:27; 15:3) is established as a distinct body. When the gospel spread out from Antioch, the "churches" of Syria and Cilicia came into existence (Ac. 15:41). Later, with the evangelization of South Galatia, churches were established in Pisidian, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe (Ac. 14:23, *kat' ekklèsia*), as later still in cities west and east of the Aegean, e.g. Ephesus (20:17, 28).

The *ekklèsia* of a city is also called the *plèthos* (Ac. 6:5;

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15:30), or is referred to in terms of its members, the "disciples" (6:1; 9:19, 38; 11:26; 14:22; 18:23, 27; 20:1, etc.), the "believers" (2:44; 4:32), the "brothers" (15:1, 3, 32 f., 36, 40; 16:2, 40, etc.).

The condition for membership of the church is faith in Jesus (as Messiah, Lord or Son of God); entry into it is marked by baptism (in water) in the name of Jesus. The church of Jerusalem was formed at Pentecost of those who repented, were baptized and received the gift of the Holy Spirit (Ac. 2:38, 41). The time relation between being baptized and receiving the Spirit might vary (see p. above). The Gentile Cornelius and his household would probably not have been baptized had they not first manifestly received the Spirit (Ac. 10:44). The belated baptism of the twelve disciples of Ephesus, who previously knew only John's baptism and had not heard of the Holy Spirit, is recorded as an anomaly (Ac. 19:1-7). In baptism the convert, invoking the name of the Lord, had his sins washed away (Ac. 22:16).

The church adhered to the apostolic teaching and fellowship (Ac. 2:42). The apostolic teaching, as maintained at Jerusalem (with the practice which gave expression to it) was the norm to which deviations elsewhere were made to conform, as is shown in the incidents of Apollos (Ac. 18:26) and the twelve disciples of Ephesus (19:1-7).⁶ The apostolic fellowship was manifested, *inter alia*, in the breaking of bread, the united prayers, and (in the primitive church of Jerusalem) the community of goods. The breaking of bread was probably a fellowship meal in the course of which the eucharistic or memorial bread might be taken. (It may be accidental that wine is nowhere mentioned in Acts, whether in this context or in any other). In the primitive church of Jerusalem the believers evidently shared such meals in their homes every day (*kath' hēmeran . . . kat' oikon*, 2:46); in the church of Troas, at a later date, they appear to have met for this purpose on the first day of the week (20:7). There may also be a eucharist element in the meal aboard the doomed ship recorded in Ac. 27:33-37 (obviously not in a church context); but it is in the light of passages outside Acts (notably Lk. 22:14-19a) that this suggestion commends itself. No eucharistic doctrine can be inferred from Acts itself.

The administration of the church of Jerusalem was at first in the hands of the apostles (the twelve), then of apostles and elders (Ac. 15:2-16:4), then of elders without apostles (11:30; 21:18), James the Just being *primus inter pares* among those elders (12:17; 21:18). The seven men with Greek names appointed to supervise the distribution of charity from the church's communal fund (6:1-6) do not seem to have functioned in that capacity after the death of Stephen and the dispersal of the Hellenists. Elders are appointed to guide the affairs of Gentile churches—e.g. in South Galatia (14:23) and Ephesus (20:17).⁷ "Elders" (*presbuteroi*) is Luke's term for them; in Ac. 20:28 Paul refers to those in the Ephesian church as "guardians" (*episkopoi*), whose main responsibility is to "be shepherds" (*poimainein*) to the "flock" (*poimnion*) of God.

Outside Jerusalem the church comprises Jewish and Gentile believers; the churches outside Judaea are predominantly Gentile in composition. The "decrees" issued by the Council of Jerusalem (15:6-16:4; 21:25;) were designed for acceptance by Gentile believers in order to facilitate regular fellowship (especially table-fellowship) between them and Jewish believers. They are not viewed by Luke as imposing any limitation on the liberty of Gentile Christians but rather as a token of their acceptance as full members of the believing fellowship.⁸

5. *The Gentile mission.* Luke is especially interested in the Gentile mission: naturally so, if he was a Gentile Christian himself.⁹

The Gentile mission is part of the divine purpose for the salvation of the world: it was foretold in prophecy (cf. Ac. 13:47, quoting Isa. 42:6; Ac. 15:16-18, quoting Am. 9:11 f.) and inaugurated in history under the direct guidance and indeed compelling pressure of God (Ac. 10:1-48; cf. Peter's question in 11:17, "who was I that I could withstand God?"). The detail in which Luke narrates and repeats the story of Cornelius (10:1-48; 11:1-18; cf. 15:7-9) reflects the importance which he attaches to this break-through—not only Gentile evangelization in itself but the acceptance of the principle of Gentile evangelization by the apostles.

The gospel was rightly and necessarily presented to the people of Israel first (*hymn prōton*), 3:26; 13:46), and in every place some of them believed it, but in most places the majority refused it, with the result that it was then presented directly to Gentiles (13:46; 18:6; 19:8-10). Rome provides the setting for the definitive instance of this recurring pattern (28:28): henceforth, Luke implies, the gospel is for the Gentiles.

The Gentile mission was adumbrated in the history of Israel, as was indicated in Jesus' inaugural preaching at Nazareth by his references to the widow of Zarephath and Naaman the Syrian (Lk. 4:25-27); it was given effect in the new age by the ministry of Philip (Ac. 8:26-39), Peter (10:1-11:18) and the unnamed disciples of Cyprus and Cyrene who first preached to Gentiles in Antioch (11:19-21), and pre-eminently in the missionary activity of Paul (see pp.).

6. *Biblical theology.* Luke is a biblical theologian: he sees the worldwide extension of the gospel as the fulfillment of God's self-revelation progressively imparted in earlier days through mighty work and prophetic word, as recorded in the Hebrew scriptures. He himself relies on the pre-Christian Greek version of those scriptures commonly called the Septuagint. His understanding of the on-going process and its climax is frequently summed up in the term "salvation history" (Ger. *Heilsgeschichte*).¹⁰

God's saving purpose was declared to Abraham: "In your posterity shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Ac. 3:25, quoting Gen. 12:3; 22:18; cf. Lk. 1:55). It was not impeded by the migration of Abraham's descendants to Egypt and their bondage there (Ac. 7:9-22); their departure from Egypt supplied the setting for an unprecedented manifestation of God's saving power (Ac. 7:30-38; 13:17), which was further displayed in Israel's ensuing history, especially in the raising of David to the kingship (13:22). The maintenance of the kingship in David's family was confirmed to him by a succession of promises, "the sure mercies of David" (Isa. 55:3), which were fulfilled in the sending of Jesus and in his resurrection and exaltation to be Lord and Messiah (Lk. 1:32 f.; Ac. 2:25-36; 13:23, 34-37). The testimony of the prophets, from Moses onward (Ac. 3:22-24), also pointed forward to the climax of salvation-history in the Christ-event and the acceptance of the gospel in the Gentile world (see above). Over the whole record of gospel progress, in fact, might be written Peter's words at the pentecostal fulfillment of the oracle of Joel 2:28-32, but now with reference to the whole corpus of OT prophecy: "This is what was spoken by the prophet" (Ac. 2:16). Christ is the one to whom "all the prophets bear witness" (Ac. 10:43).

7. *Soteriology.* Salvation (*sōtēria*) is a key-word in Acts. It is the blessing offered by the gospel; it has a variety of aspects, and it is not always said explicitly what the persons who accept it are saved *from*. Since salvation includes forgiveness of sins (Ac. 2:38; 3:19; 10:43; 13:38 f.; 26:18; cf. Lk. 1:77), it implies (*inter alia*) deliverance from the guilt of sin. In Ac. 2:40 Peter's Jewish hearers are urged to save themselves from "this crooked generation"—the implication being that that generation had

shown its perversity by rejecting Jesus, but that by accepting the gospel they could save themselves from the nemesis which such perversity must inevitably incur. The conditions necessary for obtaining salvation are repentance and faith—a forsaking of old attitudes and an embracing of new attitudes: “repentance to God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ac. 20:21). Faith in Jesus as Christ is so essential that “the believers” and “the saved” are interchangeable terms.

Even when the salvation consists mainly of bodily healing, this faith is necessary: it was so with the cripple in the temple court (Ac. 3:16) and with the cripple of Lystra, who had “faith to be made well” (*pistin tou sôthênai*, Ac. 14:9). Whatever form the salvation takes, it depends exclusively on Jesus: “there is salvation in no one else” (Ac. 4:12).

How Jesus has procured this salvation for believers is rarely spelled out in Acts. According to the prophets, whose words were fulfilled in the gospel, it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead (26:23; cf. Lk. 24:46 f.); it is, then, as the crucified and risen Christ that Jesus saves. Passages from the Isaianic Servant Songs are sometimes quoted as gospel *testimonia* (cf. Ac. 3:13), but even when the passage quoted portrays the Servant’s suffering (cf. Ac. 8:32 f., quoting Isa. 53:7 f.), the words which bring out the vicarious efficacy of that suffering are not reproduced. Whether such words are deliberately not reproduced—cf. the absence of “to give his life a ransom for many” (Mk. 10:45) from Lk. 22:25-27¹¹—or the words actually reproduced carry their vicarious context with them by implication,¹² cannot be affirmed with certainty. The one place where the redemptive power of the death of Christ finds clearest expression—the reference to “the church of God, which he has purchased with the blood of his own one” (Ac. 20:28)—comes, significantly enough, in a speech ascribed to Paul, and should be recognized as an authentic representation of Paul’s teaching.

8. *Eschatology*. The end of the age does not appear to be imminent in Ac., nor yet in Lk. According to Lk. 21:24, after the Jewish War “Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled”—but there is no indication how long the times of the Gentiles will last. The disciples are simply commanded to keep on the alert, so that they may survive the great distress which precedes the manifestation of the kingdom of God and so “stand before the Son of man” (Lk. 21:36).

In Ac. 1:11 the parousia of Christ will take place as his ascension did (but in the opposite direction)—visibly, in a cloud. It is foretold in Ac. 3:20 f. in terms which probably survive from a more primitive eschatology than Luke’s own.

The end of the age will be marked by the resurrection of the just and the unjust (Ac. 24:15) and by the judgment of the living and the dead, to be carried out by Christ as the agent of God (Ac. 10:42; cf. 17:31). But the present age is the age of the Spirit, the gospel age, and there is no suggestion that it has reached its consummation at the end of the book, with Paul’s preaching in Rome. If that marks the conclusion of one phase of gospel expansion, it also marks the beginning of a new phase. No eschatological note is struck here, as is struck in Rom. 11:13-16, 25-27, where Paul sees the conversion of Israel, achieved indirectly through his own Gentile apostleship, as the prelude to the parousia. Luke no doubt thinks of the parousia as the goal towards which the gospel age is moving but, as he writes, the gospel age is still going on.

¹ M. Hengel argues that the crucial phase of christological development coincided with the first five years after the death and resurrection of Christ: “the multiplicity of christological titles does not mean a multiplicity of exclusive ‘christologies’ but an accumulative glorification of Jesus” (*Between Jesus and Paul*, E.T. [London, 1983], p. 41).

² See C.F.D. Moule, “The Christology of Acts,” in *Studies in Luke-Acts*, ed. L.E. Keck and J.L. Martyn (Nashville/New York, 1966), pp. 159-185; S.S. Smalley, “The Christology of Acts,” *ExT* 73 (1961-62), pp. 358-362, and “The Christology of Acts Again,” in *Christ and Spirit in the New Testament*, ed. B. Lindars and S.S. Smalley (Cambridge, 1973), pp. 79-93.

³ So thoroughly does the Spirit pervade Acts that Chrysostom called this book “the Gospel of the Holy Spirit”: “the Gospels are a history of what Christ did and said; but the Acts, of what that ‘other Paraclete’ said and did” (*Hom.* 1.5). Cf. the title of A.T. Pierson, *The Acts of the Holy Spirit* (London, 1913); so also J.A. Bengel, *Gnomon*, on Ac. 1:1.

⁴ According to Schuyler Brown, in Lk.-Ac. “the gift of the spirit, and the enthusiastic phenomena which accompany it, are restricted to the apostolic age” (*The Origins of Christianity* [Oxford, 1984], p. 146). This is said to be Luke’s attempt to resolve “the conflict between the witness of the Spirit to the individual and the decisions of apostolic authority,” but the argument is unconvincing.

⁵ See P. Loyd, *The Holy Spirit in the Acts* (London, 1952); G.W. H. Lampe, “The Holy Spirit in the Writings of St. Luke,” in *Studies in the Gospels*, ed. D.E. Nineham (Oxford, 1966), pp. 159-201. J.H.E. Hull, *The Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles* (London, 1967).

⁶ See A.A. T. Ehrhardt, *The Framework of the NT Stories* (Manchester, 1964), pp. 94 f., 158-160.

⁷ Cf. C.K. Barrett, *Church, Ministry and Sacraments in the NT* (Exeter, 1985), pp. 49-53.

⁸ See F.J.A. Hort, *The Christian Ecclesia* (London, 1897).

⁹ See S.G. Wilson, *The Gentiles and the Gentile Mission in Luke-Acts* (Cambridge, 1973).

¹⁰ See E. Lohse, “Lukas als Theologe der Heilsgeschichte,” *EvT* 14 (1954), pp. 256-275; H. Flender, *St. Luke: Theologian of Redemptive History*, E.T. (London/Philadelphia, 1967); O. Cullmann, *Salvation in History*, E.T. (London, 1967).

¹¹ Cf. H. Conzelmann, *The Theology of Saint Luke*, E.T. (London/New York, 1960), pp. 200 f. Over against J.M. Creed, who denies that there is any *theologia crucis* in Lk.-Ac. (*The Gospel According to St. Luke* [London, 1930], p. lxxii), see C.K. Barrett, “Theologia Crucis—in Acts,” in *Theologia Crucis—Signum Crucis: Festschrift für E. Dinkler*, ed. C. Andresen and G. Klein (Tübingen, 1979), pp. 73-84.

¹² Cf. C.H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures* (London, 1952), p. 132 *et passim*, for the “governing intention” in the NT use of *testimonia* as being “to exploit whole contexts selected as the varying expression of certain fundamental and permanent elements in the biblical revelation.”

Bibliography on Aging for Pastors and Other Church Leaders

by David O. Moberg

NOTE: Bibliographical references are found in most of the below resources. They can lead readers to additional publications, organizations, audiovisual materials, and other reference materials. I have not attempted to list the numerous *textbooks in gerontology* which are valuable aids to understanding, serving, and working with the aging even though most of them ignore or minimize the role of religious faith in the lives of older people and the services provided by religious institutions. *Journals* in geriatrics and gerontology also are very

useful; these include *Aging and Human Development*, *Clinical Gerontologist*, *Generations*, *Geriatrics*, *The Gerontologist*, *Gerontology and Geriatrics Education*, *Journal of Gerontology*, *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, *Journal of Housing for the Elderly*, *Journal of Nutrition for the Elderly*, *Journal of Religion and Aging*, and many other highly specialized publications.

(Some of these are now available only in libraries; they are marked OP [out of print] only if I know they are unavailable from publishers.)

AARP Educational & Service Programs. American Association of Retired Persons, 1909 K Street N.W., Washington, DC 20049.

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The 1984 edition of this catalog of programs, services, and resources, most of which are useful for church-related programs, has 36 pages.

Bianchi, Eugene C., *Aging As a Spiritual Journey*. New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1984, 285 pp. Reflections by an associate professor of religion (Emory College) on the challenges and potentials of midlife and elderhood; aims at establishment of "a general framework for a spirituality of aging."

Clements, William M., editor, *Ministry With the Aging: Designs, Challenges, Foundations*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981. Sixteen contributions on the biblical basis, precedents in the early church, theological roots, realities of aging in American culture, linkages with worship, ethical challenges, guidelines, and examples for befriending, counseling, educating, and serving the aging and the elderly.

Clingan, Donald F., *Aging Persons in the Community of Faith*. Indianapolis: Institute on Religion and Aging and the Indiana Commission on the Aging and Aged, revised edition, Oct. 1980. (Order from Christian Board of Publication, Box 179, St. Louis, MO 63166). A 93-page paperback "Guide for Churches and Synagogues on Ministry with the Aging" which gives much factual data and numerous action suggestions.

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Hessel, Dieter, editor, *Empowering Ministry in an Ageist Society*. NY: The Program Agency, The United Presbyterian Church, USA, 1981, 93 pp., \$1.50. (Order from the Presbyterian Office on Aging, 341 Ponce de Leon Ave., N.E., Atlanta, GA 30365). A symposium on aging as a challenge to society, public policy, the Christian promise of new life, the church's response to ageism, and other topics.

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with spiritual needs of aging people, spiritual growth, a survey of faith commitment, and ministering to the elderly.

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the older adult are not peripheral but essential parts of the business of the church" (p.109).

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and presents aging as fulfillment in the human search for meaning.

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Leadership '88 Conference

Next year, June 27-July 1, the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization will sponsor a conference in Washington, D.C. Leadership '88 will bring together 2,000 younger Christians from across the United States. Diverse in culture, theology, style, and education, these emerging leaders will be encouraged and equipped to take aggressive action in completing the Great Commission in their generation. Anyone interested in participating is invited to write Leadership '88 at P.O. Box 2620, Pasadena, CA 91102.

Here is the Draft Statement of the Senior Advisory Council for Leadership '88 which the Council adopted on December 5, 1986.

Introduction

The Senior Advisory Council for Leadership '88 met to determine how they could best shape the thinking and lives of emerging Christian leaders in the United States. The following is a brief statement of what they as Senior leaders have learned in Christian leadership and how they would define the unfinished task of world evangelization and the expansion of the Kingdom of God.

Underlying this statement by the Senior leaders is their firm conviction in the utter indispensability of evangelism in the mission and calling of the Church.

Challenges and Opportunities in the World and the Church

A sample of our analysis of the contemporary and future scene includes the following opportunities and challenges:

1) A planet with newly emerging nations and aspirations as well as long established nations struggling for effective survival.

2) A time of the greatest harvest in the history of the Church, and a corresponding need to substantially increase the number of practicing Christians throughout the world.

3) Masses of the world's poor outside of the Kingdom of God.

4) Vast inner-city complexes to which rural populations are moving, providing at the same time an occasion for moral erosion and an opportunity for mass evangelism.

5) Tremendous havoc resulting from the uncritical democratization of ideas.

6) The distressing breakdown of monogamous marriage through divorce, battered wives, separation and fornication (adultery), and the overall tenuous plight of the home.

7) The need for evangelistic strategies which take women seriously in the context of their needs, and an appropriate evangelical response to a radical feminist theology.

8) The lack of a consensus, and an effective paradigm, over the relationships of evangelism and social action, which remains obscure for many evangelicals, and the need for instructive models.

9) The stunted faith, hope, and love of the Christian community in its polarizations and divisions, resulting in disunity,

disharmony and a lack of communications among believers which have obscured the Lordship of the believing church, their obedience to fulfilling the evangelistic mandate and their ability to stand together in matters of social justice.

10) Opportunities for ministry partnering, especially in urban ministries, and for a new ecumenical cooperation among those who lift up and emulate Jesus Christ, including those within the Catholic community.

11) Impotence of much of contemporary Christianity characterized by a decline in mainline denominations, lack of evangelistic zeal among traditional churches, a failure to minister to the whole person, an unwillingness to empower the laity, and a reluctance of Christians to enter all vocational arenas as legitimate areas of Christian service.

12) The need to learn from effective urban evangelistic churches, to celebrate the charismatic renewal, and to learn from churches in the Third World which are growing through prayer and the supernatural working of God in spite of their great suffering.

Training, Character, and Preparation of Emerging Christian Leaders

We live in an age in which there is tremendous change both in the United States and throughout the world. Any leader or Christian institution that intends to be effective in the future will need the ability to accommodate to change while maintaining an unshakable commitment to Christ. A sampling of our analysis of our Christian institutions which prepare emerging leaders and the inner life and character which sustains them includes the following observations:

Institutions

1) Institutions as well as individual leaders are ordained by God and are essential to the ordering of society and to believers fulfilling their calling.

2) The Old Testament model of Israel in exile in Babylon may be a more fruitful model of the Church in the world than the model of the theocratic nation of Israel.

3) A new vision is needed for new institutions among ethnic Americans and among Christians living in poor communities; in addition, power sharing by minorities is needed in existing institutions so that these minorities can be in a position to help shape direction.

4) Local churches have an important responsibility to train, prepare and test emerging Christian leaders before they become candidates for seminary education; in addition, seminary graduates must increasingly learn to trust lay people with significant, important biblical ministries in their churches.

5) Ways must be found to help existing Christian leaders to be better servants, thereby following the life and example of Jesus Christ; further, it is important that existing leaders become ardently devoted to emerging leaders, invest their lives

with them, listen to them, and release them into responsible ministries.

6) Several minority and urban Christian leaders have felt that current seminary training, based primarily on academic excellence, has failed to equip them as leaders. They felt ill-prepared to lead, unsure of their gifts, ignorant of the Bible and how to integrate it into life situations, and lacking in personal spiritual development.

7) It is important to affirm both intuitive and managerial leadership of institutions. Both the intuitive visionary who often begins a institution and the manager who wisely organizes work effectively need to be utilized effectively so that institutions can enjoy the fruits of both gifts.

Character & Inner Life

1) The definition of the inner life includes both the private internal life and the private relationships of the leader with his immediate family.

2) The development of a vital inner life includes a close walk with God, transparency in fraternal relationships, intimacy in one's personal family life, and accountability with another individual or group.

3) Honoring the biblical teaching of the Sabbath rest is an important factor in maintaining intimacy with God, with one's family, as well as personal wholeness.

4) Emerging Christian leaders may need to acquire a new sense of the authority of God, particularly because so many

leaders in the 30-40 year old age group are an unfathered generation who need authoritative figures to father them (not dominate them).

5) Personal involvement in evangelism and sharing the love of Christ with a non-believer can be an important component in renewing and maintaining our spiritual vitality.

6) Our highest calling is not to be fruitful in ministry, but to love God and to enter into intimate relationship with Him.

7) Spiritual maturity is not instantly achieved and walking with God involves "practicing" the development of spiritual character.

Final Comment

The approach of the twenty first century promises to be as exciting as any time since the prophecy concerning the outpouring of the Spirit of God on all people began to be fulfilled at Pentecost. The great need is for an inter-generational, sex-inclusive, intercultural gift of supernatural power, a new Pentecost, through which all the peoples of the earth can have an opportunity to call on the name of the Lord and thereby be saved. We praise the Lord for all that has been done in decades past, but acknowledge with repentance the Church we have condoned and the society we have allowed. Together, young and old, women and men, we seek to humble ourselves as leaders to dream God's dream for His Church of the 21st century. We commend a new generation to the Lord of the greatest harvest which the Church has ever seen.

REVIEW ESSAYS

The Chronology of the Apostle Paul

by James J.G. Dunn

Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles: Studies in Chronology
by G. Luedemann (Fortress, 1984, 311 pp., \$29.95).

This is the English translation of *Paulus, der Heidenapostel Vol. 1*, published by Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, in 1980. Some footnotes have been dropped, but bibliographical references have been updated and some minor adjustments have been made to the text. A six page Postscript lists and responds to some thirteen reviews. So this is in effect a second edition.

It is the first of a projected trilogy on Paul, the second part having already been published by Vandenhoeck under the subtitle *Antipaulismus im frühen Christentum* (1983). For understandable reasons Luedemann feels it desirable to reach a conclusion regarding the chronology relation and interval between Paul's letters, before embarking on an interpretation of his role and theology, since only within a soundly based chronological framework can we resolve such questions as whether there was enough time for Paul to change or modify his views on any subject.

Luedemann starts from the observation that most attempts to reconstruct Pauline

chronology have fallen into the trap of attempting in one degree or other to harmonize the chronology of Acts with information gleaned from Paul's letters. A sequence of critical observations, including particularly "contradictions between Luke's chronological information and data from world history" and "the redactional nature of Luke's chronological references," provides "a decisive critique of the use of Acts in such a direct or immediate manner. And thus the way is opened for Luedemann to put forward his primary thesis: that Paul's own witness in his letters must have absolute priority in determining Pauline chronology—"a chronology obtained solely on the basis of the letters" becomes a *leitmotif* running through the whole.

In chapter 2 Luedemann turns first to Gal. 1:6-2:14 as "the central pillar for a chronology of Paul." A form (or rhetorical) critical analysis along the lines of H.D. Betz opens up the possibility that Paul could have abandoned a chronological order in this section. Some detailed exegesis, particularly of Gal. 2:7-9, leads to the conclusion that prior to the Jerusalem conference Paul had already been engaged in an *independent* Gentile mission, Galatia included, with the Antioch incident (Gal. 2:11ff.) also probably falling before the conference. Gal. 2:10 then becomes the jumping-off point for the second major thesis: that the collection agreed in Gal. 2:10

provides a firm criterion of dating, since all references to the collection (1 Cor. 16:1ff, 2 Cor. 8-9, Rom. 15:26) must point back to Gal. 2:10.

The Corinthian and Roman letters and the mission they speak of must therefore fall after the Jerusalem conference and imply a 3-4 year period devoted to organizing the collection. Galatians itself implies the collection had already made some progress, but subsequent silence regarding Galatia must mean that in the interval it had been overthrown in Galatia. Moreover, the absence of any mention of the collection in 1 Thess. and in the founding visits to the Philippian and Corinthian churches implies that Paul's initial visit to these churches must have taken place *before* the Jerusalem conference. That is to say, Paul probably missionized (*sic*) Greece at an early stage in his Gentile mission in the 14 year period between his first and second visit to Jerusalem.

In chapter 3 critical analysis of the Acts traditions leads to the key conclusion that Acts 18:22 was Paul's *second* visit to Jerusalem, with 11:27ff. and 15:1ff. deriving from Luke's redaction (the conference of Acts 15 legitimizing Paul's subsequent world-wide mission), and that Acts 18:1-17 combines reports of two different periods in Corinth, the second related to the Gallio episode and the first to the 41 AD expulsion of the Jews from Rome. These results provide "surprising con-

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firmation of the chronology developed solely on the basis of the letters."

The last main chapter analyzes Paul's eschatological statements in 1 Thess. 4:13-18 and 1 Cor. 15:51-52. The former considers the death of Christians before the parousia a rare exception; the latter conversely envisages the proportion of dead Christians as outweighing that of living Christians as the parousia. The likelihood is thus strengthened that 1 Thess. was written early, about 41, well before 1 Cor. (some 8 or 11 years later).

There are full notes, a concluding chronological chart, an extensive bibliography and indices of authors and passages.

This is a thesis—a *tour de force* in order to establish and defend a particular hypothesis. It is not a dispassionate review of alternative chronological schemes with a tentative resolution appended at the end. As such it is an excellent example of the genre. Those not prepared for full-blooded argument should look elsewhere. The clarity and tenacity of the argument make it easy to follow and a pleasure to read.

It must also be said that the two primary assertions must be given considerable weight. It is wholly right as a methodological principle to attempt to make sense of Paul on his terms *before* looking to Acts, lest we miss some of the Pauline distinctives by superimposing the relative blandness of the Acts' Paul on them. And the collection was undoubtedly of great importance for Paul (even though we would never know it from Acts) and does provide something of a key to the chronological relationships of at least some of the letters.

That being said, however, I find myself far from convinced by a good number of Luedemann's conclusions.

1. For all that he recognizes the central importance of Gal. 1:6-2:14 his exegesis of it is surprisingly selective. He has ignored the point already made by B. Holmberg, *Paul and Power*, Con. Bib., Gleerup: Lund, 1978 (and

developed by myself—*NTS* 28, 1982, 461-78) that this passage cannot be understood without taking account of the tension within it between acknowledging Jerusalem's authority up to the Jerusalem conference, but had since then distanced himself much more clearly from Jerusalem. In particular, the suggestion that Paul discussed his gospel with Peter on his first visit to Jerusalem pays no attention to the dispute over *historèsai Kèphan* and runs counter to the clear implication of Gal. 2:2. And the argument that Gal. 2:9 reads as if it was an undoing of church relations in already existing mixed congregations (p. 73) is highly tendentious. Paul's own language in Gal. 1 and 2 is therefore at odds with one of the central assertions of Luedemann's reconstruction—viz. that Paul was already an independent and world-wide missionary before the Jerusalem conference.

2. If exegesis of Paul's own letters is, quite properly, to have the primary say in such questions, then we must not only take into account *all* that Paul said which is of relevance, but we must also recognize the *limits* of exegesis, the unavoidable ambiguity of Paul's language. Despite his carefulness, Luedemann, like his fellow chronologist Jewett, falls into the trap of pressing a particular plausible exegesis of one or two key texts into a firm datum from which he then draws wide ranging conclusions. Where the evidence does not quite fit his reconstruction he is willing to recognize exegetical ambiguity (as in pp. 135 n.185 and 180 n.48). Whereas, in order to substantiate his thesis, he has to insist that Phil. 4:15 cannot refer to the beginning of Paul's whole missionary endeavor—thus rendering the thesis of a Pauline mission in Greece *before* the Jerusalem conference "certain" (pp. 105, 199)!

3. It is clear that Gal. 2:10 must refer to the collection itself and must mean that thereafter the collection was such a dominant concern for Paul that he could not write to one of his congregations without mentioning

it. I think not. Galatians itself is an embarrassment on that score, since it says nothing about the collection in Galatia; Gal. 2:10 can hardly be ranked with the explicit instructions and exhortations of Rom. and Cor. Conversely, the failure of Rom. 15:26 to mention Galatia among those contributing to the collection is simply explained by the fact that Macedonia and Achaia were within Rome's horizon and so could serve as a powerful example to the Romans, whereas Galatia was a much more distant territory. But if treatment of the collection is not such a definitive characteristic of Paul's post-conference epistolary concern, another of Luedemann's central pillars is undermined.

4. Space permits only a brief mention of a few other points. (a) Does 1 Thess. 4 mean that only a short time had passed between the first Easter and Paul's initial visit to Thessalonica (p. 238), or that only a short time had elapsed between the initial visit and the letter? (b) The refusal to allow plausible speculation seeking to make sense of the Acts evidence as "historicizing" (e.g. pp. 159-60) is an unwelcome form of methodological fundamentalism. (c) On the Key issue of whether there was one expulsion of Jews from Rome (AD 41) or two (41 and 49), Luedemann's response to Hübner's criticism that Luedemann had failed to use E. Smallwood's *The Jews Under Roman Rule* is hardly to the point (p. 290). Hübner's point was that Smallwood's careful consideration of the evidence leads to the conclusion that there were *two* expulsions. Simply to note that he (Luedemann) had referred to Smallwood (but not to the passage in question!) hardly answers the point.

In short Luedemann's first volume shows all the strengths of a *tour de force*—but also the weaknesses. When a civil engineer is determined to push his road through along a certain line it is hardly surprising if he is unable to observe all the contours of the territory traversed.

Reading the New Testament as a Canonical Text

by Scot McKnight

The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction
by B. S. Childs (Fortress, 1985, 572 pp., \$22.95).

One could list only a handful of scholars in the world who would not only attempt to discuss the whole barrage of issues in both Testaments but who could also accomplish the feat. Professor Childs is a world-renowned scholar for his insightful analyses in Old Testament studies; this book will now earn him respect in the field of New Testament studies.

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In reading it I was humbled by the amazing grasp Childs has, not only of the literature pertaining to the NT, but also of the exegetical issues involved at each juncture.

Let me begin by stating what this *Introduction* is not. Childs has not written yet another standard introduction to the New Testament, merely to re-examine issues such as authorship, date, addressees, etc. Though Childs regularly raises one or more of these typical issues, his interest is of a different order and he offers for his readers a groundbreaking introduction to reading the NT *as a canonical text and the hermeneutical approach one must have if one takes the NT as canon*. In short, Childs is doing battle on the hermeneutical front, not the historical, proposing,

in contrast to the normal historicist approach, that the NT must be interpreted at the final layer if one is to discern the true role the Bible has in the life of the believing Church.

Each chapter functions, if I may use the label, as a sort of "pronouncement story": first, we have a salient description of the context of scholarship in both its conservative and liberal forms, usually unable to resolve its own difficulties created by its desire to find historical referentiality; secondly, Childs offers a *via media* which seeks to exploit the best of both worlds, a hermeneutical stance called "canonical exegesis." The last part of the chapter is usually a short, pithy section which functions as more than a casual reminder that the NT scholarly world needs to

press on to interpret the final form of the text. After offering an introduction on the role of the canon, Childs applies his approach to each book of the NT and includes a discussion of the canonical problem of the Four Gospels and a lengthy, canonical approach to the issue of harmonizing the Gospels. He concludes with four stimulating excursions: the impact of a canonical approach on NT textual criticism (one of the most provocative features of the book) and on parable interpretation (here he steers away from Jeremias and the modern literary approaches), as well as a response to G.A. Lindbeck's new model for doing theology. Finally, he offers his suggestions for commentaries on the NT for pastor and teacher, books which he would suggest for those who want to pursue his hermeneutical angle. His suggestions, if heeded, will bring great benefits to the expositor.

It is needful to state here what Childs is criticizing. Continuing the lines he has already developed in his Old Testament studies, the author argues trenchantly against much of the current mode of scholarship: the attempt to discern the intention of the author in his own particular (reconstructed) historical context, an approach regularly called "historicism" (cf. pp. 35-7). As Childs and others have seriously queried, if one can never reconstruct that original context, can one ever really understand the text? In other words, as a good many are arguing today, meaning does not reside solely in referentiality, and the question after all for exegesis is that of meaning. A good example of this, one which is carefully criticized by Childs, is the recent view on the Johannine corpus of R. E. Brown who argues that there was a secession and that the Johannine letters are to be interpreted against this background. In the author's view, "what purports to be an historical investigation is actually an exercise in creative imagination with very few historical controls . . . and the text is interpreted in direct relation to Brown's reconstructed referent regardless of the level of clarity" (p. 483). Instead, Childs proposes that interpretation and meaning are concerned with the particular canonical construal of various traditions as found in their final shape.

Childs has successfully and brilliantly accomplished a grand exposure of the consistent failure in this regard for the bulk of NT scholarship, and each chapter is a painful reminder of the fact. This demonstration is the major success of the book; Childs is not attempting to discard historical-critical scholarship but, instead, is reminding its practitioners, especially those within the Church, that the historical-critical enterprise is an unfinished task if it does not climax in the interpretation of the text as it has been received by the Church and seek to understand the kerygmatic theology of the canonical text (cf. pp. 48-53). And so, Childs' proposal is one of a both/and rather than an either/or; the interpreter is to utilize the tools of the historical-critical method but his task is not finished until the present shape of the text is discussed.

Contrary to most scholars, Childs is not

attempting to discern the intention of the author as made known in his original setting or text; instead his pursuit is the meaning of the canonical text, and this text has often been modified in many ways. In fact, Childs, along with many NT scholars today, would argue that few books of the NT are presently substantially the text of the original author. Regarding 1 Peter, for instance, Childs states the following: "It is of crucial hermeneutical significance to understand exactly what is being suggested. This canonical function [rendering 1 Peter as a letter of the apostle by its canonical attribution] is not to be confused with recovering an author's original intention, nor proving historical continuity. Rather, it is a function of canon to establish an intertextuality between the parts as the context for its theological appropriation" (p. 461). One could cite many such examples, including his treatment of 2 Thessalonians, Jude, 2 Peter and Revelation. Loosing exegesis from the moorings of the author's historical intention is an unwelcomed departure and for most it will be seen as putting one's interpretation into the sea of relativity, though Childs has some comments on this as well (cf. pp. 542-6).

A noteworthy feature of this volume is that Childs calls attention to the need to take the canon seriously, not only as a collection, but as a hermeneutical device for interpreting the individual books. I will offer a criticism below on whether the author is consistent in this regard, but let it be said here that Childs proposes a bold reminder that a decision in favor of the canon may well imply some hermeneutical restrictions. For instance, Childs demonstrates that though Jude does not specify the theological content of the gospel to be defended, the book in its canonical shape exhorts the Church to preserve what is written in the rest of her Bible (p. 493). An historicist reading of Jude would not detect this. Similarly, he argues that Revelation, though he thinks the apostle was not the author, in its canonical shape (having John as the author) is to be read "in conjunction with the large Johannine corpus" and "that there is a larger canonical unity to the church's scriptures which is an important guideline to its correct theological understanding" (p. 517). Of course, the most fruitful book for canonical exegesis is James, and Childs demonstrates carefully that a canonical rendering of James makes it a balancing of Paul's understanding of the relationship of faith and works. This is argued quite apart from any historical relationship of James to Paul; instead, the canonical order forces one to think of Paul's views and to incorporate the views into one whole (pp. 436, 438-43). For the evangelical, anyone who takes seriously the desire to incorporate the NT texts into one whole is welcome (cf. p. 30). I must admit that I found this motif in his book the most challenging, and it has caused me to re-think some of my approach to exegesis. If one accepts the canon, then certainly this will have an impact upon one's exegetical method, but the critical factor here is precisely how one is to utilize the canon for the hermeneutical process.

We mentioned above that Childs argues

that a canonical reading of the NT will have an impact on how one does textual criticism and he offers guidelines on the matter. In contrast to most text critics, Childs argues that the *purpose* of the enterprise is not to discover the original text (the success of which he doubts as feasible) but instead to find the text "which best reflects the true apostolic witness found in the church's scripture" (p. 527) which he calls "the best received text" (p. 525). Thus, the critic is to begin with the *textus receptus* (but Childs is not to be aligned with those who want to align themselves with the Majority text) and distill from this inclusive text, in an ongoing process, "that text which best reflects the church's judgment as to its truth" (p. 528). In effect, this suggestion seems to require that one know the theological content of the apostolic faith of the Church before one determines her text. Can this be done? Childs, however, sees this sifting to be a discernment between various qualities (p. 528) and he obviously accepts the normal methods for this determination. What at first seemed to be radical is not as radical as I had thought; nevertheless, his proposal of beginning with the inclusive text and proceeding by way of restriction is fully commensurate with his canonical approach, and his goal is certainly not the traditional one.

Let me now offer my reservations with the book. Though Childs does offer some rationale for a canonical reading of the NT (pp. 34-47), I am not satisfied that he has demonstrated that his view is the *true* approach. Yes, there are antecedents within the texts themselves for this approach (pp. 23-4); but how can the reader know that the canon is in fact what it claims to be—the authoritative books for the Church? Again, we do indeed have a canon; but, is the canon justified? Childs anchors this decision totally in the decision of the Church. Those who accuse Childs of a fideism (p. 37) are not without some justification.

Childs anticipates my second criticism (p. 543). I find it difficult to render the meaning of a text apart from its factuality or historical reference. For Childs the issue is one of a theological construal, but the nagging question of truth, to me, remains unanswered, and I think that one cannot opt for a theological construal which renders the historical fact relative. I quote his treatment of 1 Peter as an example of his view: "Still the point must be emphasized that in its canonical shape the letter of I Peter is attributed to the apostle, and its kerygmatic function is made a derivative of his authority. The effect of the historical-critical approach has been to force a distinction between the historical problem of authorship and the theological function of rendering the material according to a peculiar canonical fashion" (p. 461). Is one being intellectually honest, can one base one's faith upon a theological construal which, in fact, may be historically inaccurate? Is there not an intense concern with the texts themselves with description of the past (a referentiality)? Is not the nature of gospel genre an indicator of concern with past reference?

What is the precise meaning of canonical? Though Childs utilizes "canon" in an amaz-

ingly plastic fashion (cf. p. 41), when it comes to the treatments of the NT books, by and large it means the present shape of the text. But, in my view, one must speak to the issue of intertextuality if one is to call one's method canonical and Childs does this, say, in Jude, James and the Pastorals, but he does not always do this in the Synoptics (pp. 86, 92, 104, etc.). Instead, what he often calls "canonical" is nothing other than the final, redactional layer, or the authorial intent. Thus, I think a distinction needs to be made between redactional and canonical exegesis. It goes to the credit of Childs that he has shown that redactional studies need to press forward to study the canonical shape of the text, but canonical exegesis, in my view, implies a larger context. And a disappointing feature of the book for me was his consistent reduction of the meaning of a NT book to its basic theological meaning (cf. his studies of the Pauline epistles). One wonders if this can

work except at the broadest level of exegesis.

In spite of his concern with the canonical text and how the editors of the canon sought to free the texts from their historical occasion, there still remains a great deal of historical particularity in these texts and few will be satisfied with his brief statements which address this (pp. 23-4) or with a hermeneutic which "typifies" these historical particulars. Thus, when he discusses Paul's cloak in 2 Timothy 4:13, he sees this illustrating "the single-hearted devotion of the apostle to his ministry who ended his life not even possessing a coat" (p. 394).

I might criticize his *method* of demonstrating, for each book of the NT, the lack of consensus of interpretation by playing off conservatives and liberals. The fact is that there is a much greater consensus if one recognizes that the two poles are incompatible; within each framework there is often a considerable consensus. Instead, Childs should recognize

that a consensus can only be reached on the basis of some *a priori*s and previously established conclusions. One could wish that Childs would explore a little more deeply into the realm of what factors led to each polarity.

Finally, for the evangelical there will be a grave disappointment in the fact that Childs does not relate canon to inspiration. Traditional orthodoxy has always posited canon as a direct and natural effect of inspiration. For Childs, the Bible is canon seemingly because of decisions of the Church. For the evangelical the question will always be: what if the Church was wrong?

This book has been one of the most challenging I have ever read. Though I disagree with the historical moorings of Childs' proposal, I agree wholeheartedly with the need to interpret the finished product and his interest in understanding the theological meaning of a NT book in light of its relationship to other NT books.

Childs Responds to McKnight

Dear Prof. McKnight:

It was very kind and thoughtful of you to send me a copy of your review which I have studied with interest and profit. You have read the book with more care and insight than anyone up to now and for that I am grateful.

I think that your review is both fair and incisive. As you correctly saw, the book did not attempt to engage in a detailed analysis of all the problems surrounding the NT, but rather to propose some broad lines of a different approach in an effort to reverse the dominant trend within the field. I am happy that you felt the book raised some fresh questions. I doubt very much whether many within the scholarly guild will be convinced, but I felt the need to present another theological alternative. When I was in seminary, I was always exceedingly grateful for the minority voice of scholars such as J. Denney, M. Kaehler, and A. Schlatter, among others.

You pose some reservations which, I am sure, are high on the priority of most evangelicals. Let me offer a few brief responses:

1) I have purposefully not dealt directly with the question of inspiration. The reason is not because I regard the issue as unimportant. Rather, the present theological climate is such that it is difficult to formulate a fresh position. I think that other issues will first have to be understood before there can be a meaningful return to a restatement.

For a very long time there has been an impasse between a position such as that of Warfield and the numerous followers of Schleiermacher. In my judgment, both these giants were children of the 19th century. Time is, of course, too short to discuss in detail such questions as whether Warfield has nar-

rowed the doctrinal scope even of 17th century Reformed dogmatics. My present concern is that he has defined inspiration in terms of a philosophical theory of truth—namely, 18th century Scottish realism—as correspondence to historical referentiality (iner-rancy), and author intentionality. In contrast, I find in Calvin a far greater emphasis on the Holy Spirit's role in rendering the Word truthfully to its recipient, and thus not pulling text and believer apart in the same way. Obviously, Calvin and Schleiermacher are in great opposition respecting the role of the Spirit which in the latter is simply a form of human consciousness.

In my opinion, the place to begin in reformulating a modern theology of inspiration—and it is only a beginning—is with the Early Church Fathers before Word and tradition, text and Spirit were split apart in the controversies of the 16th century. My appropriation of the concept of *regula fidei* from Irenaeus and Tertullian is my initial attempt at a formulation of the issue. I fear that most evangelicals will not even recognize the attempt.

2) In regard to the question of historicity and historical moorings, it is again difficult to formulate the issue with enough theological precision. In my opinion, most of the modern evangelical formulations reflect a type of natural theology which I do not share. Carl Henry is a grievous example. I do not, for example, believe that one can establish scientifically and in a neutral fashion the factuality of the biblical accounts nor can such an attempt provide a criterion for testing the truth of the Gospel. There is no means outside the Gospel to test its truth. It is *sui generis*. Of course, the OT and NT make constant reference to external reality (I Cor.

15:14), but often to a reality which has entered time and space but is only perceived in faith. Indeed, at times an appeal is made to God's action which can be confirmed by public knowledge (e.g., the fall of Jerusalem) cf. the prophets. The point is that the level of public perception (factuality) varies greatly within the biblical witness. Historicity as a perception apart from faith cannot be made a criterion of divine truth, certainly not as an overarching theological axiom. Conversely, one cannot argue as does Bultmann that historicity is never an issue. In my opinion, both these theological stances are skewed, and both are very much a product of the Enlightenment. Often the most concrete entry of God into human affairs is registered in the Bible in such a way as utterly to confound the litmus paper test of critical appraisal, whether liberal or conservative. The appeal to historical criticism both from the left and right as a correction of Docetism appears to me badly misconstrued and a serious confusion of categories. In sum, it remains difficult to address the problem of historicity in a meaningful way before the basic problems of natural theology are first addressed. In this respect, most evangelicals—Bromiley is an exception—have simply misunderstood what K. Barth was after.

3) Finally regarding the problem of canon as church decision, I have tried to make the point, fully consonant with Calvin, that the church never "created" its canon, but responded to the authority of certain books which were received through use as normative for faith and practice.

But you raise the question: "What if the church was wrong?" Is this not a response of unbelief which does not take seriously the power and promise of God? We confess: "I

Concerning "Sexuality, Hierarchy and Evangelicalism"

Editor's Note: The following disclaimer was submitted between the typesetting and printing stages of the production of this issue of the Bulletin. The unusual format of including a single page insert is due to the fact that, with this issue of the Bulletin, we will cease publication. Therefore, the only time this disclaimer could be included is with the issue.

Fuller Theological Seminary has been linked to the article "Sexuality, Hierarchy and Evangelicalism," by Kathleen E. Corley and Karen J. Torjesen, which appeared in the March/April 1987 issue of the *TSF Bulletin*. The content and spirit of the article in no way reflects Fuller Theological Seminary's position and perspective on sexual standards. We have a carefully developed *Statement on Sexual Standards* which is normative for faculty, students, staff and board members, all of whom participated in its formulation. The statement printed below clearly indicates the Seminary's distance from the positions suggested by the article.—**David Allan Hubbard, President, Fuller Theological Seminary**

Fuller Theological Seminary Statement on Sexual Standards

Men and women of God are suited for Christian service by moral character as well as by academic achievement and spiritual gifts. They are qualified by compassion for individual persons, by sensitivity to the needs of the communities of which they are a part, by a burden that the whole of God's will will be obeyed on earth, by personal integrity, and by readiness to accept correction and a desire for moral growth. Candidates for a degree from Fuller are expected to exhibit these moral characteristics.

The ethical standards of Fuller Theological Seminary are guided by our understanding of Scripture and our commitment to its authority regarding all matters of Christian faith and living. The Seminary community also desires to honor and respect the moral traditions of the churches for whose students we seek to provide training. These moral standards encompass every area of life, but the confusion about this specific topic demands that the community speak clearly regarding sexual ethics.

Our understanding of a Christian sexual ethic reserves heterosexual union for marriage and insists on continence for the unmarried. We believe premarital, extramarital and homosexual forms of explicit sexual conduct to be inconsistent with the teaching of Scripture.

Consequently, we expect all members of the Seminary community—trustees, faculty members, students, administrators, and classified staff members—to abstain from what we hold to be unbiblical sexual practices.

If any member of the administration, faculty, trustees, classified staff, or student body is charged with failure to abide by this Statement of Sexual Standards, the Seminary will invoke the procedures for investigation and, where necessary, discipline outlined in the Faculty, Staff, or Student Handbooks.

believe in God, the Father, Maker of Heaven and Earth; I believe in Jesus Christ . . . ; I believe in the Holy Catholic Church . . . and the resurrection from the dead . . ." But what if the Church was wrong in believing in God the Father as Creator, and in Jesus Christ as Redeemer? Is this not a very false way to pose the issue and utterly without warrant in the NT?

We confess that God has made himself known in Jesus Christ and in the same way that His Spirit has brought into existence a people of God, his Church. We have the

promise of His continuous presence and guidance which is daily confirmed. Our confession in the reality of the Church as bearer of the Gospel proclamation is equally strong as in Christology. The Church's designation of an authoritative canon was simply a derivative of its Christology. This is not to claim "inerrancy" for the canon, but rather to stake out the parameters of the Christian faith and to provide a point of standing in the belief that God is faithful and will not abandon his people to confusion in spite of their sin. Just as there is no "objective cri-

terion" by which to prove that Jesus Christ is God's elect Son, the Church cannot *prove* from a neutral position shared with unbelief that its canon is from God. No degree of historical inerrancy can confirm this testimony, but only the Spirit. Thus, the Church has confessed from the beginning of its inception that the Holy Spirit continues to instruct, edify, and admonish God's people through the apostolic witness to Jesus Christ.

But enough of this. You can see that your review has stimulated further reflection and thought.

Taking Mennonite History Seriously

by Dennis D. Martin

Maintaining the Right Fellowship: A Narrative Account of Life in the Oldest Mennonite Community in North America by John L. Ruth (Herald Press, 1984, 616 pp., \$24.95).

Land, Piety, Peoplehood: The Establishment of Mennonite Communities in America, 1683-1790, Mennonite Experience in America, Vol. 1 by Richard K. MacMaster (Herald Press, 1985, 340 pp., \$12.00).

In 1937 a recent graduate of Westminster Theological Seminary named J.C. Wenger published a history of eastern Pennsylvania's Franconia Conference of the Mennonite Church. Fifty years later J.C. Wenger is emeritus professor of historical theology at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries and a respected storytelling guardian of the Swiss-Pennsylvania Mennonite heritage. John L. Ruth, a former teacher of literature and present freelance filmmaker and storytelling interpreter of the Mennonite heritage, has now given us a history of the Franconia Conference and its counterpart, the Eastern District of the General Conference Mennonite Church. It is not a typical regional denominational history, i.e., it is not merely a collection of biographies, congregational historical sketches and desultory photographs of high schools and retirement homes.

It is rare that a local denominational study merits attention beyond its own constituency. Ruth's book merits attention because it is a fine piece of regional history told with

considerable narrative power. Coinciding with the three-hundredth anniversary of the initial Quaker-Mennonite immigration to Germantown, Pennsylvania, Ruth's book carries the story of a people through three centuries of emigration, immigration and acculturation, following the thread of their effort to maintain identity through a disciplined church life.

Maintaining the Right Fellowship is a story of Quaker-Mennonite tensions and commonalities in Germany's Rhine Valley and of Dutch Mennonite aid to and exasperation at Swiss Mennonite refugees over a century of emigration. It is the story of Mennonite peoplehood in the midst of Pennsylvania's varied peoples: Lutheran and Reformed, Pietist, Dunkers, Schwenkfelders, Quakers. It is the story of Mennonite divisions in response to the American revolt against the king of England and in response to a nineteenth century American enthusiasm for education, evangelism, and organization. Ruth's treatment of two main schisms in the 1770s and 1840s would be profitable reading for Christians of any tradition as case studies in church discipline, leadership styles, and decision making by consensus or by "parliamentary democracy."

Ruth uses family records and tales to document and interpret many of the events he chronicles. At times the detailed narration of family interconnections will swamp the outside reader to the same degree that it will fascinate eastern Pennsylvania Mennonites: Ruth traces migrations to Ohio, Indiana and Ontario, following eastern Pennsylvania natives who assumed denominational leadership roles.

The first two or three chapters of *Maintaining the Right Fellowship* could serve as an alternate introduction for a study of American church history, contrasting with the fa-

miliar story of Puritan immigration and settlement. The fifth chapter, on the Pennsylvania Mennonite experience of the Revolution (cf. Ruth's booklength treatment of the same materials in *'Twas Seeding Time* [Herald Press, 1976]), could be used in survey courses as a reminder that there were two sides to the war for independence. Few Mennonites and even fewer non-Mennonites are aware of Mennonite involvement in the early Christian and Missionary Alliance (p. 370). (Members of the Church of the Brethren [Dunkers] and related groups were also involved in the early CMA. See *Brethren Encyclopedia* [1983], p. 259).

Maintaining the Right Fellowship is, however, a denominational regional history and, despite Ruth's narrative skill, reveals its origins: the list of donors at the back of the book, the use of the in-house Mennonite code-words "unordained" and "ethnic" on the dedication page, occasional untranslated German ("zersplitter" on p. 303), and chains of family-transmitted anecdotes (pp. 172ff). Most blemishes are editorial: The book has excellent maps for Mennonite origins in Europe but a good map for colonial eastern Pennsylvania would have been a great help to readers plowing their way through the intricate interconnections of families and villages. The modern map of the area on p. 479 is inadequate for that purpose. Cross-referencing in footnotes is outstanding; the index is thorough, especially for names.

At times Ruth's colloquial story-telling style and his tendency to tell what the future held for an individual, family, or congregation under discussion becomes distracting (e.g., p. 213 bottom, p. 284 top). Colloquial language, as in the case of references to two congregations that "had gotten stone meetinghouses" and to another that "seems also

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to have gotten one about this time" (pp. 139-40) might work orally but seem questionable in print. Strings of (partly parenthetical) modifiers abound: "This musical (like his mother Magdalena Hunsberger), conscientious, Bible-steeped pastor was an overpowering orator" (p. 347). The term "squaw" on p. 165 will be disconcerting to some readers.

The second book under review here also picks up where J.C. Wenger left off. Twenty years ago Wenger edited *The Mennonite Church in America* (Herald, 1966), a survey that was not really intended to be a definitive reference work, certainly not for all Mennonite groups in the United States. Scholarship on North American Mennonites has lagged far behind scholarship on sixteenth-century Anabaptism. Frank H. Epp's still unfinished multivolume history of *Mennonites in Canada* (1974, 1982) and the projected four-volume *Mennonite Experience in America* (MEA) series seek to remedy that situation. The first volume in the MEA series, Richard MacMaster's *Land, Piety, Peoplehood* is a promising downpayment on the endeavor. It belongs in the library of every university or seminary that is committed to the study of American religious history.

MacMaster, like the authors at work on subsequent volumes in the series, is a professional historian. In MacMaster's case this involves an interest in settlement patterns and tax and land records. After several generations of Mennonite historical scholarship led by theologian-pastor-historians (Harold Bender, J.C. Wenger, S. F. Pannabecker, J.B. Toews, John A. Toews), a growing pool of historians, aided by a network of several dozen Mennonite archives and historical libraries (e.g., Lancaster, Pa.; Fresno, Cal.; Winnipeg; Newton, Kans.; Goshen, Ind.), is hard at work on a variety of local and regional studies.

Whereas John Ruth's history of eastern Pennsylvania Mennonites narrates rather expansively the immigration process, MacMaster covers both immigration to Pennsylvania and migration to surrounding areas during the eighteenth century concisely. Rather than family connections and anecdotes, the connecting thread for MacMaster's study is provided by the economic and social forces that pushed and pulled Mennonites from Europe to eastern Pennsylvania and onward to Lancaster County, to Maryland and Virginia, and to western Pennsylvania. Determined to put the lie to the filiopietistic Mennonite image of a devout people migrating primarily for religious reasons and settling in compact, closed, Mennonite communities, he repeatedly points to ways in which Mennonites were stimulated by land prices and commerce and emphasizes their interaction with Dunker, Pietist, Lutheran, Reformed, and English neighbors. At times he overdoes the debunking. I find unconvincing his cautiously nonseparatist, nonsectarian explanation for the American republication of the Mennonite martyrology in the 1740s (143-45). Geographical intermingling does not necessarily preclude sectarian separateness (138-51). On the other hand, his

careful work with tax lists and land ownership records amply documents the variations of wealth and poverty within supposedly tidy Mennonite communities.

Thus, the corrective emphasis on variety within the Mennonite world and on Mennonite interaction with non-Mennonites is needed and welcome. Yet the story of Mennonite separateness and religious subculture should not be completely abandoned in the colonial period or in later centuries. MacMaster occasionally shows caution. He rightly points out that Mennonite communities became more compact over time as land prices rose and wealthier Mennonites bought up surrounding land to establish their children in farming. It will remain for subsequent volumes of the *Mennonite Experience in America* series to explain the degree to which a self-conscious subcultural separatism does or does not characterize the Mennonite story in the 19th and 20th centuries. MacMaster's chapters on colonial and Revolutionary politics and Mennonite pacifism begin the explanation: the seeds of a Mennonite isolationist subculture may have sprouted during that trial by fire.

MacMaster's study of the impact of Pietism and revivalism (ch. 6, 8) are also insightful. With Robert Friedmann (*Mennonite Piety through the Centuries*[1949]), MacMaster points to differing shades of meaning for key terms like *Gelassenheit* (yieldedness) in sixteenth-century Anabaptism and eighteenth-century Pietism. Yet MacMaster lacks Friedman's polemical tone and finds much that is positive in the Pietist impact on Anabaptism, pointing to the schoolmaster Christopher Dock as an example of the way in which Pietism provided connections between Mennonites and the general Pennsylvania-German world. MacMaster's descriptions of congregational life and preaching in chs. 6-7 are well worth reading as cross-sections of the colonial Mennonite experience.

Editorial problems are few: the map of "European Rhinelands" might have been better placed in chapter 1; some effort to provide modern equivalents for the frequent references to colonial and European currencies, despite the perils that accompany any such attempt, might have been in order; the reference to American Indians as "friendly reds" on p. 242 will offend some readers.

Apart from hagiographical chronicles and martyrologies and except for the 18th- and 19th-century Dutch Mennonite historians, Mennonite history-writing began only about one hundred years ago in Germany, Russia, and North America. Fifty to seventy-five years ago, C. Henry Smith and Harold Bender began an apostolate aimed at telling the Anabaptist story to the larger church and world. These efforts succeeded in rehabilitating sixteenth-century Anabaptism so that by the 1950s and 1960s, it was a major branch of Reformation studies that was no longer exclusively carried on by Mennonites. (This historiography is reviewed by James M. Stayer in *Reformation Europe: A Guide to Research* ed. Steven E. Ozment [1982] pp. 135-39 and by several authors in *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, [1956] II: 751-69).

During the last fifty years Mennonites have increasingly entered the North American mainstream culturally and socially. From a base in the education and health-care professions (1900ff), they have entered a wide variety of professions and the business world. It is unlikely that non-Mennonites will take up the study of post-sixteenth-century Mennonite history in the same way that Anabaptist studies have expanded. In-house Mennonite scholarship is only the beginning to work over the four centuries of Mennonite history since the formative decades, 1525-75. From genealogical studies and personal reminiscences by the remaining eyewitnesses of the Mennonite exodus from the Soviet Union sixty years ago to numerous regional, institutional, topical, and denominational histories by professional historians it is evident that the last two centuries are receiving the greatest attention. (A partial list would include the following: Theron F. Schlabach, *Gospel versus Gospel* [1980]; James Juhnke, *A People of Mission* [1979] and *A People of Two Kingdoms* [1975]; Richard K. MacMaster and others, *Conscience in Crises* [1979]; John B. Toews, *Czars, Soviets, and Mennonites* [1982]; Carlton O. Wittlinger, *Quest for Piety and Obedience* [1978]; Paul Toews, ed., *Pilgrims and Strangers* [1977]; and James O. Lehman's excellent histories of congregations and Mennonite communities). The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries remain the stepchildren of Anabaptist-Mennonite history.

Future research will be aided by the two-volume *Mennonite Bibliography, 1631-1961*, compiled by Nelson P. Springer and A.J. Klassen. Significant sociological studies are also emerging (John A. Hostetler, *Amish Society* [1963, 1968, 1980] and *Hutterite Society* [1974]; Leland Harder and J. Howard Kaufman, *Anabaptists Four Centuries Later* [1975]; numerous articles in sociological journals and *Mennonite Quarterly Review*). The Institute of Mennonite Studies at Elkhart, the Chair of Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg, and two journals (*Journal of Mennonite Studies*, Winnipeg and *Conrad Grebel Review*, Waterloo, Ontario) have taken the lead in stimulating biblical, theological and literary research and dialogue. No longer is history the sole focus for Mennonite scholarship in the humanities.

Yet historical studies remain an important part of the Mennonite scene and the books by Ruth and MacMaster represent some of the best efforts to synthesize the present state of American Mennonite historiography. They should serve a dual purpose: to remind Mennonites of their past in an era when Mennonites are rapidly leaving behind their distinctive subculture and experiencing in the process a significant identity crisis and to call on the members of mainstream Christian traditions in North America and Europe to take Mennonite history as seriously as they have begun to take Anabaptist history. The third stage—when Mennonites sufficiently resolve their identity transformation in their post-sectarian epoch—will, this reviewer hopes, find Mennonites taking the mainstream Christian traditions equally seriously.

Early Christians in the Roman Empire

by Christopher Haas

The Christians as the Romans Saw Them by Robert W. Wilken (Yale University, 1984, 214 pp., \$17.95). *Pagan Rome and the Early Christians* by Stephen Benko (Indiana University Press, 1984, 180 pp., \$20.00). *Christianizing the Roman Empire* by Ramsay MacMullen (Yale University Press, 1984, 183 pp., \$18.00).

"Thus we two faced each other across the trench in solemn colloquy." (Homer *Odyssey* 11:81-82)

"... between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us." (Luke 16:26)

For many years, classicists and students of the New Testament and early church have gazed at each other across a broad chasm which has traditionally separated their disciplines. Surprisingly, they both tend to go about their business on either side of this canyon in a strikingly similar fashion, employing a methodology which is concerned primarily with textual matters or with questions internal to their chosen literary works. On occasion, a few bold academic engineers have painstakingly constructed interdisciplinary bridges which have spanned the gap. Indeed, during the last years of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of this century these bridges carried a veritable flood of traffic between the disciplines. However, most of this traffic was one-way, as many New Testament scholars crowded onto what came to be a rather unreliable bridge, across which they "discovered" the pagan mystery cults and their similarities to Christianity. Other interdisciplinary work proved to be built more solidly, especially that of A.D. Nock (1902-1963) and F.J. Dölger (1879-1940). Generally though, after the Second World War communication between the two fields of inquiry slowed to a trickle, with the migration of F.F. Bruce from Classics to New Testament studies being a noted exception.

Within the last ten to fifteen years, however, there has been increased activity in both camps, as scholars have become more interested in the socio-cultural settings of their beloved texts. The field of Roman social history has witnessed tremendous advances during this period, owing to the work of scholars such as Claude Nicolet, Moses Finley, Keith Hopkins, and Ramsay MacMullen. Likewise, studies concerned with the social setting of the New Testament and early church have blossomed during these same years, pioneered by Gerd Theissen, E.A.

Judge, R.M. Grant, and Abraham Malherbe. The phenomenal success of Wayne Meeks' *The First Urban Christians* attests to this new interest in sociological questions. Perhaps more remarkable is that the recent developments in both disciplines have been carried out, for the most part, independently of one another, and they have since resulted in renewed exchange between the worlds of *Antike und Christentum*.

This interdisciplinary interest is best exemplified by Robert Wilken's *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*, Stephen Benko's *Pagan Rome and the Early Christians*, and Ramsay MacMullen's *Christianizing the Roman Empire*. Their almost simultaneous publication in 1984 indicates how strong these new currents are in interdisciplinary research, and they represent both the strengths and the limitations of this new trend. Although Wilken and Benko approach their subject from the *Christentum* side and MacMullen brings to bear a classicist's perspective, all three strive to present a pagan's-eye view of Christianity. Moreover, they set forth those elements in early Christianity that made the new religion an object of scorn and persecution as well as a force that attracted increasing numbers of converts throughout the Roman world.

In many respects, Robert Wilken's book is the most accessible of the three being reviewed, partly because his aims are modest ones: "By focusing on the comments of Roman and Greek writers on Christianity, I show how pagans thought about religion and philosophy and the society in which they lived, while at the same time shedding light on early Christianity" (p. xv). The success of Wilken's book is also due to his ability to keep his intended audience in focus, the general reader as well as "students of Christian history and theology." Only twice does technical verbiage raise its formidable head in the text: *lares* (Roman domestic deities) appear on p. 26 with no accompanying definition, and the Greekless general reader comes face to face with *thiasarchês* on p. 45. My only other suggestion along these lines would be to include a map to orient the reader in locating Wilken's colorful pagan spokesmen.

It is these spokesmen who receive pride of place in Wilken's book, and he does an admirable job of allowing them to speak clearly to us across the centuries. Wilken has not simply collated all of the references to Christianity in pagan literature, a sort of updated version of P. de Labriolle's *La Réaction païenne* (1934). Rather, he has carefully chosen the most articulate critics of Christianity from the pagan literary and philosophical elite: Pliny the Younger, Galen, Celsus, Porphyry, and the apostate emperor, Julian II. Wilken begins with Pliny and his much-discussed exchange of letters with the emperor

Trajan, and uses these letters as the springboard for a two chapter digression on Christianity as a *collegium* and Christianity as a *superstitio*. The *collegia* were Greco-Roman societies formed as craft guilds, burial societies, or cult organizations. Much of Wilken's discussion here is patterned after his able survey, "Collegia, Philosophical Schools and Theology" in S. Benko and J.J. O'Rourke, eds., *The Catacombs and the Colosseum* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1971), pp. 268-291. He points out the intriguing parallels between the *collegia* and the organization of the church, but skirts the oft-debated issue whether these similarities affected the legal status of the church during this early period. His discussion of the widespread characterization of Christianity as a *superstitio* includes observations by Plutarch, Tacitus, and Suetonius, providing us with a concise account of Roman religious scruples and the ways in which ancient society was permeated by religious concerns.

Important as this is, it serves as no more than stage dressing for the last four chapters, each setting forth in detail the views of Christianity's most eloquent critics. These chapters constitute one of the best surveys in English of the criticisms offered by Galen, Celsus, Porphyry and Julian. Wilken demonstrates how these attacks were grounded in Greek philosophical concepts, and how the pagans, in effect, set the agenda for early Christian theology by assailing emerging doctrines which required more defensible intellectual underpinnings: creation *ex nihilo*, the incarnation, the resurrection of the body, the role of Christ in a monotheistic religion, and the relationship between Christianity and Judaism. Especially on this last point, Wilken exhibits great sensitivity to the pagan arguments, no doubt the fruit of several years of research best exemplified by his recent *John Chrysostom and the Jews* (1983).

While Wilken's book serves as an admirable introduction to pagan views of Christianity, it should be pointed out that these are the opinions of only a tiny fraction of the empire's inhabitants. Perhaps the book should be better titled, "The Christians as Selected Members of the Pagan Literary Elite Saw Them." This narrow focus is not necessarily to be faulted; in part, it is determined by the survival of scanty source material. Even Porphyry's literary output is extant largely in fragments. Nevertheless, an exclusive concern with the educated literary elite ignores the seemingly inarticulate mass of the pagan population, whose religious views we can only discern from material remains and from humble inscriptions—including some tens of thousands of funerary inscriptions and domestic altars. Exploiting such sources, however, is a daunting task and even some of the most well-received surveys of Roman reli-

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gion, such as J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz's *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion* (1979), confine their analysis to the views of certain literary spokesmen. Upon closer observation, it may turn out that the pagan man in the street has more in common with his unsophisticated Christian neighbor than with Neoplatonic philosophers of the likes of Porphyry and Julian.

Early on in his introduction, Wilken sets forth another line of analysis which he pursues throughout the book: that the pagan criticisms of the church "tell us something significant about the character of the early Christian movement" (xiv). Arguing from the premise, "How something is perceived is an aspect of what it is," he concludes that the "attitudes of others, and the roles assigned by society to individuals or groups, define and shape identity" (pp. xiv, 31). This is an intriguing thesis, with great potential for revising conventional interpretations of the early church. Patricia Crone has raised a storm of controversy in Islamic studies by arguing in a similar fashion, that the best sources for the early history of Islam are the criticisms and observations of contemporary Byzantine writers, (see her *Hagarism*, 1977, co-authored with Michael Cook; and the Introduction to her *Slaves on Horses*, 1980). Wilken gives us glimpses of how such a line of reasoning can prove useful in his discussions of anti-intellectualism in the church (pp. 78-79), and of pre-Nicene conceptions of Christ (p. 107). Unfortunately, he hesitates to follow this argumentation vigorously, for example, when he dismisses as a cross-cultural *interpretatio* Tertullian's description of the church as a *collegium* in his *Apology* (pp. 45-46). Just as Wilken has clearly shown early Christian theology to develop as a response to pagan criticism, could not the organization and liturgy of the church (its inner "social world") evolve as a response to the social expectations of its first observers and recently-converted members?

Stephen Benko has sought to address these issues in his *Pagan Rome and the Early Christians*, a little book which is sure to both fascinate and enlighten students of early Christianity. He limits his discussion to the second century, a formative period which set the course for Christian/pagan interaction before Constantine. Taking Wilken's methodology a step farther, Benko states, "The Premise of this book is to give the pagans the benefit of the doubt and to assume that they have been right" (ix). Such an assumption gives rise to the book's most provocative chapters in which Benko assesses pagan accusations that the Christians were promiscuous, engaged in ritual murder and cannibalism, and also practiced magical arts.

Before analyzing these various charges, Benko (like Wilken) begins with a discussion of Pliny's encounter with Christians in Bithynia/Pontus. Benko does an outstanding job of helping his readers appreciate the concerns and presuppositions of a conscientious Roman administrator. The *carmen* which the Christians sing to Christ may be a simple hymn, but a *carmen* could also be a magical incantation. The *sacramentum* which binds

them together might be the initiation rite into a mystery cult, or it might be the oath which joins them in a political conspiracy. We follow Pliny during the course of his investigations and discover that, to many of his contemporaries such as Tacitus and Suetonius, the very name of Christian implied "certain antisocial and criminal activities" (p. 9). The only drawback to Benko's analysis of these Roman suspicions regarding Christianity is the exaggerated importance he assigns to the Bacchanalian scandal of 186 B.C. and the Catilinarian conspiracy of 63 B.C. as providing parallels for a suspected Christian cabal. While not discounting the importance of these events in Roman history, it is difficult to gauge their impact on Roman ways of thinking some 150 to 300 years later. Here again, we see how easy it is to be held captive by our literary sources, in this case Livy and Cicero. Pliny had other precedents closer at hand: the conspiracy of Caepio and Murena against Augustus, that of Sejanus in A.D. 31, the successful plot against Caligula in A.D. 41, and most importantly the Jewish insurrections in Palestine and Egypt.

After a generally weak chapter on Lucian's biography of Peregrinus (due to less-than-recent notes and an imprecise conception of Cynicism), Benko comes to the heart of his book, the three fascinating chapters on Christian immorality and cannibalism, the holy kiss, and Christian magical practices. Benko does not take the easy route of either rejecting out of hand the pagan charges of Christian licentiousness and cannibalism, or claiming that the pagans simply misunderstood Christian terminology—as in "eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man." Instead, he concludes that some of these accusations were grounded in truth, and reflected practices "found in certain Gnostic-Christian groups that advocated some exceedingly bizarre and repellent practices" (p. 63). Benko's analysis is based on extensive previous research concerning a deviant analysis is based on extensive previous research concerning a deviant Gnostic sect known as the Phibionites, and he makes clear the inner logic and consistency of their theology—albeit a theology which led to abhorrent practices. Thus, the deeds of certain fringe groups were attributed to the entire church, and the early Christians found themselves in a situation that reminds one of many Anabaptists in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to whom were unjustly ascribed the excesses of John of Leiden and his colleagues at Münster in 1533-35.

In the chapters concerned with the holy kiss and magic in early Christianity, Benko broadens his field of analysis to include the entire church, not just fringe sects. He finds that the kiss employed in liturgical settings owed its use partly to a long-held Mediterranean notion that the religious kiss somehow effected "a relationship with the divine for the purpose of attaining life" (p. 98). In his discussion of magical practices in early Christianity, we see the Christians inhabiting a common thought-world with their pagan neighbors, employing methods of controlling divine powers that appear similar to

those of popular paganism. It is in this context that Benko places exorcism, glossolalia, miracles effected by powerful names and signs, (although he ignores "the laying on of hands"), as well as participation in sacred meals. This may sound curiously reminiscent of a *Golden Bough* type approach to ritual and cult, but Benko is careful to "distinguish between the appearance of magic and that which was truly magic" (p. 131). It is this sort of judicious analysis which characterizes Benko's books as a whole, and makes it one of the most insightful interdisciplinary studies to appear in recent years.

With the exception of an unnecessary final chapter outlining high-brow criticisms of the early church, Benko confines his discussion to popular images of Christianity, images which could so repel the pagan observer as to incite persecution. Ramsay MacMullen, in his *Christianizing the Roman Empire*, looks at the other side of this pagan/Christian encounter to determine the forces of attraction which prompted pagans to embrace Christianity. MacMullen's book can best be understood as a companion volume to his highly-regarded *Paganism in the Roman Empire* (1981), in which he colorfully depicts, not a monolithic religion known as paganism, but a mosaic of sects and religious systems, as well as a great variation in individual religious commitment and practice. In the book here reviewed, MacMullen finds this same variation in both pagans and Christians, and offers the friendly *caveat* that modern scholars frequently are "misled about the proportions of piety and indifference within the empire's population" (p. 6).

Clearly, the most important contribution MacMullen makes to the field of early Christianity studies consists of his methodological observations regarding "conversion" in the ancient world. He takes issue with the prevailing view that conversion, to be counted as such, must be "intense and consuming." Moreover, he helps his readers set aside the modern Western assumption that religion should be equated with doctrine and belief. In the ancient world, actions flowing from a quite-often simple allegiance counted for far more, and he concludes, "It would be arbitrary to insist on a stricter definition of 'Christian' than did the church itself" (p. 52). How does one classify a tribe of desert bedouins whom the church chroniclers depict converting *en masse* to Christianity?

While only a third of the book deals with the period before Constantine, some of MacMullen's most intriguing observations regard the "points of contact and modes of persuasion" before A.D. 312. Here, he details ideas first adumbrated in *Paganism* . . . (pp. 96, 135) and later developed in his article, "Two Types of Conversion to Early Christianity," *Vigiliae Christianae* 37 (1983): 174-192. On the examination of the sources he finds that a demonstration of supernatural power, particularly "the manhandling of demons," was "the chief instrument of conversion" during this period (pp. 27-28). This is even more surprising, considering that most of these acts of wonder-working were essentially private, not public, since the Christians

found it prudent to avoid public attention by the early second century. Indeed, MacMullen goes so far as to assert that "after St. Paul, the church had no mission, it made no organized or official approach to unbelievers; rather it left everything to individuals" (pp. 33-34). While this may be overstating the case, one can see how there would be many opportunities for individual proselytizing in the teeming urban centers so vividly described by MacMullen in his *Roman Social Relations*, (1974). The only other type of conversion he sees is that of the convinced intellectual, such as Justin Martyr or later Augustine, but he argues that these celebrated conversions have received attention disproportionate to their real historical significance. Edward Gibbon and his later disciples might reply that the siphoning off of intellectual talent to the church in the fourth century ensured the downfall of the Western empire, a fact of more than passing significance.

This, of course, carries the discussion past Constantine who made all the difference in the fortunes of the early church. MacMullen recounts the familiar story of imperial patronage and increasing coercion throughout the fourth century, a combination of forces which he labels "flattery and battery." He also describes the ways in which Christianity both transformed and was in turn shaped by its surrounding culture, exploring the vague "shared territory" existing between Christianity and paganism—from amulets to emperor worship.

This is not an easy book. Although it will certainly appeal to specialists, large portions of MacMullen's book should also be mandatory reading for those interested in the history of conversion, evangelization strategies, and the contextualization of the Christian message in various cultures. Strengths such as these demonstrate the utility of bridging the gap between *Antike und Christentum*.

BOOK REVIEWS

The End of the Ages Has Come: An Early Interpretation of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus

by Dale C. Allison, Jr. (Fortress, 1985, 194 pp.) Reviewed by Joel B. Green, Ph.D., Acting Dean and Assistant Professor of New Testament, New College for Advanced Christian Studies, Berkeley, CA.

Based on a 1982 Ph.D. thesis at Duke University, this study argues for a pointedly eschatological interpretation of Jesus' death and resurrection from the very beginning of the Christian movement: "The eschatological prophecies of Jesus were believed to have met their initial fulfillment in the Messiah's death and resurrection. Thus had dawned the great Day of the Lord."

Allison is clearly indebted to C.H. Dodd, H.W. Bartsch, and A. Strobel—each of whom emphasized "realized eschatology" ("The end of the ages has come!") in his own way. He argues, however, that none of these scholars

has either adequately accounted for the presence in the early church of a realized eschatology or properly nuanced this aspect of the NT message. Moreover, against G.B. Caird and others, he maintains that the language of realized eschatology is not the language of metaphor: to claim that the Messiah had come was to claim that the eschatological promises had been fulfilled, and this claim must be taken at face value. The why and how of this claim constitute the point of departure for Allison's study.

The first part of Allison's study is largely given over to discussions of the NT evidence for an eschatological interpretation of the death of Jesus. Allison discovers in the passion narratives of Mark, Matthew, and John, as well as in Paul and Revelation, the view that Jesus' death marked the beginning of the fulfillment of eschatological expectations—that the passion partakes of the messianic woes and the vindication of Jesus belongs to the onset of the general resurrection. Particularly in the chapters of this section devoted to the Gospels, Allison engages in careful critical work, for he is interested in establishing the presence of this theme not only at the level of the NT writings but indeed from the very beginning of the Christian faith. Compared to this more technical work Allison's chapter on Luke-Acts is much less satisfying; here, in a rather cursory treatment, Allison finds no additional traces of the attempt to portray the end of Jesus as the eschatological turning point.

Having established the presence of a realized eschatology in earliest Christianity, Allison then devotes a second section of his work to explaining the rise of this phenomenon. In chapters of "Jesus and the Kingdom of God," "The Death of Jesus and the Great Tribulation," and "Correlations: From Expectation to Interpretation," he suggests that Jesus himself understood his ministry and end in eschatological categories; hence, at Jesus' vindication, his disciples understood that his expectation had in part come to fulfillment. This led to an interpretation of the passion and resurrection in eschatological categories and constituted the genesis of realized eschatology. This eschatology was not "realized" in the classical sense of the word, however; Allison prefers "inaugurated eschatology" as a label, for this focuses more on the *initial* fulfillment of eschatological expectations while leaving room for the further, forward-looking expectations also characteristic of the earliest church. Making use of insights from social psychology, Allison further demonstrates how natural it was that those first Christians maintained their inaugurated eschatology in spite of the fact that the kingdom of God had not arrived as hoped.

Throughout his book Allison is to be commended for his attention to technical detail, theological awareness, and for his remarkable comprehensiveness in synthesizing a huge body of data, both biblical and extrabiblical. His excursions on "Belief in the Resurrection of Jesus" and epilogue on "Theological Reflections" build helpful bridges from his sometimes arcane study to the wider concerns of theologians and the larger church.

Apart from matters of detail here and there, most questions raised in an attempt to interact with his work stem from the very narrow focus of its argument. It would be interesting, therefore, to see Allison discuss other, perhaps competing, very early interpretations of Jesus' end. While the Gospels' passion narratives do contain the sort of interpretation with which he credits them, and while Allison is right to argue for the pre-canonical character of this interpretation, are there not other interpretations with an equal claim to antiquity? Can the Lukan evidence, which also utilizes early material, be swept aside so easily? What of the salvific interpretation of Jesus' death in pre-Pauline formulae? And so on. In the end, however, Allison has accomplished what he set out to do—i.e. he has demonstrated the genesis of realized eschatology in Jesus' own expectations, death, and resurrection. He thus accounts for this important interpretation of Jesus' work and shows the continuity between pre- and post-Easter thinking.

Church, Kingdom, World

edited by Gennadios Limouris. Faith and Order Paper No. 130 (Geneva, World Council of Churches, 1986, 209 pp., \$8.95). Reviewed by Jeffrey Gros, Director, Commission on Faith and Order, National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA.

In exploring the biblical understanding of Christ's work with the disciples and God's saving will for humankind, one of the most fascinating and difficult doctrines of the Christian world is the nature of God's Church. This book represents a discussion of the biblical understanding of the Church and its mission in the world from a number of perspectives around the world. The book is the record of a conference, sponsored by the World Council of Churches, asking how Christians can speak of the unity of the Church and its relationship to the renewal of human community from their biblical understanding.

The volume includes six major essays from Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox traditions, four serious responses to these essays, and a number of discussion summaries and reports. The themes of Church and Kingdom, Church as Sign, Instrument and Sacrament, the Church and Human Community and the Challenge of Christian Witness all provide avenues for probing biblical, historical and theological reflection on God's will for the Christian community in history. For the Protestant student, the biblical essays from non-Protestant sources will provide clear and succinct insights into the faith of the majority of evangelical Christians in the world. The care given to outline the history and the biblical bases of the positions presented makes the book a valuable collection, though at times difficult reading because of the diversity of cultures and traditions represented.

A very helpful integration of scientific thinking and Christian eschatology is outlined in a Roman Catholic essay by a French scientist. While the point of view is undoubt-

edly controversial and more helpful than many modern Christian thinkers, the issues raised are crucial in the Church's confrontation with secularism in the modern world. While pre and postmillennial discussions are at the center of much U.S. Protestant theology, this is not the case in Catholic, Orthodox and European Protestant thought. The dialogue engendered with these two papers is particularly helpful in the contemporary spiritual climate.

A paper on the Church and the World in the light of the Kingdom of God by Jan Lochman, Karl Barth's successor at Basel, skillfully lays out the tension experienced in Protestant theologies and practice of Church, between the secularist temptation on the one hand and the otherworldly temptation of pietism on the other. We have both the difficulties of trying to remove ourselves, as Christians, from the flow and responsibility of history as well as of allowing the secular world to set the agenda for the Church. While setting out a theology of Church, continually open to reform, Lochman delineates a Protestant understanding that allows neither reduction to pietistic sectarianism or triumphal activism.

Orthodox and Catholic papers helpfully lay out understandings of Church rooted in the biblical understanding of communion, worship—especially Eucharistic worship of Word and Sacrament—and mystery. While these theologies are sometimes remote from common Protestant understandings, particularly in the U.S., their careful grounding in the Scripture points to their importance for the understanding of world-wide Christianity. The fact that the understanding of the Church's relation to the world is so carefully and firmly rooted in the Church's understanding of its own relationship to the trinity makes clear the complexity of this particular doctrinal discussion.

While the book is somewhat challenging reading, it brings together the quality of theological reflection that can enrich both the understanding and the practice of late 20th century Church life.

Human Medicine (rev. ed.)
by James B. Nelson and Jo Anne Smith Rohricht (Augsburg, 1984, 224 pp., \$10.95).
Reviewed by John Kilner, Assistant Professor of Social Ethics, Asbury Theological Seminary and Adjunct Professor of Medical Ethics, University of Kentucky.

The wait for a solidly biblical-Christian text on the gamut of issues in medical ethics is not over. However, the revised edition of *Human Medicine* by James B. Nelson and Jo Anne Smith Rohricht makes valuable reading while we are waiting. Eight important issues—caring, abortion, human experimentation, reproductive technologies, genetics, dying, organ transplantation, and resource allocation—receive about 25 pages of analysis each, beginning with one or more brief, engaging case studies. While there is unfortunately neither an index nor a bibliography, many helpful notes accompany each chapter.

The book disavows either a deontological ("rights and duties") or a teleological ("goals and consequences") ethical orientation, preferring instead an "ethics of responsibility" which consistently seeks to enhance the "normatively human." This effort is to be applauded, but requires a more careful definition and use of terms than the authors provide. They make much of the distinction between (merely) "human" and "personal" life (p. 21 and throughout, especially when the beginning and ending of life are in view). Yet, they generally elect to use the word "human" to refer to both "for economy of expression" (p. 24). One might have hoped for a little splurging with regard to the key ethical term in the book's title.

Much of the content of the book is quite good. Less familiar topics such as reproductive technologies and genetics receive excellent treatment from a social, psychological, legal, and historical—as well as ethical and, to a lesser extent, theological perspective. The authors also generally do a good job of identifying and responding to views with which they disagree, the discussion of euthanasia being a prime example. The most outstanding contribution of the book is its exploration of caring—an often neglected element of medical care. In references throughout the book as well as in more extended discussions (pp. 28-30, 154-155, 171-175), Nelson and Rohricht sensitively remind us of the larger caring relationship within which attempts at curing, when legitimate expressions of caring, may be pursued.

In light of this sensitivity the chapter on abortion is surprisingly weak and unbalanced, except for the excellent legal history of the problem included there. Rather than identifying the two main contemporary camps fairly, according to the value each emphasizes (pro-life and pro-choice) the authors give one group a negative cast ("anti-abortion"). Whereas "anti-abortion" laws are simply noted at the outset of the chapter, liberalized abortion laws are accompanied by a lengthy list of reasons undergirding them (pp. 32-33). Later, reasons given by supporters of permissive laws are simply stated, while opposing restrictive rationales are accompanied by negative criticism (pp. 41-43). The authors go so far in their neglect of much conservative scholarship as to assert without further comment that "scholars of the Bible and Talmud generally concur that only when the fetus comes into the world is it a 'person'" (p. 47). Needless to say, the authors lean strongly pro-choice (p. 57). This position is consistent with their views that personhood develops over time and is not necessarily a part of genetically human life (p. 20), and that active euthanasia even of adults is justifiable in certain circumstances (pp. 159-164).

One other questionable aspect of the book is its theological perspective. The book assumes that there are no absolute moral values which should direct our actions: "Think not to settle down forever in any truth" (pp. 12, 59, 138). The relative lack of biblical material throughout is no coincidence, nor is the naturalistic perspective that death is "a normal part of God's creation" (p. 144). Where Jesus

is mentioned, his emphasis upon the heart's intention is given a "situation-ethics" interpretation (a la Joseph Fletcher, pp. 108-9) according to which truly moral action not only fulfills and goes beyond but may even contradict the moral law of the Old Testament. At the same time, the authors are quite perceptive in criticizing the body-Spirit dualism in much of contemporary Christianity (pp. 15-17), analyzing the notions of human rights and limitations from a theological perspective (pp. 211-12), and recognizing that human(e) existence "is both a gift and an achievement" (p. 216). All in all, then, despite some shortcomings, this book stands as one of the best among the few medical ethics texts written from a Christian perspective.

The Humiliation of the Word
by Jacques Ellul (Eerdmans, 1985, 285 pp., \$14.95).
Reviewed by Jack Balswick, Professor of Sociology and Family Development, Fuller Theological Seminary.

In *The Humiliation of the Word* Ellul continues his analysis of life in the technological society. His major thesis is that image and sight have replaced written and spoken language as a basis for arriving at the truth. There has been an "invasion of images into every area of contemporary life"—the classroom, where professors prefer to teach a subject which could be reduced in its entirety to visual symbols; the roadways, where signs and billboards of every color, form, and design give us a picture of the product and the good life it can bring; exhibitions and museums, where the development of our image-oriented society is viewed through photos, prototypes, drawings, sketches, diagrams, and slides; and finally in the more obvious visual media of films, television, newspapers, magazines, comic books, and photographs. Ellul concludes that images are indispensable for the construction of the technological society, and critical reflection is not possible without them.

The person living in the image-oriented society becomes a consumer of images, relying upon what is depicted as reality itself, instead of as a mere selected and constructed reality. But, as harmful as this unreflective acceptance of a false reality is, an even more harmful effect is that the image-oriented person also comes to rely upon the consumption of images in arriving at truth. Ellul is quite firm in his insistence that "the word belongs to the order of truth and sight to the order of reality" (p. 102).

The person who attempts to read this book too hurriedly will falsely assume that Ellul is holding the word up as being good and pure, and putting sight down as being bad and impure. Ellul's message is rather that both sight and the word are designed by God to form a unity, but in the technological society the runaway glorification of sight has caused "the humiliation of the word."

As with most of Ellul's works, this book is full of rich sociological insights. Even more, however, his concluding chapter, "Reconciliation," demonstrates how the unity between

the word and sight can be restored. Ellul uses the apostle John's discussion of Jesus as the "word" and the "light" to illustrate that the radical message of the gospel can move the technological society beyond the unreflective acceptance of a false reality to a genuine searching for truth.

The Sermon on the Mount: Utopia or Program for Action?

by Pinchas Lapidé (Orbis, 1986, 148 pp., \$9.95). Reviewed by Joel B. Green, Ph.D., Acting Dean and Assistant Professor of New Testament, New College for Advanced Christian Studies, Berkeley, CA.

Is the Sermon on the Mount a vision of utopia or a program for action? Lapidé's confident answer is the latter. But, considering the content of his study, Lapidé could have more aptly subtitled his book, "Was Jesus a Jew?" Almost the whole of this volume is given to answering this question in the affirmative. Indeed, according to Lapidé, in this sermon Jesus ("Rabbi Yeshua") was saying nothing more, nothing less than one might expect of a first-century Jewish teacher.

Lapidé, himself an Orthodox Jew residing in Frankfurt, West Germany, initiates his study by pinpointing eight *mis*interpretations of the Sermon on the Mount and proceeds to comment on Matthew 5 section by section. Along the way he makes numerous comparisons between Jesus' teaching and that of the rabbis, and suggests not a few interesting (if not always convincing) interpretations. The notion he develops is that Jesus, like his peers, was concerned to build a hedge around the Torah; hence, the so-called "antitheses" of the Sermon become "supertheses"—which deepen, intensify, and radicalize the biblical commandments. There is much to learn from Lapidé, especially among contemporary Christians reared on an all too pessimistic and simplistic view of the Judaism of Jesus' day.

On the other hand, Lapidé's views are not presented without cost. He fails to justify this attempt to evaluate Jesus' teaching against later rabbinic interpretation. Modern Christian scholarship in the Sermon on the Mount is largely bypassed. On numerous occasions he charges Matthew with mistranslating Jesus' sayings, sometimes insisting that the thought of Matthew and that of Jesus were fundamentally at odds with one another. For example, we are told Jesus "certainly" would never have quoted Lev. 19:18 ("Love your neighbor") without the phrases "as yourself" and "I am (God) the Lord" (as in Matt. 5:43-44), but Matthew has done so in order that the unbiblical hatred of enemies could be inserted as an anti-Jewish innuendo (p. 78). Surprisingly, this and other attempts at re-writing and re-translating the Sermon on the Mount come after Lapidé's brief defense of the basic historicity of the text.

Moreover, Lapidé insists that on the question of the law Jesus and early Christians opposed one another: "Thus what Jesus said of the eternal validity of the Torah was, within thirty years, turned into its opposite: Jesus

became the 'end of the law' (Rom. 10:4)" (p. 19). Unfortunately for his case, Lapidé's argument seems to be circular: The Sermon on the Mount must be read this way because as a good Jew Jesus could never have intended any other reading. Nor does he explain the events of Jesus' life and the development of early Christian thought in a way suited to support his thesis. What was Jesus' offense? Must we disallow every record of conflict between Jesus and the Jews in the Gospels? If Lapidé is correct how do we explain the position of numerous New Testament witnesses vis-a-vis the law? Finally, at several points the question of Jesus' uniqueness is raised at least implicitly, but is neither recognized nor developed by Lapidé.

Here, then, is a recent attempt to reclaim the Jewishness of Jesus which suggests many interesting parallels with rabbinic thought and makes the Christian reader look at a familiar text in an unfamiliar way. In the end, however, it is disappointing in the depth of its ethical analysis and ultimately unconvincing in its attempt to drive a wedge between Jesus and early Christianity.

Election and Predestination

by Paul K. Jewett (Eerdmans, 1985, 147 pp., \$8.95). Reviewed by Clark H. Pinnock, Professor of Theology, McMaster Divinity College.

Paul Jewett has proved himself to be a profound evangelical systematic theologian over the years, and the back cover of this book informs us: "For accuracy, clarity, and competency, this is the best modern discussion of the subject that I (Osterhaven) know." Therefore, one approaches the book with hope and expectation.

Typical of Jewett, the order of topics is a little unusual: first a historical overview, then the biblical data in five pages, then corporate election focussing on the Jews, and finally one hundred pages devoted to individual election and the "horrible decree" (Calvin). But such idiosyncrasies do not conceal Jewett's first rate theological mind and one does not go away dissatisfied.

The thesis of the book is the old Augustinian belief in election/reprobation. God has eternally decreed to save some sinners, and also not to save others, a plan of salvation Jewett tells us ought to lead us to worship and admire God. Although he admits that Scripture is less than clear in these matters, he accepts Augustine's construction of the doctrine even as Luther and Calvin did before him. The larger part of the book is then devoted to explaining and defending this apparently repugnant belief.

Occasionally in the course of his exposition the reviewer was given some hope of relief, as when Jewett introduces Barth's wonderful revision of the whole concept of election as the claim God has made upon the whole human race, but alas, Jewett rejects it. Another happened when he raised the nature of election as a corporate category, leading me to wish that he might dismiss Augustine's

orientation to the election of a certain number of individuals in favour of it, but no such luck. And again when Jewett backs off supralapsarian Calvinism, finding it morally distasteful to think of God planning to damn people from the beginning, but then accepting its twin sister version which improves things hardly at all. In the end there is no relief for this post-Calvinist—Jewett wants to defend the awful package of election/reprobation even in 1986.

In his own closing ruminations, Jewett drags the issue of time and eternity across the subject in the hope the doctrine will appear more convincing. But nothing is changed by this move; God still must accept the responsibility of refusing to provide salvation to people no less qualified or unqualified for it. He also mentions the importance of human choice in conversion, but leaves us in no doubt about the sovereign of grace (read, coercive power) which lurks behind every such choice. He recognizes texts which speak of Christ's work on behalf of all sinners, and seems for a moment to want to accept them, but in the end he refuses to admit that God desires all to be saved.

It is impossible for me to read or review this book dispassionately. God, if he is as Jewett describes him, is simply not a good God. He does not deserve our worship, nor will he receive it. We are dealing in doctrinal tragedy. Not that Jewett himself is to blame. Most of our great "evangelical" seminaries are dominated by people who defend the same views. Like a small voice in the wilderness I want to say, Stop! Our suffering world needs to hear better news than this. I hope this phase of Augustinian theology is just about over, so that our theologians can begin to support the church's faithful witnesses who are out there telling people "God so loved the world." How I wish our theologians would learn to be goodnews theologians instead of badnews bears.

Maybe this is the best book there is on this subject. But if this is the final word on the topic, we are in bad shape.

The Galileo Connection: Resolving Conflicts Between Science and the Bible

by Charles E. Hummel (InterVarsity Press, 1986, 293 pp., \$8.95). Reviewed by Richard H. Bube, Dept. of Materials Science & Engineering, Stanford University.

Over the last 20 years there have been a number of different books treating the topic of the interaction between science and the Christian faith, many with particular reference to the creation vs. evolution debate. Some have done this from a primarily philosophical perspective, analyzing the nature of science and considering its interaction with theology. Others have done this from a biblical perspective, inquiring as to how the Bible should be interpreted in order to be consistent with its intrinsic nature and purpose. In this book, Hummel enriches the picture by essentially giving an historical overview of the developments in science and the interaction with theology from Aristotle to Ein-

stein, with particular emphasis on the lives and testimonies of Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo and Newton, with an epilog on Pascal. Three-fifths of the book is devoted to this historical treatment, followed by equal portions of space devoted to the interpretation of the Bible, particularly the first chapters of Genesis, and to the creation-science controversy of the past few years.

Hummel, who has advanced degrees in both science and biblical literature, has served as president of Barrington College, and is currently director of faculty ministries for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, is admirably prepared for the task he has chosen. Without enumerating all of the points, it is fair to say that Hummel stands squarely in the center of the informed evangelical position that seeks to do justice both to authentic science and to authentic biblical theology. It is perhaps trivial but unfortunate anachronism that the publisher has chosen the subtitle with the phrase, "conflicts between science and the Bible," in spite of the fact that Hummel argues strongly for the position that both science and theology are human endeavors, and that it is possible for conflicts to arise only between these two human activities; i.e., there is a category confusion implicit in speaking of conflicts between science and the Bible that ought no longer appear in informed Christian literature.

Hummel is consistently faithful in avoiding the semantic pitfalls that so often characterize discussions of this type. He recognizes that one must understand the nature of scientific description, hypothesis, law, and theory, and he avoids the historical mistakes in relating God's activities to the physical universe: "According to the Bible, God does not 'intervene' in a semi-independent order of nature; nor is he a God-of-the-gaps working only in cracks and crevices of the universe." Similarly he recognizes the necessity to observe the intrinsic characteristics of the biblical revelation: "Once for all we need to get rid of the deep-seated feeling that figurative speech is inferior to literal language . . . we must give up the false antithesis that prose is fact while poetry is fiction. . . . The *historical-cultural* approach avoids those problems by explaining the creation days in light of the author's purpose, the literary genre of his message and what it meant to Israel at Mount Sinai."

This book deserves to be read widely. For the non-Christian it will help clear up some of the conceptual and historical caricatures that often obscure this subject, and for the Christian it will provide a balanced view on the nature of scientific and theological inquiry.

Christian Morality: Biblical Foundations
by Raymond F. Collins (Notre Dame Press, 1986, 258 pp., \$22.95). Reviewed by Robert W. Wall, Th.D., Professor of Biblical Studies, Seattle Pacific University.

In this series of essays, Roman Catholic Bible scholar Raymond F. Collins, Professor

of New Testament Studies at the Catholic University of Louvain, attempts to examine basic elements of the Christian's existence as envisaged by the biblical (and especially the New Testament) material. By doing so, Professor Collins takes up the challenge of the "Decree on Priestly Formation," issued as part of Vatican II. In that document, the leadership of the Council encouraged special attention be given to a moral theology which was thoroughly nourished by "scriptural teaching." The very same concern had already been expressed within Protestant Christianity by James Gustafson, who claimed the greatest in Protestant ethical formulations was the gulf between ethical thought and biblical studies.

After attending to the propriety of allowing Scripture to "speak" to the Church's moral concerns (chapter 1), Collins sets forth his general approach to biblical ethics. His discussion is noteworthy for two reasons: first, he is largely (although not exclusively) dependent upon Protestant scholarship in defending the point that Scripture is a critical resource for the Church's reflection upon moral concerns; and second, his discussion is ecumenical not only in scope but also in purpose since Protestants too are in need of hearing that Scripture is a moral authority. Protestants are often guilty of emphasizing "orthodoxy" over "orthopraxy" so that ethical concerns are often demoted, while Roman Catholics are so inclined to elevate the authority of the Church that the Bible's moral and theological authority is often denied. Collins' point, then, is a necessary one for all believers to hear: the Bible constitutes a moral authority of primary importance for the Christian community.

In subsequent chapters, Collins develops his programme. He grounds his moral advice in the Old Testament Decalogue (and especially its "second table") as it is worked out through the biblical tradition (consistent with the Reformed tradition as well as with the natural law tradition of Roman Catholicism). He posits his understanding of the Decalogue (chapter 2) within the theological framework of the "new covenant" (chapter 3): divine commandments are obeyed as covenantal obligations. The point is nicely illustrated by a discussion of "honor father and mother" (chapter 4). This more general introduction is followed by specific discussions of the love command (chapters 5-6), human sexuality (chapters 7-8), and the particularity of the New Testament's ethic/ethos (chapters 9-11).

I found Collins' work quite helpful as a readable introduction to Roman Catholic biblical ethics; indeed, he asks Roman Catholic questions, even though he sometimes answers them with the fruit of Protestant scholarship! He is at his best when discussing more practical, less programmatic concerns. His discussion of familial love (including care of aged parents) is superb. Other discussions are for insiders to the debates between Roman Catholic ethicists (e.g., "proportionalism" in chapter 11). However, his discussion on "Christian Personalism and the Sermon on the Mount" is quite helpful as a corrective for those evangelical Protestants whose val-

ues enshrine the modern philosophy of "personalism" rather than biblical teaching.

For all that is commendable and useful about this work, I do have two major criticisms. The first is an overall impression of Collins' scholarship: it tends to be imprecise. On a number of occasions, he assumes a position as obvious or as embodying a consensus when in fact it is contested between or has been rejected by current scholarship. On other occasions he is rather too optimistic about the conclusions of critical scholarship: what is "obvious" to Collins is sometimes but a historicist speculation of one (usually German) school of critical thought.

A more decisive criticism is *hermeneutical*. One is never certain what Collins actually thinks about the theological ground of Scripture's moral authority. As a result, he does not pay enough attention to how or why one "moves" from the moral dilemma to the Bible for advice (the metaethical and methodological concerns). It is as though good exegesis is sufficient, when clearly this does not help us bring the Bible together with the moral concerns of the Church during the current age in a coherent way. More specifically, Collins does not know what to do with the Bible's own diverse moral advice. For example, he very nicely develops the Johannine idea of "loving one another," using the best of redactional critical methods to discern that John's "new commandment" bids the disciple to love "brothers" in distinctively "Christian" ways in order to form a distinctively Christian community. Yet, he does not see that the Synoptic idea of "loving enemies" is not the same; nor does he see that this inspired diversity is somehow *useful* in the development of a distinctively Christian lifestyle. With other redaction critics, he is content to leave such differences alone rather than bring them into mutually-informing, canonical conversations.

I would still recommend this book, even though it is not as solid as Allen Verhey's *The Great Reversal* or Stephen Charles Mott's *Biblical Ethics and Social Change* as a primer for biblical ethics. In particular, it is a book most suitable for those who are interested in a Roman Catholic's view of how Scripture informs ethical judgments.

A Crack in the Jar: What Ancient Jewish Documents Tell Us About the New Testament

by Neil S. Fujita (Paulist Press, 1986, 312 PP., \$9.95). Reviewed by J. Julius Scott, Jr., Professor of Biblical and Historical Studies, Wheaton College Graduate School.

The Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered some 40 years ago. Yet, to many laypersons their nature, content, and significance are still generally unknown. So too the existence and contribution of other recently discovered Jewish documents from the periods just before, after, and during the New Testament era.

Neil Fujita, associate professor of Religious Studies at Iona College, New Rochelle,

N.Y., presents a survey of ancient Judean writings which have bearing on the New Testament and the scholarly assessment of them. His audience is "interested laypersons" (p. 1), but this is not a book for raw beginners. It is simply and clearly written with excellent summaries, but Fujita assumes at least minimal familiarity with his subject. It is suitable for an "advanced beginner" or "intermediate" student.

The first chapter surveys the documents. The Dead Sea Scrolls, both biblical and sectarian, receive the major emphasis. There are other discoveries. The manuscripts found at Masada come from the period of First Jewish Revolt, AD 66-73, while those from Wadi Murabá at and the region between En-Gedi and Masada provide evidence of the Second Revolt, AD 132-135; finds from the Judean foothills date from both revolts and the intervening periods. Caves in Wadi ed-Daliyeh, north of Jericho, yield glimpses into life of a group of refugees from Samaria (possibly fleeing from Alexander the Great) during the fourth century BC. Khirbet Mird, near Jerusalem, was occupied by Hasmonians, Herod the Great, Medieval and Modern Christians; its written materials are no earlier than the fifth century AD but include parts of the New Testament and other Christian literature.

Chapter Two describes the historical setting of the documents and what they have contributed to our understanding of Jewish history. The summary of data related to the Second Revolt (pp. 64-73) provides one of the better brief summaries of that event; it also shows just how great is our debt to these recent discoveries for our knowledge of this part of Jewish history.

The Old Testament is the single most important part of the background for the New Testament. Chapter Three summarizes the bearing of recent Judean literary discoveries for Old Testament studies in general (such as textual criticism). Fujita then does an excellent job of indicating specific passages and issues of particular relevance for the New Testament student. The brief, but knowledgeable survey of "The Language of Palestine" (pp. 102-108) is a valuable contribution for a study of the knotty problem of the languages of Jesus and the early Christians.

We might have expected a fairly detailed discussion of specific contributions of the Judean documents to numerous New Testament issues and texts. Instead we find a consideration of the relation of the Dead Sea Scrolls to (1) John the Baptist and Christians, (2) Use of Scripture, (3) Temple Theology and (4) an excursus discussing the Qumran communal meal and the Last Supper. The second topic, a discussion of Jewish and New Testament hermeneutical methods, packs a great deal of material into a little space (pp. 118-140). The discussion of "Temple Theology" (pp. 140-150) is thought-provoking and points toward potentially exciting areas for further study.

The final chapter introduces the reader to the complicated, confusing, and often ignored world of Jewish Mysticism and the equally difficult, but much discussed, subject

of gnosticism. Fujita provides excellent brief descriptions of the various elements of Jewish and Christian thought and experience in these areas. His simplifications do no violence to the complexity involved. His discussions of relevant literature is clear and helpful. I am appreciative of the way Fujita shows the interrelationships between various mystical, wisdom, and gnostic strains of both Judaism and Christianity. I wish I had had this kind of help when beginning to attempt to understand it all.

Any discussion of the relation between the Jewish documents and the New Testament must contend with often radical (and sometimes heated) differences of opinion within the scholarly community over interpretations of the data. Where necessary Fujita summarizes the competing positions. When appropriate, he states his own opinion yet stays above much of the controversy. He never permits either the debates nor his own conclusions to divert him from his goal.

Fujita says the Bedouin's rock which caused "A crack in the jar [holding one of the Dead Sea Scrolls] unexpectedly opened up a vast new treasure of information with regard to the Bible, Jewish political, cultural and religious history around the time of Jesus, and Christian origins" (p. 1). His book helps shine light into the crack. It brings a vast amount of information in a way that provides important information for the student or layman interested in this field; once read it should remain on the shelf as a helpful reference source.

The Puritan Conversion Narrative
by Patricia Caldwell (Cambridge University Press, 1983, 210 pp.). Reviewed by Roger Lundin, Associate Professor of English, Wheaton College.

This is an intelligent and exhaustively researched contribution to the study of early American culture. Caldwell's work seeks to take its place in a venerable tradition of scholarship, alongside the works of such figures as Perry Miller, Edmund Morgan, and David Hall. Its particular focus is the "conversion narrative," a form of testimony which served, on both sides of the Atlantic, as a test of prospective Church members.

Concentrating on the only significant extant body of "confessions" (a group of 51 transcribed between 1637 and 1645 at the church of Thomas Shepard in Cambridge, Massachusetts), Caldwell compares American stories with English-Irish narratives of the same period. She does so in an attempt to "locate some of the first faint murmurings of a truly American voice," the voice of "little-known, ordinary people" who were "struggling to express in an unfamiliar public arena their most vital and private religious concerns" (41).

Caldwell quotes Edmund Morgan's summary of the Puritan "morphology of conversion": "knowledge, conviction, faith, combat, and true, imperfect assurance." She finds in American conversion narratives, however, a

marked tendency to veer from the path established by the formula. "What is notable in a majority of New England conversion stories," she writes, "is the sense of strain, the meagerness of genuine, fulfilling relief" (121). The New World narratives repeatedly trace this poverty of spirit to its roots: to "the specific shift to America, in the 'motion to New England,' one 'was left a more flat condition than before'" (122). Instead of testifying to the infusion of saving grace, many of the New England narratives dwell upon the journey "to America, where disorientation and guilt paint the whole world gray, and where in their confusion they keep bumping into their own sinful selves" (168).

This dialectic of expectation and disenchantment, which Caldwell documents in the narratives from the 1630s and 1640s, has indeed been a constant of the American political, literary, and religious experience. One can find it in the very earliest Puritan experiences—contrast the visionary hope of John Winthrop in the sermon he preached aboard the Arbella as it sailed towards Massachusetts Bay in 1630 with the somber description William Bradford (in *Of Plymouth Plantation*) gives of the breakup of the community at Plymouth in 1632. And one can find it in many of the great novels, poems, and plays produced by Americans. In showing some of the earliest manifestations of this distinctively American voice, Professor Caldwell has performed a valuable service.

The Sinai Strategy
by Gary North (Institute for Christian Economics, 1986, 338 pp., \$12.50). Reviewed by Dr. Thomas E. Van Dahm, Ph.D., Professor of Economics, Carthage College, Kenosha, WI.

Subtitled "Economics and the Ten Commandments," *The Sinai Strategy* is intended as "a detailed look at the ten commandments and their social, political, and especially, economic implications" (back cover). Why "The Sinai Strategy?" As explained by North: "What the ten commandments provides is . . . a dominion strategy. It is a strategy for *not staying poor*, either individually or socially" (p. 223, italics in the original).

Reading this book without a prior acquaintance with other works by North or other publications of the Institute for Christian Economics (ICE) would be like reading a trilogy beginning with the third volume. So it would be advisable to begin this review with a brief introduction to the author and the ICE.

Dr. North founded, and is the president of, the ICE. Previously he was on the staff of R.J. Rushdoony's Chalcedon Foundation. This volume is the sixteenth book written or edited by North, who has also published innumerable articles in journals and ICE newsletters.

As to the ICE, in the words of its founder, it "is devoted to research and publishing in the field of Christian ethics. The perspective of those associated with the ICE is straight-

forwardly conservative and pro-free market" (363). In fact, the free market seems to stand on a par with the Trinity, the divinity of Jesus Christ, and other orthodox Christian doctrines: "the Bible categorically affirms legal, moral, and economic principles that lay the foundations of a free market economic system" (11; italics in the original). Not only do all ICE writings express belief in the free-market system but they also vigorously condemn, in the name of Christ, virtually all deviations from it.

This being the case, the reader, recalling the subtitle of the book, will not be surprised to learn that North finds "the foundational principles of a free market economy" in all of the commandments (15). In fact, so tight is the association between the two that "observance of the basic principles of the ten commandments is both necessary and sufficient for the creation of a capitalist economy" (211-12; italics in the original).

North's ability to find the free-market system taught throughout the Bible inevitably calls to mind the case of the person who, taking a Rorschach (ink-blot) test, found sexual themes in nearly all of the "pictures." When the administrator of the test commented that he seemed to be obsessed with sex, the subject responded: "Well, what did you expect me to say when you showed me all those dirty pictures!"

North and the other ICE writers demonstrate the highest respect for the authority of the Bible in matters of ethics—not as merely pointing to certain ethical principles for Christian decision-making, however. North *et. al.* go far beyond this position by insisting that the Bible, especially the Old Testament, contains the basis for specific rules which clearly spell out God's will for every conceivable decision-situation. Bible study, then, is mainly a matter of looking for and identifying all of the Scripture passages which record or imply God's instructions to individuals or groups (e.g., Israel) and which tell of God's dealings with particular persons or groups in a way that seems to show His approval or disapproval of specific actions or patterns of behavior. Regardless of the historical-cultural context in which the recorded events occurred, all of these rules, stated or deduced, are considering binding on us today.

Only one class of exceptions is allowed by North:

There should be a specific injunction [in the New Testament] that a particular law, or a particular class of laws, is no longer binding in New Testament times because Jesus' work of redemption has fulfilled it and also annulled it. If the New Testament does not reveal this, then the law must still be in force (4; italics in the original).

North is quite consistent in his adherence to this "case-law" approach, even when it yields conclusions which seem strange. For example: "The eldest son is entitled to a double portion of the estate (Deut. 21:15-17)" (97). Or: "When people curse their parents,

it unquestionably is a capital crime (Ex. 21:17)" (59), as are adultery and a number of other deeds (56-57). The prescribed biblical means of execution, says North, is stoning; and he finds no fewer than five arguments in support of this method (122-125).

In its structure, the book contains no surprises: introductory chapter, a chapter on each of the commandments, appendices, and indices. North's treatment of most of the commandments contains insights which reflect the author's background in economics. For example, he correctly points out in several places how adherence to the commandments tends to foster the economic growth of a nation, an outcome which seems extremely important to him.

North appears to be well-read in a number of areas and has sprinkled the pages liberally with footnotes (422 in 338 pages). However, the book should be accessible to the average educated person: there is a minimum of technical jargon, and the style is not ponderous.

One's evaluation of *The Sinai Strategy* will depend in part on whether he or she is comfortable with the two premises on which much of the discussion is based: (1) the free-market system is the only economic system acceptable to God, and (2) nearly all Old Testament laws, stated and implied, are binding on Christians today. But even those who accept them may find objectionable certain other characteristics of North's writing.

One such characteristic is the argumentative tone of much of the book, especially in the numerous passages in which he inveighs against the State or "radical Christians" who criticize aspects of the free-market system. Furthermore, many of North's "conclusions" do not seem to be supported by close reasoning, and in some cases are little more than assertions. It is true that he has discussed a number of these topics in other writings; but the reader has no way of assessing the validity of supporting arguments presented elsewhere.

The Sinai Strategy will undoubtedly reinforce the convictions of ICE adherents. To those whose interest in the ICE has been stimulated, I would recommend North's *An Introduction to Christian Economics* (Craig Press, 1973), rather than the book under review, as a suitable means of making an acquaintance with this approach to the Bible and Christian ethics.

Unmasking the Powers: The Invisible Powers That Determine Human Existence
by Walter Wink (Fortress, 1986, 227 pp.).
Reviewed by John H. Yoder, Department of Theology, University of Notre Dame.

Walter Wink began his research into the cosmology of the New Testament world with the expectation that it could be "demythologized" into social science categories. His first volume, describing the New Testament language on its own terms (*Naming the Powers*, 1984, cf. *Bulletin* Sept.-Oct. 1986, p. 251), al-

ready pointed beyond itself toward the challenge of interpretation which the second volume faces head-on. Renouncing the "demythologizing" project in the face of the facts of the present, as well as the witness of Scripture, Wink now finds himself speaking realistically of angels, demons, gods, "sailing off the map of our two-dimensional universe, into a universe that is alive" (170).

Instead of affirming merely that the cosmology within which the New Testament witness was communicated can be understood, or that the witness thus stated can be retrieved, Wink has been drawn into projecting an update, moving not back to the repetition of the first century world view but "forward with the Bible" to a reappropriation especially of those elements which had been shifted out of our scientific world view.

By the nature of the case there can be no standard ground rules for such a necessary but unprecedented project. Should it be considered a prolongation of the literary-historical study of the scriptures, facing the challenges of validation by argument based on the text, or should it be a pendulum-swing away from the "scientific" models in the direction of esoteric and poetic modes of apprehension? Should it deepen the disenchanting impact of JHWH's messengers upon the spookiness of the pagan world, penetrating even into the realm of the invisible with the word of Jesus Christ's Lordship, or should it revalidate the eerie edges of reality, as enrichment, or even as corrective, for a vision narrowed too much by Jesus and his Jewishness? Should it place greater trust in the nonrationalistic cosmologies of our contemporaries (Jung, neopagan esotericism) which leapfrog over the world of sciences, or in the rational case which can be made within those disciplines, in their own languages, against the limits of reductionist determinism? Should we be guided more by the vision of a globally satisfying new cosmology which would be a convincing description of the way things are, more descriptively adequate and more lively than two-dimensional materialism, convincing with or without Jesus, or by the christologically centered proclamation of the Powers' disenthronement at the cross?

At each of these points, Wink's choice fails to convince. His confession of Jesus' normativeness is clear, but not central to this work. The work's major thesis is the greater adequacy of a neo-classical cosmology, with a universe that is alive with real gods and angels, to make sense of reality. He finds Jung and Findhorn to be more help toward this end than the physical or social sciences. On one hand Wink easily grants, repeatedly, that as a unity the ancient cosmology cannot and should not be resuscitated. In that sense modern understandings of reality are accepted. But on the other hand he uses terms like "real" and "inner" without any semantic accountability, without our knowing what might count as their validation. We are on the razor's edge between authentic apostolic *gnosis* and gnosticism, where the church in Colossae was balancing. The specific terms most used in the apostolic passages directly on the themes of Christ and the powers

("principalities," "powers," "thrones," "dominions") receive less attention than "gods," "demons," "angels," "elements," terms more current in general speculative cosmologies whether ancient or contemporary. The concrete debatable matters of pastoral concern being considered in the Pauline passages (food restrictions and holidays in *Colossians*, the Law in *Galatians*, Roman authorities in *Romans*) are less interesting for Wink's redefinition than extrabiblical themes like the angel in a sunset or the saving of a nation.

All of Wink's work is worthy of careful reading. He has amassed an enormous bulk of authentic erudition around his reconstruction. His declaration of the bankruptcy of two-dimensional scientism and his readiness to denounce the Powers' apostasy (to be spelled out further in the third volume) are right, though thinly argued. My above-stated misgivings about the weighting of the several factors of the needed reconstruction do not make his work less strategic. He has worthily broken open a debate which needs to go deeper.

The Meaning of Creation: Genesis and Modern Science

by Conrad Hyers (John Knox Press, 1984, 203 pp., \$11.95). Reviewed by Richard H. Bube, Department of Materials Science and Engineering, Stanford University.

Conrad Hyers, Professor and Chairperson of Religion at Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota, has provided in this book a major contribution to the creation/evolution debate of recent years. He continues a growing trend toward considering the proper interpretation of the Genesis account in its own integrity, rather than focusing on whether or not these accounts can be in fact harmonized with modern science. Believing that the "real" meaning of these texts has been understandable in part from the beginning, and that this "real" meaning has not been waiting until the present generation to be perceived by today's scientific descriptions, Hyers delves into the purpose and meaning of these sections of Scripture in their own context. He critiques the practice of many conservative Christians in recent years who have been so enamored with the findings of science that they have paid little attention to the biblical text itself and even less to the original meaning and purpose of the text in its historical setting.

The book is organized into eight chapters. The first two chapters discuss general issues in treating the revelation of Genesis, the second two focus on the interpretation of Genesis 1, the fifth deals with the types of literature in Genesis and explores the meaning of "myth" rightly understood, the sixth and seventh chapters deal with the interpretation of Genesis 2 and 3, and the eighth chapter is a kind of appendix in which Hyers integrates revelational perspectives in terms of the order vs. chance debates of current years.

Hyers is as critical of scientific misreadings of Genesis as he is of theological misreadings. He finds linguistic confusion, fail-

ure to appreciate the nature of the literature being interpreted, as a recurrent source of the misunderstanding and conflict in the creation/evolution debate. He makes clear the fallacy of the "Bible science" position that makes the truth, validity and relevance of the Genesis passages depend on whether or not they conform to today's notion of what is an acceptable scientific description. He points out that "quite ironically, those who would dismiss the Bible as contradicting science and those who would defend it as true science find themselves in agreement that these biblical texts are to be interpreted 'literally'" (pp. 12, 20). Indifference to the religious roots of the Genesis accounts makes authentic interpretation impossible.

Even if evolution is only a scientific theory of interpretation posing as scientific fact, as the creationists argue, creationism is only a religious theory of biblical interpretation posing as biblical fact. . . . It is, therefore, essentially *modernistic* even though claiming to be truly conservative (p. 27).

Only by recognizing what these scriptural documents actually are, can we hope to understand God's revelation for us in them.

Hyers gives a detailed and persuasive interpretation of the two creation accounts in Genesis 1 and Genesis 2, and clarifies many nuances, far too numerous to be included in this review. His appreciation for the different styles of the two creation accounts makes it possible to see them as essentially complementary, with Genesis 1 stressing the role of order in creation, and Genesis 2 ff. stressing the fundamental virtues of pastoral simplicity in contrast to the effects of civilization, urbanization and technology. In appropriate contexts he points out not only the shortcomings of Bible science (which he terms an oxymoron), but also those of anti-religious scientism, progressive creationism, and views that necessitate a God-of-the-gaps.

Hyers' elaboration of the meaning and use of "myth" is one of the clearest available. Always readable and attention-holding, his writing at times breaks out into pure prose/poetry, as in the passage on mystery:

. . .mystery in its ultimate sense . . . is not resolvable, for the greater the knowledge and understanding, the greater the awareness of mystery. Rather than being the absence of knowledge, mystery in this sense surrounds even the most commonplace, obvious, taken-for-granted, and therefore presumably well-known areas of experience. Such a sense of mystery looms not only where knowledge and thought are exhausted and where science has not yet broken through the latest barrier, but also where even the small child understands perfectly well. It comes where there is clear light as well as seemingly impenetrable darkness. It comes at the moment when the oddness of the most familiar object overwhelms us. Then even the ephemer-

eral presence of a snowflake confronts us with those primordial questions that are at the heart of myth and religion: the mysteries of life and death, of being and nothing, of origins and destinies, of mind and matter and time, and of the very existence of creatures capable of asking these questions (p. 111).

He points out that historically science has not superseded religion, but rather science has superseded magic and magical practices. He argues that one need not "demythologize" the Bible to get rid of mythical concepts no longer acceptable to modern man and then to reconstruct the biblical message in categories acceptable to modern man (following the path of Bultmann, for example), nor need one "demythologize" the Bible by taking its statements literally and restating them in terms of modern science and historiography (following the path of Christian fundamentalists, for example). Both of these are forms of modernism. Instead the appropriate approach relative to both these misuses is to "deliteralize and remythologize the text to preserve its religious character and richness of meaning" (p. 106).

In view of these extremely timely, relevant and helpful insights, it is unfortunate that Hyers has adopted, essentially without argument or justification, the hypothesis that Genesis 1 is the product of a "Priestly" author while Genesis 2 is the product of a "Yahwist" author, both authors writing in fact considerably after the time of Moses. He speaks of the "Yahwist" account as having been written in the 10th century BC in the time of Solomon, when Imperial splendor called for the reminder of mankind's humble beginning in the dust of the earth, and for a warning against the subtle evils of civilization. He speaks of the "Priestly" account as having been written in the 6th century BC in the time of the Exile when Solomon's kingdom had been divided and conquered, and when the author reminds his readers of the intrinsic dignity of human beings and their origin as created in the image of God. It is true that the use of these historical contexts makes an understanding of some of the nuances of these two accounts surprisingly possible, but their introduction as obvious, true and established will automatically lead many evangelical readers to reject the whole of Hyer's valuable contributions out of hand. It is high time for this question to be dealt with carefully and thoroughly by scholars committed both to a high view of inspiration and the integrity of the Bible, and to a willingness to face whatever facts are really there. In this book Hyers offers only the statement, "If the seven-day account was written in the context of the dark period of exile following the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem and the deportation of Jews to Babylonia, as most scholars concur, . . ." (italics added, p. 51). Surely the dating of these certain accounts, if possible at all, should be undertaken with as much care as possible; it is not a question that can be settled either by dogmatic traditionalism on the one hand or appeal to the consensus of specialists with unknown per-

sonal commitments on the other. A very large fraction of the points that Hyers makes are independent of the specific truth or error of these dating assignments. Readers who disagree with Hyers should not take the easy way out of casting suspicion on his major conclusions via his acceptance of datings not universally agreed on in the conservative Christian community.

This is a book of first-rate quality. Its contribution to the Christian community's perception of the creation/evolution debate is sizable. No future discussion of these issues will be complete if the insights given us by Hyers are not considered and included.

Jesus in European Protestant Thought, 1778-1860

by Colin Brown (*Labyrinth*, 1985, 359 pp., \$35.00). Reviewed by John G. Stackhouse, Jr., Ph.D. candidate in the History of Christianity at the University of Chicago Divinity School and Visiting Instructor at Wheaton College, Illinois.

While Colin Brown's title is "Professor of Systematic Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary," it is gratifying to us historical types to see that he got his start as an historian. Previous books of his have ranged over several theological disciplines as they have discussed Karl Barth (contemporary theology), miracles (philosophy of religion), and New Testament studies. Indeed, the book that brought him to the attention of the evangelical reading public critiqued Western philosophy since Thomas Aquinas from an evangelical viewpoint (*Philosophy and the Christian Faith* [InterVarsity Press, 1969]). But the present work shows us that Colin Brown, titles and books notwithstanding, got his grounding in historical theology, for it is in fact a reworking of his doctoral thesis.

The book slices the rich pie of modern theology in a new and helpful way. It centers upon the conception of Jesus, but serves up more than simply another version of the so-called "search for the historical Jesus" (Schweitzer) or a discussion of Christology as an epiphenomenon of the problems in New Testament studies themselves (Kümmel, Neill). On the other hand, it goes more deeply into its subject than most surveys of modern theology-in-general (Mackintosh, Welch). Instead, Brown draws discussions of historians and biblical scholars together with others of philosophers and theologians to present a comprehensive picture of the rise of modern ideas about Jesus from Reimarus to—well, not to Wrede, but to Strauss at least (Would Dr. Brown consider taking up the story again?).

In some respects this book reads like the dissertation it once was: it speaks carefully, it draws extensively on primary sources, and it provides full and frequent footnotes. But it also bears the marks of revision since its 1969 submission, revision which, I suspect, has made it even more useful. For instance, it refers to books published quite recently (I noticed one as recent as 1984). Much more significantly, comparison with Brown's earlier

Philosophy and the Christian Faith—published the year this dissertation was completed—seems to indicate that he has changed his mind about a few things—most importantly, his estimation of the orthodoxy and importance of Soren Kierkegaard.

The main disappointment, however, also seems to stem from the book's earlier life as a dissertation. Brown admits in his introduction that the book makes no general conclusions. Dissertations often remain this modest. Brown does advance a few theses which are significant and interesting, but these get little support from the book which follows. In particular, he puts forward Kierkegaard as the one who "may yet present the twentieth century with better conceptual tools for approaching theology than any other thinker of his age" (xxi). Now this statement, coming from the author of a book which surveys such thinkers as Kant, Hegel, and Schleiermacher, is provocative to say the least. But Brown's later discussion of Kierkegaard, while thorough on its own terms, does not discuss this thesis.

A different disappointment is yet related to this restraint in forming general conclusions. As an evangelical well-positioned to make this sort of judgment, we might wish Brown had commented much more on the relatively poor show most orthodox theologians made throughout his period. I asked a professor of mine once why Schleiermacher felt (as it were!) he faced the alternatives of warm-hearted Pietism or intellectually-responsible heterodoxy. Why didn't Schleiermacher embrace orthodoxy? Brown discusses orthodoxy around in this book and substantiates my professor's answer: the kinds of orthodoxy around in those days weren't particularly attractive. But why weren't they? Brown, I suspect, might be able to teach significant lessons from the nineteenth century to those of us concerned for orthodoxy in the twentieth.

These few disappointments notwithstanding, Brown's study should aid students in a number of fields: biblical studies, theology, philosophy, and European intellectual history. It rests on wide reading, expositis ideas clearly, and works hard to show relationships between figures, ideas, and historical contexts. It deals fairly with its subjects, however far their ideas might be from Brown's own. In addition, the *Labyrinth* Press deserves commendation for a solidly-bound and well-presented text. In all of this, the book sets a high standard for evangelical scholarship.

Christian Theology: An Eschatological Approach, Vol. 1

by Thomas N. Finger (Thomas Nelson, 1985, 367 pp., \$18.95). Reviewed by Donald G. Bloesch, Professor of Theology, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary.

In this innovative study, Thomas Finger presents a systematic theology within an eschatological framework. He begins not with the doctrine of God but with the dawning of the new age in Jesus Christ. His point of de-

parture is not the attributes of God nor the decision of God in eternity but the effects of God in nature and experience.

Finger describes his position as "kerygmatic," but this is so only in a qualified sense. Unlike Luther, Calvin and Barth, Finger begins not from the kerygma, the biblical story of salvation, nor from the human context, but from the point where kerygma and context are interwoven. He speaks not only of theology's kerygmatic norm but also of its contextual norm, since "the extent to which theology is intelligible within the experience and thought-world of its context is also a standard by which its adequacy may be measured." While he insists that the kerygma remains the norm for truth, he is convinced that the expression of truth is irremediably conditioned by the cultural and philosophical milieu in which the gospel is proclaimed. Because "the kerygma in Scripture is continually entering and transforming new contexts, it must be translated into new words and actions."

His method is from the experience of humanity as it is encountered by divinity in the traditional themes of biblical theology. He agrees with Gordon Kaufman that it is a mistake for theology in the preliminary stage of its reflection to focus on transcendental concepts, such as God or Christ; at the same time, he rejects Kaufman's belief that the concept of God is a mere product of general cultural processes. He also endorses Bultmann's search for a "point of contact" between the gospel and secular goals and values but takes issue with Bultmann's subjectivizing of the faith. While acknowledging that most kerygmatic theologies are characterized by a Christology from above, he allies himself with a Christology from below.

Interestingly, Finger affirms the "total propositional truthfulness" of Scripture. He upholds the way of adduction, finding models in Scripture that relate to current experience, rather than induction, inferring universals from particulars, and deduction, arriving at conclusions from first principles available in Scripture. He also defends the concept of biblical inerrancy, but tries to hold this in tension with a consciousness of the cultural matrix in which Scripture is written. One implication of biblical inerrancy "is that no biblical proposition should ever be interpreted as in flat contradiction to a true proposition from any other field of knowledge." In the discussion on the truthfulness of Scripture, he fails to relate the truth of Scripture to the action of the Spirit, instead basing his case on the requirements of coherence and consistency. When he argues that the truth of Scripture consists "in the veracity of its propositions," a case could be made that he here diverges from the Reformers who located the truth of Scripture in the correlation of Word and Spirit. In the Reformation understanding, the truth of Scripture resides in the Lord of Scripture, Jesus Christ, and the prophetic and apostolic witness to this Lord reflects the truth which he embodies. Truth is not a property of Scripture as such but a property of the Spirit who uses Scripture as an agency in the commu-

nication of the truth of Jesus Christ.

Finger prefers the Christus Victor theory of the atonement over that of substitutionary atonement. He tries to make a place for the objective reality of the devil, refusing to reduce the exorcisms of Jesus to psychosomatic phenomena. He also affirms conditional immortality in which he envisions a gradual annihilation to the wicked.

Finger's theology represents a kind of evangelical rationalism that tries to take seriously the theological revolution inaugurated by Karl Barth and the theology of crises. Yet it is debatable whether Finger has learned from Barth that culture can only be the field and never the norm or source for theological thinking. Barth would probably accuse Finger of continuing the grandiose attempt of Neo-Protestantism to build a bridge between the message of faith and the wisdom of the culture, although Finger is intent on maintaining the uniqueness of biblical revelation. It should be noted in passing that he wrongly accuses Barth of universalism and of denying any revelation of God in nature.

This book is an important contribution to the ongoing search of evangelicals for a new theological method. Finger's writing is characterized by both lucidity and erudition. I appreciated his insightful critique of liberation theology, but it seems that he is opening the door to a new form of cultural Christianity.

The Reconstruction of the Christian Revelation Claim

by **Stuart C. Hackett** (Baker Book House, 1984, 349 pp., \$19.95). Reviewed by **Robert A.H. Larmer**, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Philosophy, University of New Brunswick.

This book has many strengths. One of these is that Hackett moves comfortably and competently over a broad subject area. Another is his humility. The strident tone which marked his earlier work, *The Resurrection of Theism*, has vanished and he is very careful throughout the book not to claim more than his arguments warrant.

Hackett begins with an exploration of epistemological issues. He develops and defends a position he calls moderate *apriorism*. On his view, we possess *a priori* interpretive principles and knowledge is the result of our properly applying these principles to experiential data. Establishing his epistemology, he moves on to stake out his metaphysical claim. He defends theism as the most plausible ontology and argues that many of the standard objections to theism are based upon an inadequate epistemology.

He goes on to defend the claims that Jesus is God incarnate and that the Bible is an inflexible, authoritative revelation of God. He recognizes that other views of Jesus and the Bible are often held, but argues that they do not account for the phenomena they purport to explain. His general strategy is to develop balance-of-probabilities arguments designed not to demonstrate that rival views are without merit, but to establish the superior scope, adequacy and plausibility of the orthodox view of Jesus and Scripture.

One flaw does bear mentioning, however. The book suffers from a lack of documentation. I respect Hackett's desire to avoid the excesses of technical paraphernalia, but at least some footnotes would have been appropriate. I agree with his stated aim of writing "for that common man who is deeply and profoundly concerned about the meaning of existence and about the truth-claims of those developed perspectives which aim to enshrine that meaning." It is this common man, however, who stands to benefit the most from a judicious use of footnotes, since it is by this means that he is given resources to pursue the discussion further should he so desire.

Belonging: Our Need for Community in Church and Family

by **Stan D. Gaede** (Zondervan Academic Books, 1985, 277 pp., \$9.95). Reviewed by **David O. Moberg**, Professor of Sociology, Marquette University.

In our evangelical subculture that stresses individualistic aspects of Christian faith and life, this is a refreshing corrective. Gordon College sociologist Gaede has given us an excellent analysis of "Our Need for Community in Church and Family," to use the publisher's subtitle. Although he suggests that his "most peculiar treatise" (p. 7) is neither a study in sociology nor a discourse in theology, in many ways it is both, although it does lie more in the applied than the theoretical domain of either.

At first glance, this appears to be an elementary book for popular consumption only. Yet the seventeen smoothly written chapters reveal and underscore significant insights valuable for even the wisest of professional scholars. His main thesis is "that we live in a world that radically undermines precisely the community it so desperately needs" (p. 25). Modernization has made "happiness values" the basis for moral decisions (p. 238), forced religious organizations into the task of "selling their authority on the open market of religiosity" (p. 67), "turned religion into a matter of private discretion" (p. 57), and made the family a "perfect breeding ground for rampant insecurity" (p. 109). Among its accompaniments are individualistic autonomy, mobility, the search for relevance, and the elevation of self-fulfillment. Individual choice is considered far more important than the well-being of community, defined as "an unremitting coterie of relationships set within the context of specific traditions and rooted in a transcendent vision" (p. 46).

The family is overburdened as a result, for people huddle in it as a refuge against "the pullage of modernity" (p. 113). They are set up for failure when it thus is laden with undue responsibilities. Other social institutions are undermined as well. Modernity mass produces unrealistic dreams and images and gives people the illusion of being in control. It widens the gap between knowing and doing by bombarding us with knowledge for which there is no immediate application.

Although Gaede points to the functional

impact of tradition upon individuals, organizations, and society, he also points to its limitations. Traditions are "keepers of the past" (p. 265), constraining unattainable visions and keeping them from undermining the dreamer. Wholesome traditions are a gift from God for the benefit of humanity, yet poor traditions can become barriers to good works, promote pride, and mask a sinful heart. Among the fascinating discussions are the picture of the Sunday morning church service as showmanship with the pastor as the ring-leader, the self-defeating nature of the goal of relevance, why it usually is wise to remain in a deficient church congregation, and how to cope with the temptation to switch churches.

The influence of Peter Berger's theoretical work is clearly evident in this valuable study, but the values brought to bear upon the subject are clearly biblical. Liberationists who have overvalued individual freedom without recognizing the corresponding need for social responsibility need to study this book. They will find that Gaede values personal autonomy, but he recognizes that if it is to endure, it must draw upon covenantal relationships and tradition in an intimate community. Excellent sociological insights presented in a language and style that any reader can understand blended with sound Christian values make this an unusually significant book. If, however, one seeks bibliographical references for further study or an index to locate significant themes and passages, one will be disappointed, for such trappings of scholarship are completely missing. As a corrective to misguided assumptions in much contemporary sociology and as an insightful stimulus to work at the important task of building and expressing faithful and intimate Christian community in a society dominated by modernity, this is a very significant book.

BOOK COMMENTS

Clark Speaks From The Grave

by **Gordon H. Clark** (The Trinity Foundation, Jefferson, Maryland, 1986, 77 pp., \$3.95).

This is a bizarre book, and I do not recommend it. The author is not in fact Gordon H. Clark but rather his devoted disciple John Robbins who speaks for the late author against his critics in this nasty little diatribe, called a "post-humous" lecture. Underlying the book (really a booklet) is an incredible admiration for Clark as one of the great, if not the greatest, Christian philosopher-theologians of all time. Supremely confident and pretentious, this "voice" from beyond cuts down all the wicked critics of Clark's ideas, mostly denizens with him of the sectarian Presbyterian sub-culture in America. Obviously we have not heard the last of Gordon Clark, since a foundation has been established to publish and republish his work. I am a little disappointed, because I had hoped that with his

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death this Clark would have rested in peace, and we too would have some relief from his weird combination of pure rationalism dark predestinarian ruminations. No such luck!

—Clark H. Pinnock

Worldly Saints: The Puritans As They Really Were

by Leland Ryken, foreword by J.I. Packer (Zondervan, 1986, 281 pp., \$14.95).

No one who cherishes stereotypes should pick up this book. One after another Ryken remorselessly punctures the myths held so tenaciously by otherwise "right-thinking" people, especially the one that perceives Puritans as sober-sided fanatics who trembled at the thought that someone, somewhere might be happy. Puritans, Ryken shows us through diligent marshaling of the sources, actually laughed a little (and at themselves). They really did enjoy the "coupling together of two persons into one flesh, according to the ordinance of God" (44). They were sensible about work and money. They spent time making worship beautiful and fitting to audiences. They felt education should help people from all social ranks. They reveled (there is no other word) in the goodness of the physical world. Many of them, it seems, dared to treat life as a supreme gift from God and to live, in grateful response, for his glory.

Worldly Saints makes its case through a wealth of quotations from the Puritans themselves. Many of these are memorable—not just as pithy statements, but as pointers to a quality of godliness rarely found today. Ryken also includes a section on the faults of the Puritans (e.g., "Too Many Rules," "Too Many Words"); but lovers of bad history will be hard pressed to resurrect the malevolent stereotype from this one chapter. The book is not a technical study for the initiated, but a marvelous introduction for all with minds not completely closed. Its picture of the Puritans' world-embracing piety offers special encouragement to those today who would love God with heart, soul, strength, and mind.

—Mark A. Noll

The Atonement of the Death of Christ: In Faith, Revelation and History

by H.D. McDonald (Baker Book House, 1985, 371 pp., \$19.95).

It has been a number of years since a full-scale history of the doctrine of the atonement has been published. Now we have a new one that is up-to-date and encyclopedic in scope. McDonald deals with more than 85 theologians from the early church to contemporary people touching on all varieties of people along the way. The three foci of the book are the meaning of the atonement for faith, its Scriptural bases and its expression in the history of Christian thought.

Since there are so many views about the atonement, it is difficult to find categories to group them. McDonald succeeds in doing this

yet is also sensitive to the nuances of a position that make it unique in itself.

This is a most valuable reference volume with McDonald not afraid to point to what he sees as inadequacies in various formulations. But the book also gives us a wide window on the amazing diversities of atonement doctrines and thus shows how fully and richly the church has perceived what the death of Jesus Christ means.

—Donald K. McKim

“A most valuable selection of materials. . . .”

—James Packer

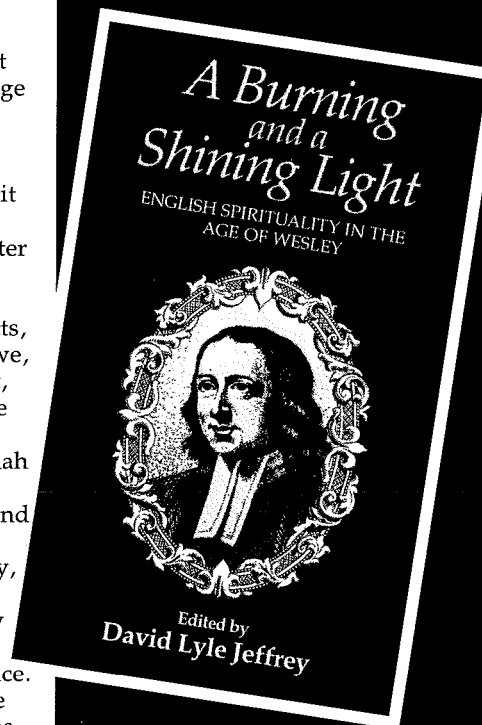
An anthology of some of the best English spiritual writing in the age of the Great Evangelical Revival, this book is an unprecedented gathering of representative witnesses to the work of the Spirit in the eighteenth century.

Emphasizing complete shorter texts, the book crosses denominational lines, including spiritual writings from Isaac Watts, Philip Doddridge, Elizabeth Rowe, William Law, Christopher Smart, John and Charles Wesley, George Whitefield, John Fletcher, John Newton, William Cowper, Hannah More, and William Wilberforce. The works range from sermons and tracts to thoughtful meditative devotional pieces, hymns, poetry, and pastoral counsel on every aspect of the inner life from daily prayer to the most practical consequences of Gospel obedience.

Through these selections the reader will recognize that, then as now, the real worker of revival is the Holy Spirit. As is always true of human instruments, these writers were "not that Light, but sent to bear witness to the Light." In that they were willing to be instruments, it may be said of them, as it was of John the Baptist, that they become as "a burning and a shining light" to their own and subsequent generations.


What Are They Saying About Euthanasia?
by Richard M. Gula (Paulist Press, 1986, 179 pp.).

This book is a clear and fair introduction to the complex and difficult topic of euthanasia through exposure to a variety of positions. The author first describes philosophical, theological, medical and legal dimensions



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of the question of determining death. He then discusses four moral issues at stake: the principle of sanctity of life; the extent of dominion over life and death; the difference between the killing and allowing to die; and the distinction between ordinary and extraordinary means of treatment to sustain life. Three types of moral positions are taken on euthanasia: strict consequentialist views, mixed consequentialist views, and deontological views. Ethical considerations related to caring or the dying are stated: Who should decide whether life-prolonging treatments should be used? Should the dying person be told the truth about his or her condition? What is hospice and how does it fit within the larger discussion of euthanasia? The concluding chapter identifies four convictions which dispose us to act in certain ways: life is not an absolute good; the patient's choice is necessary; treatments that cannot reverse terminal illness are not morally required; treatments that cannot reverse terminal illness are not morally required; and decisions to withhold or withdraw treatment should intensify efforts to comfort.

—Millard J. Erickson

The Authority of the Bible

by Robert Gnuse (Paulist Press, 1985, 153 pp., \$6.95).

The author sets out in this book to review five models for understanding the authority of Scripture. The first, the *inspiration model*, postulates that authority resides in God's act of breathing into the biblical writers the divine message. Under this category Gnuse examines four options, from strict inerrancy (Schaeffer, Lindsell) to the theory of partial infallibility (Beegle, Davis). Second, the *salvation history model* affirms that biblical authority derives from the saving events to which Scripture testifies (Cullmann, Bright) or from uniform world history as revelation (Pannenberg, Motlmann). Third, the *existentialist model* maintains that authority is rooted in the individual's encounter with and response to the proclaimed word (Barth, Brunner, Bultmann). Fourth, the *Christocentric model* claims that authority is rooted in the Bible's witness either to the historical Jesus (Ritschl, Harnack) or to the divine Christ (Luther, Forsyth). And fifth, out of preference for other sources of truth (lived experience, science, etc.), *models of limited authority* severely restrict the authority of the Bible (Herder, Fosdick).

Discussion of the canon reveals the author's personal commitment: Scripture arose via a horizontal process from the life and traditions of the community of faith, i.e., "Human Life Situation—Traditions—Corpus of Literature—Sacred Texts—Canon" (110). Here the author reveals his indebtedness to critical contemporary scholars such as James Barr and David Kelsey. The author's bottom line is that it is impossible to articulate any coherent theory of biblical authority. "The Scriptures are authoritative because the Church has chosen to use them for 2,000 years" (123).

Gnuse's work is useful for rounding out

one's understanding of modern Protestant and Roman Catholic theories of inspiration, biblical authority, and the canon. But this reviewer concludes that the author, apparently indebted to modern, enlightened skepticisms, fails to do justice to the historic Christian position, which most ordinary believers (and not a few scholars) understand to be the position of the Bible itself: *Sola Scriptura!*

—Bruce Demarest

Francis A. Schaeffer: Portraits of the Man and His Work

by Lane T. Dennis, ed. (Crossway Books, 1986, 237 pp., \$7.95).

These twelve portraits are provided by individuals who have been significantly affected by Schaeffer's life and work. They are tributes to his personal, theological or social influence. Each focuses on particular aspects of Schaeffer's thought or ministry which personally touched the writer, but several recurring themes are noticeable. They include: Schaeffer's focus on the unity of truth, his interdisciplinary methodology, his belief in a biblical world view and his use of world view criticism, his Christian critique of culture, his deep love for people and belief in prayer, and his overriding confidence that because Christ is the Lord of all of life, Christian faith speaks to the whole of human life.

Writing for a general audience, the authors attempt to combine a tribute to Schaeffer's work with insights from their own experience or academic discipline, resulting in an odd and not entirely satisfactory mixture. The portraits sometimes show as much of the painter as the subject and occasionally contain rather lengthy digressions. Others are fine glimpses into the life, work and influence of a man whose desire was to show forth the existence and character of God. Though offering some criticism of Schaeffer's work, the authors are far more critical of his critics. A few of the writers make bold assertions about Schaeffer's contribution to modern thought.

The essays vary significantly in style and value. Several are helpful in pointing out some of Schaeffer's less commonly recognized contributions to contemporary Christian thought and action. Others are interesting in their demonstration of how Schaeffer's seminal work has blossomed in a new generation of Christian thinkers.

—Christine D. Pohl

The Theory and Practice of Virtue

by Gilbert C. Meilaender (University of Notre Dame Press, 1984, 191 pp., \$16.95).

Meilaender's third book is a collection of essays which, taken together, analyze the recent flourishing of interest in the virtues, character, moral education, and values clarification. He welcomes this turn in Christian ethics but would have his readers consider it in relation to the culture's passion for self-actualization. Do such inward concerns reflect an undue preoccupation with the self? Do they lead to moralistic understandings of

Christianity? Both are possibilities. Meilaender's remedy is to ground any ethic of virtue in God and in service to others. He argues this point and charts a distinctly Protestant course through the literature on the virtues by a chapter discussion with figures ranging from Plato and Aristotle to Luther and John Henry Newman to Josef Pieper and C.S. Lewis to Alasdair MacIntyre and Lawrence Kohlberg. In the process he considers the necessity for an ethic of virtue, the unity of the virtues, whether and how virtue can be taught, the kind of community context necessary for the teaching of virtue, and the relation between sin, grace and moralism. The final two chapters consider the virtues of curiosity and gratitude. While the book is not as systematic a presentation as the title suggests, Meilaender succeeds in introducing the theories and practices of virtue and does so with a clear and concise writing style. The book is highly recommended to teachers of ethics and others who struggle to include an ethical dimension to what they teach.

—Stephen Charles Mott

The Abusing Family

by Blair and Rita Justice (Human Sciences Press, 1986, 288 pp., \$14.95).

The Broken Taboo: Sex in the Family
by Blair and Rita Justice (Human Sciences Press, 1979, 304 pp., \$14.95).

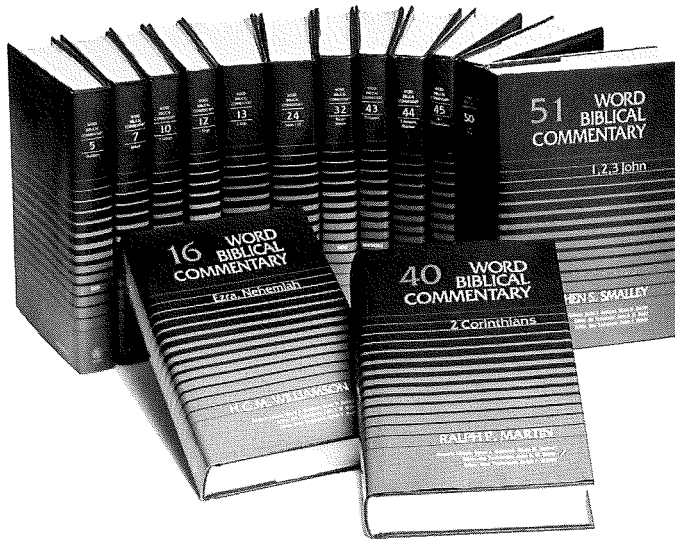
Every effective pastor who truly serves his or her parishioners will, at one time or another, be confronted with abusing parents or incestuous relation in a family in his or her parish. The question is not, "will he/she" but "how well will he or she help them become loving and caring parents, find forgiveness for their cruelty, then redirection (sublimation) for their rage toward their offspring(s) or a more psychological and spiritual love for family members?" The Justices' books will help the pastoral healer be a healing influence rather than a shocked and counter-hostile enemy to the abusing parents or sexually involved person.

Don't look for theology or a place for pastoral counseling by name in these volumes, for there isn't any, but there is a lot of solid psychological and sociological direction which every seminary student should be conversant with before going out to minister to hurting, hostile, sinful and sexual abusing persons in their community.

As with most social/behavioral scientific approaches to social problems, sin and the place of evil in human life is depicted in psychological language but the serious seminary student may make his or her own insight into the ultimate sources of these kinds of anti-social and humanly degrading abuse of family members.

Certainly these ancient sins and evils are not unknown to the Bible student; read 2 Sam. 13:1 where Amnon, the son of David, lusted after his sister Tamar and committed incest with her, or the daughters of Lot, Gen. 19:34, who were both pregnant by their father, seduced while intoxicated.

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The Justices do accuse "physicians, clergy, relatives and neighbors" who close their eyes to incest and child abuse in their families seen in their practice, parish, family or neighborhood of contributing to the suffering of the victims and the increase in incest from one in a million in 1940 to one in 100 in 1950 to one in 20 in 1970, and ? in ? in 1980.

Many of us who see victims and their abusers in psychotherapy believe that pastors, more than any professional group in society, have the effective answers to both child abuse and incest—in the Gospel of forgiveness and ethical living and personal holiness.

—John M. Vayhinger

Towards A Christian Poetics

by Michael Edwards (Eerdmans, 1984, 246 pp., \$13.95).

When I come across a difficult book (and this is a difficult book), I introspect on a series of questions: 1) Is this difficult because of the complexity of ideas?; 2) Is this difficult because the writer prefers obfuscation to clarity?; or, 3) Is this difficult because I am too stupid or unlearned to keep pace? With Edwards' book, though, I can guess which position he would choose, I'm torn between all three. Although his poetic is profound at times, rigorously defended, and rich with examples from Racine to Boccaccio to Shakespeare and Dickens, Edwards is also, often, convoluted and unnecessarily thick.

Edwards' thesis is that literature and language exist in their experienced forms because of the reality of the creation, fall, and redemption. Since we are created and have a vision of the redeemed paradise, we strive to understand and express *grandeur*. Since we are fallen and remain constrained by sin this side of perfection, we are condemned to understand and express *misère*. This dialectic between *grandeur* and *misère* explains the nature of literature (with special attention devoted to tragedy, comedy, story and translation), as well as painting and music.

Extending these parallels to language itself, Edwards contends that the very structure of language and composition betrays the dialectic, ultimately resting in the Spirit's recognition of our "groaning" inadequacy and pointing toward the redemption of speech in the Word Himself. In a special chapter, T.S. Eliot is revealed as a model of the thoroughly intentional Christian writer.

Not for the casual reader of intense treatments of aesthetics.

—Gregory H. Spencer

That You May Believe: Miracles and Faith Then and Now

by Colin Brown (Eerdmans, 1985, 232 pp., \$7.95).

Colin Brown is Professor of Systematic Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary. This book is a popular sequel to his *Miracles and the Critical Mind* (1982). The book is divided into three parts dealing with philosophical,

biblical and pastoral theology.

Part One is a historical sketch, from New Testament times to today, of topics concerning the nature of miracle, how it relates to faith, and whether rational people can believe it. This is basically a popularized version of his previous book.

Part Two looks at the miracle stories surrounding Jesus, and concludes that they can be historical, and need not be rejected as inventions of the church. He looks at the theology of Jesus' miracles in each Gospel. Part Three is an examination and rejection of the doctrine that miraculous healing is the "right" of every true believer.

Brown has written an important book, not least because he writes for the general reader. His analysis of philosophy, history of ideas, and Scripture is accurate and easy to read. He has set error to flight; granted his readers a wealth of information for a modest sum; and filled those who may be lead astray with a fund of Christian wisdom regarding healing and exorcism. I highly recommend this book.

—Alan Padgett

Clinical Handbook of Pastoral Counseling edited by R.J. Wicks, R.D. Parsons and D.E. Capps (Paulist Press, 1985, 579 pp., \$14.95).

Well written, this volume is a classic, a basic that every seminary student should read through and should be used as text in classes in Pastoral Care and Counseling. Long needed, it fills a unique place in the basic over-all view of the current and historic philosophy and theology of pastoral counseling.

It suffers from the common problems of all edited books (31 chapters by 34 authors) of overlapping information sometimes, but less than most books of its type. Many of the historic leaders of the field are missing, i.e., Wayne Oates, Edgar Jackson, Paul Johnson, Seward Hiltner, Carroll A. Wise, etc., but this lack is evidence that the field is passing to younger leaders with the death of most of those named.

What the volume does do is open with a broad introduction to the history of pastoral counseling by two experts most equipped to do so, Don Browning and Orlo Strunk, then selects specific foci and centers in on them.

Two physicians, Edgar Draper, B.D. & M.D. and Bevan Steadman discuss Assessment in pastoral care; Bernard Tyrrell on Christotherapy; Bob Wicks on Countertransference and Burnout; Sr. Madonna Cunningham, O.S.F. on Consultation, Collaboration and Referral; Ralph Underwood in the Parish and Gerald Fath, O.P. in the Hospital, Sharon Parks in the University, Ross Trower in the Military and Clark Power in the school setting describe the counseling environment.

A third focus is dealt with dynamically in chapters by Bob Neale on Loneliness; David Augsburg on Anger and Aggression (rev. I would have thought Depression); James Royce, S.J., Alcohol; Coval MacDonald on Loss and Bereavement; Ken Byrne on Sexual Dysfunction; Bascue and Lewis on Marital and Family Therapy.

And finally, Lowell G. Colston (since deceased) on the Handicapped; Emma Justes on Women; Ed Wimberly with Minorities; Fames Lapsley on the Aging; Carole Rayburn on Prison Counseling, and so on and so on.

Strunk's description of the Clinical Pastoral Education and American Assn. of Pastoral Counselors' history is both heartening and informative as to the place of both in pastoral education and accreditation and clinical training, but also warns of the dangers of psychologizing our theology and becoming "just only" therapists. The reader is also warned against overvaluing the psychiatric/psychological healing theories of Freud, Skinner and Rogers, giving them more validity than they deserve.

Styles of the chapter authors vary widely, as would be expected; some use case method, some historical, some lecture, some theoretical forms, some expository, and so on.

Had this been published earlier I would certainly have used it as a text in my nearly 30 years as a seminary professor. What better praise!

—John M. Vayhinger

Women, Authority and the Bible edited by Alvera Mickelsen (InterVarsity Press, 1986, 304 pp., \$9.95).

In October of 1984, thirty six leading evangelical scholars gathered in Illinois for a colloquium on the biblical and hermeneutical issues involved in the question of women's role in ministry. *Women, Authority and the Bible* is a collection of select presentations and responses from that colloquium. Overall, it represents an effort by authors with a biblical feminist orientation to break new ground in the theological stalemate between traditional and feminist perspectives.

The book opens with a discussion of the human element involved in the issue of women's role in ministry. It moves the discussion out of the realm of theological abstraction and reminds the reader that the issue deals with flesh-and-blood hurting, hoping women.

The next section deals with broad hermeneutical issues. Robert K. Johnston seeks to address the question of how various people who affirm the authority of Scripture can hold such radically different views on this issue. Roger Nicole discusses how feminist aspirations have been set in opposition to biblical authority and whether or not such a conflict is unavoidable. Clark Pinnock surveys feminist and contemporary traditional scholarship in order to illustrate that the conflict is, in fact, unavoidable and that biblical feminism is a contradiction in terms.

The book moves on to discuss biblical views of authority and headship. In the discussion of authority, Richard Longenecker argues for a developmental hermeneutic that roots hierarchy in creation and mutuality in redemption. In the second article on this topic, Berkeley and Alvera Mickelsen discuss the significance of *kephale* as it is used in the Pauline epistles.

Having laid this foundation, the book begins to deal with the "difficult texts" of Paul in I Corinthians, Galatians, and II Timothy. The book concludes with strategies for change within the church and an evaluation of the colloquium. The thrust with which the reader is left is that there is strong biblical support for the broadening of women's roles in ministry. At the same time, the book exhorts theologians, pastors, and laypeople to continue to address the theological, biblical and hermeneutical issues involved.

The nature of this book as a collection of papers presented at a colloquium is its greatest strength. This allows for a great breadth and diversity of topics and viewpoints. Furthermore, because the book is structured as a series of presentations and responses, the reader is readily drawn into the theological dialogue and forced to think critically about the writers' claims. This structure also allows the reader to view any given issue from a variety of perspectives, an opportunity found in few, if any, books on the same subject.

—Donna Van Haren

Sociological Approaches to the Old Testament

by Robert R. Wilson (Guides to Biblical Scholarship: Old Testament Series. Fortress Press, 1984, 83 pp., \$4.50).

Robert R. Wilson has provided us with a useful guide to the use of the social sciences in our understanding of the Old Testament.

He begins by providing a concise overview of the development, roles and emphases of the various social sciences and their influence on Old Testament studies. In the process he provides us with some guidelines for their use. One such guideline is that while the comparative sociological material is used to form a hypothesis, the exegesis of the text itself has the role of confirming, disproving or modifying the hypothesis.

With this background Wilson illustrates how sociological approaches can be used by applying them to three different areas of Old Testament study (reconstructing the history of Israel, understanding literary forms and understanding Israel's religion).

The last three pages are given to a look at the role sociological approaches will likely play in biblical studies in the future.

This little book will prove valuable to any student interested in a clear and concise introduction to the use of the social sciences in Old Testament studies.

—Roy E. Ciampa

Clive Staples Lewis: A Dramatic Life

by William Griffin (Harper & Row, 1986, 507 pp., \$24.95).

C.S. Lewis seems a man worth knowing. And though this biography is only a partial means to that end, it exudes an enthusiasm for Lewis which is disarming—and which mitigates some serious faults. The arrangement of the biography can make for an ex-

hausting reading: the book consists of a series of anecdotes about Lewis, arranged in chronological order. This approach tends to give the impression of Lewis as a kind of stand-up comedian, firing off witty repartee at luncheon tables and making sage comments in his voluminous correspondence. For good or ill, Griffin resolutely declines to probe any of the difficult questions of Lewis' life.

The main problem in writing a study of Lewis is that a scholar's life is dramatic indeed, but not in the sense which Griffith shows it to be—i.e., full of medical crises, endless letter-writing and frequent whiskey and sodas, though these play a definite part as well. Still, a scholar's life is dramatic because ideas excite him; and their pursuit and hammering out in prose becomes a heroic quest. The concept of an intellectual and spiritual life is definitely missing in this picture of Lewis. *C.S. Lewis: A Dramatic Life* contains no psychological subtlety, and lacks significant insight into Lewis' character. But the biographer shows an evident and warm affection for his subject; and in this case perhaps love covers a multitude of sins.

—Janice A. Rossen

Evangelical Ethics—Issues Facing The Church Today

by John Jefferson Davis (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1985, 299 pp., \$13.95).

The moral dimension of our everyday experience is a pervasive and inescapable fact. Often, we seem instinctively to apply moral judgment to situations (both real and fictional) and to people of our acquaintance. However, the evangelical tradition of the last century and a half has been primarily concerned with conversion and personal commitment; in the ethical realm, evangelicalism has tended to accept the existing (and perhaps stagnant) body of traditional Christian ethical teaching. John Jefferson Davis' *Evangelical Ethics* attempts to make contact with the solid substance of Christian ethical tradition and to awaken the sleeping evangelical church to an awareness of the pressing moral issues facing Christians today.

Davis limits his discussion to ten issues that are "likely to confront the pastor and Christian layperson today." By use of casuistry, Davis provides the reader with ample historical, legal and biblical data to begin reflection toward a consistent and biblically valid way of life. Disappointing is the omission of any ethical considerations with regard to non-human life. The work has many strengths. Davis' chapter on "Civil Disobedience and Revolution" is insightful, especially in light of the lack of evangelical response to South Africa.

Evangelical Ethics is a solid introductory entry which should stimulate the evangelical community to do some new systematic and creative thinking in the development of a comprehensive and distinctive ethic which is not limited to the repetition of selected Bible texts.

—John M. Kenney

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In Praise of TSF

I cannot begin to tell you how much receiving *TSF Bulletin* means to me. Living overseas, cut off from the resources which have nourished me up to this point in my journey feels lonely and ruthless. *TSF Bulletin* "brings me home."

I especially enjoyed the September/October 1986 issue. Harold Netland's article, "The Challenge of Religious Pluralism" was especially refreshing because he articulates much of my own struggle here in Asia. Netland has done a good job of outlining the problem and critiquing the false solutions (i.e., John Hicks' "theocentric" program). Netland suggests that an evangelical response to religious pluralism is to "develop a genuinely biblical theology of religions which gives special attention to three areas" (p. 24). From my experience, I would suggest that there are two other needed areas. No. 4 would be called a deeper understanding of the nature of sin, following the line of Karl Barth's insights in his Romans commentary, i.e., in our sin we human beings seek to hide from the living God; religion is not so much the fruit of seeking the true God as it is the consequence of running from the true God and embracing a false concept of God which makes us comfortable. And a fifth area would be a deeper understanding of the powers of darkness which blind human beings to the light and which disguise themselves in an aura of light (2 Cor. 4).

Again, thank you for the work you and your staff do for *TSF*. I am, by grace, a disciple of the Incarnate One.

Darrell W. Johnson
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TSF BULLETIN VOLUME 10

KEY TO VOLUME AND NUMBER ABBREVIATIONS

10:1 September/October 1986
10:2 November/December 1986
10:3 January/February 1987
10:4 March/April 1987
10:5 May/June 1987

ARTICLES—AREA/AUTHOR LISTING

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Dyrness, William. The Voice of Outsiders: Is Anybody Listening? 10:4:34
Grounds, Vernon. Finis to Fratricide 10:2:4-8
Marney, Carlyle. On Ecclesiastical Provincialism 10:1:4
Torrance, T.F. The Reconciliation of Mind 10:3:4-7

CHURCH HISTORY

De Gruchy, Steve. Karl Barth: Socialism and Biblical Hermeneutics 10:1:8-11
Guinness, Os. The American Hour, The Evangelical Moment 10:2:22-24
Haas, Christopher. Early Christians in the Roman Empire 10:5:27-29
Massey, James Earl. The Black Contribution to Evangelicalism 10:2:16-19
Martin, Dennis D. Taking Mennonite History Seriously 10:5:25-27
McKim, Donald K. How Karl Barth Changed Their Minds 10:1:5-8
Smith, Timothy L. Our Shared Evangelical Heritage 10:2:10-16
Torrance, T.F. Karl Barth: 1886-1986 10:1:4-5

ETHICS

Adeney, Bernard T. Love and War: Augustine and the Problem of Nuclear Weapons 10:3:10-14
Eller, Vernard. Romans 13 (Actually Romans 12:14-13:8) Reexamined 10:3:7-10
Hanks, Thomas. The Evangelical Witness to the Poor and Oppressed 10:1:11-20
Mott, Stephen Charles. The Case of *Brave New People*: A Shadow and a Hope 10:2:27-31
Yui, Yoshiaki. Japanese Christians and the Yasukuni Shrine Issue 10:4:27-29

THEOLOGY

Achtemeier, Paul J. The Authority of the Bible: What Shall We Then Preach? 10:2:19-22
Bruce, F.F. The Theology of Acts 10:5:15-17
Butler, Diana Hochstedt. An Interview With Carl Henry. 10:4:16-19
Childs, Brevard. Childs Responds to McKnight 10:5:24
Conn, Harvie M. Normativity, Relevance and Relativism 10:3:24-33
Dillard, Annie. Singing With the Fundamentalists 10:5:4-7
Dunn, James D. G. The Chronology of the Apostle Paul 10:5:21
Grounds, Vernon. American Evangelicalism: Quo Vadis? 10:5:7-10
Henry, Carl. Carl Henry on Hierarchy 10:4:25
Hollinger, Dennis P. The Church: A Social Institution? 10:3:18-24
Jacobsen, Douglas. From Truth to Authority to Responsibility: The Shifting Focus of Evangelical Hermeneutics, 1915-1986 (Part I) 10:4:8-15
Jacobsen, Douglas. From Truth to Authority to Responsibility: The Shifting Focus of Evangelical Hermeneutics, 1915-1986 (Part II) 10:5:10-15
Johnston, Robert K. The Vocation of the Theologian 10:4:4-8
McKnight, Scott. Reading the New Testament as a Canonical Text 10:5:22-23
Netland, Harold. The Challenge of Religious Pluralism. 10:1:20-25

ACADEME

Bergman, Marvin. North American Evangelical Missions: The Last 100 Years 10:2:24-26
Corley, Kathleen E. and Torjesen Karen J. Sexuality, Hierarchy and Evangelicalism 10:4:23-25
Jakobsen, Wilma. The Kairos Convocation 10:4:31-32
Johnson, Thomas F. Evangelical Diversity and Self-Criticism: Signs of Hope 10:2:8-10
Persons, Donald. The Pain of the North American Heart: Reflections on A Recent Ecumenical Student Gathering 10:4:29-31
Russell, Thomas. Missiology Students Form Society 10:2:26-27
Leadership '88 Conference 10:5:20

BIBLIOGRAPHY

McKim, Donald K. The Authority and Role of Scripture (1981-1986): A Selected Bibliography 10:4:19-22
Moberg, David O. Bibliography on Aging for Pastors and Other Church Leaders 10:5:17-20
Nation, Mark. Nuclear Ethics: A Selected, Annotated Bibliography 10:3:15-18
O'Reilly, Kathy. Bibliography on South Africa 10:4:33-34

ARTICLES—AUTHOR LISTING

Achtemeier, Paul J. The Authority of the Bible: What Shall We Then Preach? 10:2:19-22
Adeney, Bernard T. Love and War: Augustine and the Problem of Nuclear Weapons 10:3:10-14
Bruce, F.F. The Theology of Acts 10:5:15-17
Butler, Diana Hochstedt. An Interview With Carl Henry 10:4:16-19
Childs, Brevard. Childs Responds to McKnight 10:5:24
Conn, Harvie M. Normativity, Relevance and Relativism 10:3:24-33
De Gruchy, Steve. Karl Barth: Socialism and Biblical Hermeneutics 10:1:8-11
Dillard, Annie. Singing With the Fundamentalists 10:5:4-7
Dyrness, William. The Voice of Outsiders: Is Anybody Listening? 10:4:34
Dunn, James D.G. The Chronology of the Apostle Paul 10:5:21
Eller, Vernard. Romans 13 (Actually Romans 12:14-13:8) Reexamined 10:3:7-10
Grounds, Vernon. American Evangelicalism: Quo Vadis? 10:5:7-10
Grounds, Vernon. Finis to Fratricide 10:2:4-8
Guinness, Os. The American Hour, The Evangelical Moment 10:2:22-24
Haas, Christopher. Early Christians in the Roman Empire 10:5:27-29
Hanks, Thomas. The Evangelical Witness to the Poor and Oppressed 10:1:11-20
Henry, Carl. Carl Henry on Hierarchy 10:4:25
Hollinger, Dennis P. The Church: A Social Institution? 10:3:18-24
Jacobsen, Douglas. From Truth to Authority to Responsibility: The Shifting Focus of Evangelical Hermeneutics, 1915-1986 (Part I) 10:4:8-15
Jacobsen, Douglas. From Truth to Authority to Responsibility: The Shifting Focus of Evangelical Hermeneutics, 1915-1986 (Part II) 10:5:10-15
Jakobsen, Wilma. The Kairos Convocation 10:4:31-32
Johnson, Thomas F. Evangelical Diversity and Self-Criticism: Signs of Hope 10:2:8-10
Johnston, Robert K. The Vocation of the Theologian 10:4:4-8
Marney, Carlyle. On Ecclesiastical Provincialism 10:1:4
Massey, James Earl. The Black Contribution to Evangelicalism 10:2:16-19
Martin, Dennis D. Taking Mennonite History Seriously 10:5:25-27
McKim, Donald K. How Karl Barth Changed Their Minds 10:1:5-8
McKim, Donald K. The Authority and Role of Scripture (1981-1986): A Selected Bibliography 10:4:19-22
McKnight, Scott. Reading the New Testament as a Canonical Text 10:5:22-23
Moberg, David O. Bibliography on Aging for Pastors and Other Church Leaders 10:5:17-20
Mott, Stephen Charles. The Case of *Brave New People*: A Shadow and a Hope 10:2:27-31
Nation, Mark. Nuclear Ethics: A Selected, Annotated Bibliography 10:3:15-18

Netland, Harold. The Challenge of Religious Pluralism. 10:1:20-25
O'Reilly, Kathy. Bibliography on South Africa 10:4:33-34
Persons, Donald. The Pain of the North American Heart: Reflections on a Recent Ecumenical Student Gathering 10:4:29-31
Russell, Thomas. Missiology Students Form Society 10:2:26-27
Smith, Timothy L. Our Shared Evangelical Heritage 10:2:10-16
Torrance, T.F. Karl Barth: 1886-1986 10:1:4-5
Torrance, T.F. The Reconciliation of Mind 10:3:4-7
Yui, Yoshiaki. Japanese Christians and the Yasukuni Shrine Issue 10:4:27-29

BOOKS REVIEWED

AUTHOR/TITLE/REVIEWER/ISSUE

Allison, C. FitzSimons. *The Rise of Moralism: The Proclamation of the Gospel from Hooker to Baxter*. Mark Noll 10:3:40.
Allison, Dale C., Jr. *The End of the Ages Has Come: An Early Interpretation of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus*. Joel B. Green 10:5:29.
Anderson, Ray S. & Dennis B. Guernsey. *On Being Family: A Social Theology of the Family*. Dr. John Vayhinger 10:4:46.
Angeles, Peter A. *Dictionary of Christian Theology*. Dr. Ray Anderson 10:1:30.
Baly, Denis & Royal Rhodes. *The Faith of Christians*. Randy Maddox 10:1:33.
Benner, David G., ed. *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology*. Dr. Bruce Narramore 10:2:39.
Bloesch, Donald. *Crumbling Foundations: Death & Rebirth in an Age of Upheaval*. Douglas Groothuis 10:1:36.
Borsch, Frederick Houk, ed. *Anglicanism and the Bible*. Rev. Dr. Kenneth J. Wissler 10:1:28.
Braaten, Carl E. *The Apostolic Imperative: Nature and Aim of the Church's Mission and Ministry*. Robert G. Umidi 10:2:46.
Braaten, Carl and Robert Jenson, eds. *Christian Dogmatics, 2 volumes*. Richard Muller 10:1:35.
Brown, Colin. *Jesus in European Protestant Thought: 1778-1860*. Mr. John Stackhouse, Jr. 10:5:36.
Brown, Colin. *That You May Believe: Miracles and Faith—Then and Now*. Alan Padgett 10:5:44.
Burtchzell, James. *Rachel Weeping: The Case Against Abortion*. Christine Pohl 10:2:32.
Caldwell, Patricia. *The Puritan Conversion Narrative: The Beginnings of American Expression*. Dr. Roger Lundin 10:5:33.
Caprio, Betsy & Thomas Hedberg. *Coming Home: A Handbook for Exploring the Sanctuary Within*. Dr. John Vayhinger 10:3:40.
Carey, George. *A Tale of Two Churches: Can Protestants & Catholics Get Together?* Rev. Bob Moran CSP 10:3:36.
Carney, Padre J. Guadalupe. *To Be a Revolutionary*. Luis Cortes 10:3:39.
Clark, Gordon. *Clark Speaks From the Grave*. Dr. Clark Pinnock 10:5:37.
Clark, Mary T., trans. *Augustine of Hippo: Selected Writings*. Dr. Robert Webber 10:3:44.
Clymer, Kenton J. *Protestant Missionaries in the Philippines 1898-1916: An Inquiry Into the American Colonial Mentality*. Paul Heidebrecht 10:3:35.
Collins, Raymond F. *Christian Morality: Biblical Foundations*. Robert Wall 10:5:32.
Conn, Harvie M. *Reaching the Unreached: The Old-New Challenge*. William Abrahams 10:3:44.
Conser, Walter H., Jr. *Church and Confession: Conservative Theologians in Germany, England & America* Mark Noll 10:4:47.
Coste, Rene. *Marxist Analysis and Christian Faith*. Prof. Paul Faber 10:4:44.
Craghan, John F. *The Psalms: Prayers for the Ups, Downs and In-Betweens of Life*. Eugene Peterson 10:3:44.
Cutler, Daniel S. *The Bible Cookbook: Lore of Food in Biblical Times Plus Modern Adaptations*. Stephen Reed 10:3:43.
Davie, Donald. *Dissenting Voice: Enlightenment & Christian Dissent*. Dr. Geoffrey Wainwright 10:1:42.
Davis, James A. *Wisdom and Spirit: An Investigation of 1 Cor. 1:18-3:20*. Dr. Edwin Yamauchi 10:1:33.
Davis, John Jefferson. *Abortion and the Christian: What Every Believer Should Know*. Dr. Frank Anthony Spina 10:2:33.
Davis, John Jefferson. *Evangelical Ethics: Issues Facing the Church Today*. John Kenney 10:5:45.
Dawe, Donald G. *Jesus: The Death and Resurrection of God*. Dr. Clark Pinnock 10:4:35.
Dennis, Lane T., ed. *Francis Schaeffer: Portraits of the Man and His Work*. Christine Pohl 10:5:42.

- Edwards, Michael. *Towards a Christian Poetics*. Dr. Greg Spencer 10:5:44.
- Ellul, Jacques. *Living Faith: Belief And Doubt In A Perilous World*. Dr. David W. Gill 10:3:38.
- Ellul, Jacques. *The Humiliation of the Word*. Dr. Jack Balswick 10:5:30.
- Fabella, Virginia & Sergio Torres. *Doing Theology In A Divided World*. Todd Saliba Speidell 10:1:42.
- Farnsworth, Kirk E. *Whole-Hearted Integration: Harmonizing Psychology and Christianity*. Dr. H. Newton Maloney 10:1:39.
- Finger, Thomas. *Christian Theology: An Eschatological Approach*, Vol. 1. Donald Bloesch 10:5:36.
- Foster, Richard J. *Money, Sex & Power*. Dr. Douglas J. Miller 10:2:35.
- Frankiel, Sandra S. *Christianity: A Way of Salvation*. Charles O. Ellenbaum 10:1:38.
- Freund, W.H.C. *Saints and Sinners in the Early Church: Differing and Conflicting Traditions*. Dr. Robert Webber 10:4:47.
- Fujita, Neil S. *A Crack In the Jar: What Ancient Jewish Documents Tell Us About the New Testament*. Dr. Julius Scott, Jr. 10:5:32.
- Gaede, S. D. *Belonging: Our Need for Community in Church and Family*. Dr. David Moberg 10:5:37.
- Gaede, S. D. *Where Gods May Dwell*. Michael Leming 10:2:42.
- Gilkey, Langdon. *Creationism on Trial: Evolution and God at Little Rock*. Dr. Richard Bube 10:3:37.
- Gruse, Robert. *The Authority of the Bible: Theories of Inspiration, Revelation and the Canon*. Dr. Bruce Demarest 10:5:42.
- Gonzalez, Justo L. *The Story of Christianity, Volume 1: The Early Church to the Reformation*. Tim Daniel 10:1:34.
- Gottwald, Norman K (ed). *The Bible And Liberation: Political And Social Hermeneutics*. Prof. Pheme Perkins 10:2:35.
- Goulder, Michael And John Hick. *Why Believe in God?* Dr. Clark Pinnock 10:2:37.
- Griffin, William. *Clive Staples Lewis: A Dramatic Life*. Janice Rosen 10:5:45.
- Groothuis, Douglas. *Unmasking the New Age*. Dr. Ronald Enroth 10:2:34.
- Gula, Richard. *What Are They Saying About Euthanasia?* Millard Erickson 10:5:40.
- Gustafson, James. *Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective, Vol. 1, Theology and Ethics*. Donald Bloesch 10:2:34.
- Hackett, Stuart C. *The Reconstruction of the Christian Revelation Claim*. Dr. Robert A. Larmer 10:5:37.
- Hanks, Thomas D. *God So Loved the Third World: The Biblical Vocabulary of Oppression*. Dr. William C. Williams 10:3:38.
- Harrison, Beverly. *Our Right to Choose: Toward a New Ethic of Abortion*. Esther Bruland 10:2:33.
- Hart, John. *The Spirit of the Earth*. Steve Moore 10:3:40.
- Hawkins, Peter. *Getting Nowhere: Christian Hope & Utopian Dream*. William A. Dyrness 10:4:46.
- Hayes, John H & Carl Holladay. *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook*. Dr. Douglas Stuart 10:1:36.
- Hebblethwaite, Brian. *The Christian Hope*. Rodney L. Petersen 10:4:43.
- Hellwig, Monika K. *Jesus, the Compassion of God*. Chris Kettler 10:2:36.
- Henderson, Charles P., Jr. *God and Science*. Dr. Richard Bube 10:3:34.
- Henry, Patrick, ed. *Schools of Thought in the Christian Tradition*. Dr. David Wells 10:4:41.
- Herbstriith, Waltraud. *Edith Stein: The Untold Story of the Philosopher and Mystic*. Prof. Kelley Clark 10:4:40.
- Hillers, Delbert R. *Micah*. Anthony J. Petrota 10:2:37.
- Hoehn, Richard. *Up From Apathy: A Study of Moral Awareness & Social Involvement*. James A. Selby 10:2:47.
- Hummel, Charles. *The Galileo Connection*. Dr. Richard Bube 10:5:31.
- Hyers, Conrad. *The Meaning of Creation: Genesis and Modern Science*. Dr. Richard Bube 10:5:35.
- Jewett, Paul K. *Election and Predestination*. Dr. Clark Pinnock 10:5:31.
- Justice, Blair & Rita Justice. *The Abusing Family*. Dr. John Vayhinger 10:5:42.
- Justice, Blair & Rita Justice. *The Broken Taboo: Sex in the Family*. Dr. John Vayhinger 10:5:42.
- Kaiser, Walter C., Jr. *The Uses of the Old Testament in the New*. Dr. Elmer Martens 10:3:34.
- Karlsen, Carol F. & Laurie Crumpacker, ed. *The Journal of Esther Edwards Burr, 1754- 1757*. Mark Noll 10:1:39.
- Kleinman, Sherry. *Equals before God*. George Peck 10:2:42.
- Laarman, Edward J. *Nuclear Pacifism: 'Just War' Thinking Today*. Bernard Adeney 10:1:36.
- Lapide, Pinchas. *The Sermon on the Mount: Utopia or Program for Action?* Joel B. Green 10:5:31.
- Limouris, Glennadios. *Church, Kingdom, World*. Brother Jeffrey Gros 10:5:29.
- Lincoln, C. Eric. *Race, Religion, and the Continuing American Dilemma*. Mark Bishop Newell 10:4:36.
- Marshall, Paul. *Thine is the Kingdom: A Biblical Perspective on the Nature of Government*. Robert A. Wauzinski 10:2:46.
- Marty, Martin. *Pilgrims in Their Own Land*. Bryan V. Hillis 10:4:42.
- McDonald, H. D. *The Atonement of the Death of Christ: In Faith, Revelation, and History*. Donald McKim 10:5:40.
- Meilaender, Gilbert C. *The Theory and Practice of Virtue*. Steve Crocco 10:5:42.
- Mickelsen, Alvera, ed. *Women, Authority and the Bible*. Donna Van Haren 10:5:44.
- Moberg, David O. *Wholistic Christianity*. John Culp 10:2:44.
- Monasterio, Xavier O. *To Be Human: An Introductory Experiment in Philosophy*. William A. Dyrness 10:4:46.
- Morrice, William. *Jury in the New Testament*. Larry R. Helyer 10:2:36.
- Mueller-Vollmer, Kurt, ed. *The Hermeneutical Reader*. Bernard Ramm 10:1:41.
- Muller, Richard. *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*. Bradley L. Nassif 10:4:36.
- Murray, Charles. *Losing Ground*. Dr. John P. Tiemstra 10:3:35.
- Nelson, James B. and J. S. Rohricht. *Human Medicine: Revised and Expanded Edition*. John Kilner 10:5:30.
- Neyrey, Jerome. *The Passion According to Luke: A Reduction Study of Luke's Soteriology*. Dr. Stanley J. Grenz 10:2:40.
- North, Gary. *The Sinai Strategy: Economics and the Ten Commandments*. Dr. Thomas Vandahm 10:5:33.
- Oden, Thomas C. *Care of Souls in the Classic Tradition*. Matthew Flooding 10:1:31.
- Patte, Daniel. *Preaching Paul*. Andrew Trotter 10:4:34.
- Fauck, Wilhelm. *From Luther to Tillich: The Reformers and Their Heirs*. Mr. John Stackhouse, Jr. 10:2:40.
- Pelikan, Jaroslav. *The Vindication of Tradition*. Mark Noll 10:2:44.
- Peters, John. C. S. *Lewis: The Man and His Achievement*. Lyle W. Dorsett 10:3:44.
- Ramm, Bernard. *Offense to Reason: The Theology of Sin*. Todd Saliba Speidell 10:4:42.
- Reventlow, Henning Graf. *The Authority of the Bible and the Rise of the Modern World*. Mark Noll 10:2:46.
- Robinson, David. *William Ellery Channing: Selected Writings*. Darryl G. Hart 10:3:43.
- Rogerson, John W. *Old Testament Criticism in the Nineteenth Century*. Mark Noll 10:1:32.
- Ryken, Leland. *Worldly Saints: The Puritans As They Really Were*. Mark Noll 10:5:40.
- Sasse, Hermann. *We Confess--The Church*. Vernard Eller 10:3:40.
- Smith, Gary Scott. *The Seeds of Secularization: Calvinism, Culture, and Pluralism in America*. David Kling 10:1:25.
- Stackhouse, Max L. *Creeds, Society and Human Rights*. Esther Bruland 10:1:31.
- Sykes, Stephen. *The Identity of Christianity*. Dr. Geoffrey Bromiley 10:1:28.
- Taves, Ernest H. *Trouble Enough: Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon*. Mark Bishop Newell 10:3:41.
- Tillapaugh, Frank. *Unleashing the Church*. Samuel Henderson 10:3:34.
- Toon, Peter. *Heaven and Hell: A Biblical and Theological Overview*. Colin Brown 10:4:35.
- Turner, Philip. *Sex, Money & Power: An Essay in Christian Social Ethics*. Dr. Douglas J. Miller 10:2:35.
- Webber, Robert E. *The Church in the World: Opposition, Tension, or Transformation?* Jack P. Maddex, Jr. 10:4:44.
- Weber, Herbert F. *The Parish Help Book*. Samuel Henderson 10:3:38.
- Weinstein, Donald & Rudolph M. Bell. *Saints and Society: The Two Worlds of Western Christendom, 1000-1700*. Thomas O. Kay 10:4:37.
- Weir, Robert. *Selective Nontreatment of Handicapped Newborn*. Christine Pohl 10:4:46.
- Wennberg, Robert N. *Life in the Balance: Exploring the Abortion Controversy*. Dr. Richard Bube 10:2:31.
- Wicks, R.J.; R.D. Parsons; D. Capps, eds. *The Clinical Handbook of Pastoral Counseling*. Dr. John Vayhinger 10:5:44.
- Wilson, Robert R. *Sociological Approaches to the Old Testament*. Mr. Roy Ciampa 10:5:45.
- Wimber, John with Kevin Springer. *Power Evangelism*. David Werther 10:3:33.
- Wink, Walter. *Naming the Powers*. Dr. John H. Yoder 10:1:25.
- Wink, Walter. *Unmasking the Powers: The Invisible Forces That Determine Human Existence*. Dr. John H. Yoder 10:5:34.
- Yance, Norman Alexander. *Religion Southern Style*. Dr. Merle D. Strege 10:3:41.
- Zeligs, Dorothy F. *Moses: A Psychodynamic Study*. Dr. John Vayhinger 10:3:40.
- van der Walt, Jansie. *Calvin and His Times*. Rodney L. Petersen 10:4:47.

BOOK REVIEWS

<i>The End of the Ages Has Come: An Early Interpretation of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus</i> , by Dale C. Allison, Jr.	29	Joel B. Green
<i>Church, Kingdom, World</i> , ed. by Gennadios Limouris	29	Jeffrey Gros
<i>Human Medicine (rev. ed.)</i> , by James B. Nelson and Jo Anne Smith Rohricht	30	John Kilner
<i>The Humiliation of the Word</i> , by Jacques Ellul	30	Jack Balswick
<i>The Sermon on the Mount: Utopia or Program for Action?</i> by Pinchas Lapide	31	Joel B. Green
<i>Election and Predestination</i> , by Paul K. Jewett	31	Clark H. Pinnock
<i>The Galileo Connection: Resolving Conflicts Between Science and the Bible</i> , by Charles E. Hummel	31	Richard H. Bube
<i>Christian Morality: Biblical Foundations</i> , by Raymond F. Collins	32	Robert W. Wall
<i>A Crack in the Jar: What Ancient Jewish Documents Tell Us About the New Testament</i> , by Neil S. Fujita	32	J. Julius Scott, Jr.
<i>The Puritan Conversion Narrative</i> , by Patricia Caldwell	33	Roger Lundin
<i>The Sinai Strategy</i> , by Gary North	33	Thomas E. Van Dahm
<i>Unmasking the Powers: The Invisible Powers That Determine Human Existence</i> , by Walter Wink	34	John H. Yoder
<i>The Meaning of Creation: Genesis and Modern Science</i> , by Conrad Hyers	35	Richard H. Bube
<i>Jesus in European Protestant Thought, 1778-1860</i> , by Colin Brown	36	John G. Stackhouse
<i>Christian Theology: An Eschatological Approach, Vol. 1</i> , by Thomas N. Finger	36	Donald G. Bloesch
<i>The Reconstruction of the Christian Revelation Claim</i> , by Stuart C. Hackett	37	Robert A.H. Larmer
<i>Belonging: Our Need for Community in Church and Family</i> , by Stan D. Gaede	37	David O. Moberg
BOOK COMMENTS		
<i>Clark Speaks From the Grave</i> , by Gordon H. Clark	37	Clark H. Pinnock
<i>Worldly Saints: The Puritans As They Really Were</i> , by Leland Ryken	40	Mark A. Noll
<i>The Atonement of the Death of Christ: In Faith, Revelation and History</i> , by H.D. McDonald	40	Donald K. McKim
<i>What Are They Saying About Euthanasia?</i> by Richard M. Gula	40	Millard J. Erickson
<i>The Authority of the Bible</i> , by Robert Gnuse	42	Bruce Demarest
<i>Francis A. Schaeffer: Portraits of the Man and His Work</i> , by Lane T. Dennis	42	Christine D. Pohl
<i>The Theory and Practice of Virtue</i> , by Gilbert C. Meilaender	42	Stephen Charles Mott
<i>The Abusing Family</i> , by Blair and Rita Justice; <i>The Broken Taboo; Sex in the Family</i> , by Blair and Rita Justice	42	John M. Vayhinger
<i>Towards a Christian Poetics</i> , by Michael Edwards	44	Gregory H. Spencer
<i>That You May Believe: Miracles and Faith Then and Now</i> , by Colin Brown	44	Alan Padgett
<i>Clinical Handbook of Pastoral Counseling</i> , ed. by R.J. Wicks, R.D. Parsons and D.E. Capps	44	John M. Vayinger
<i>Women, Authority and the Bible</i> , ed. by Alvera Mickelsen	44	Donna Van Haren
<i>Sociological Approaches to the Old Testament</i> , by Robert R. Wilson	45	Roy E. Ciampa
<i>Clive Staples Lewis: A Dramatic Life</i> , by William Griffin	45	Janice A. Rossen
<i>Evangelical Ethics—Issues Facing the Church Today</i> , by John Jefferson Davis	45	John M. Kenney