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TSF BULLETIN

MARCH 1981

TSF BULLETIN

VOL. 4 No. 4

Formerly *TSF News & Reviews*
Published by Theological Students
Fellowship, 233 Langdon, Madison WI
53703. ISSN No. 0272-3913

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Isaac, there is a basic discontinuity between Jesus and his later interpreters, especially the Gentile Church but even some parts of the New Testament itself. For Baum, the discontinuity lies between the New Testament period, where the dispute between the Church and the Synagogue is a family quarrel, and the patristic period, where the racial element is introduced. For Ruether, there is no discontinuity; the Christian tradition has continuously engaged in an anti-Judaic polemic, which is deeply rooted in the New Testament and which inevitably gives rise to anti-Semitism.

This is not the place to enter into a lengthy discussion of these positions or the issues which they raise. My purpose here has been the more modest one of introducing the reader to representative and pivotal works in the current discussion. Nevertheless, two concluding reflections would not be out of order.

First of all, any application of the term "anti-Semitic" to the New Testament is anachronistic, not only because the anti-Judaic polemic of the New Testament arose in Jewish Christian circles, but also because it arose within a Judaism characterized by a proliferation of sects, parties and movements, each vying for positions of power and influence within Israel. The story of the development of Judaism from Ezra to Judah ha-Nasi is not the unbroken line of the gradual development of a "normative Judaism" in comparison to which Christianity and other non-Pharisaic movements were insignificant. Rather, before the Roman war which went a long way towards ensuring the success of Pharisaic Judaism, Hellenistic Jewish Christianity, along with the Qumran community, the Samaritans, and assorted apocalyptic movements, existed as nonconformist groups in opposition to the Jerusalem establishment. It is against this background that the origin of New Testament anti-Judaism is to be understood.

But secondly, the ever-present danger of the misuse and misinterpretation of New Testament texts must be acknowledged. We read the New Testament—a collection of writings produced by Christians who for the most part were also Jews—as Christians who for the most part are also Gentiles. We need to develop a hermeneutic which takes this ethnic transition into account. Because the earliest Gentile Church, as it took over the debate with the Synagogue from Jewish Christianity (there was continuity in the debate, if not in the ethnic origin of the participants), failed to take account of this altered situation, it contributed in no small way to a history which Christians can remember only with shame.

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CONTRIBUTING EDITORS NEEDED

Each year TSF accepts student applications for Contributors to *TSF Bulletin*. For 1981-82, the job description includes, (1) monitoring two periodicals in your academic field and keeping the Editor informed of the most worthwhile articles and reviews in that publication, and (2) submitting at least one book review as arranged in cooperation with an Associate Editor.

Letters of application must include current degree program, area of concentration, a sample of your writing, and summer and fall addresses. All applications should be received by May 30, 1981. Send to Editor, TSF Bulletin, 233 Langdon, Madison, WI 53703.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

(Probing questions, suggestions, and encouragement in areas of personal and spiritual growth)

"BUT YOU CAN'T BE A PASTOR . . ."

By Jan Erickson-Pearson

Jan Erickson-Pearson is finishing an M.Div. at North Park Seminary (Chicago) this spring. This article first appeared in the January-February, 1979 issue of Daughters of Sarah. The magazine is an excellent source of articles on biblical texts, theology, and biographies to help women and men find the understanding and encouragement of biblical feminism. (Reprinted with permission. Daughters of Sarah, 4011 N. Ayers Chicago, IL 60616.)

Feminism. I don't remember when I first heard that word. I do remember that it made me uncomfortable. It sounded so political and radical. Women should have the freedom to choose other-than-traditional life-styles and careers, but need they be so militant and aggressive about it?

When I first started thinking about pastoral ministry as a vocation for myself, I saw no need to be a part of the feminist movement. So what if I am a woman? That shouldn't make any difference. I want to be a pastor, not a *woman*-pastor. If this is what God wants me to do, I don't need a movement to respond obediently.

I was wrong.

As soon as I began to tell people of my plans to enter seminary and prepare for pastoral ministry, I began to hear what many of you have likely also heard. "Pastor? You can't be a pastor. You're a *woman!*" "A lady minister, eh? Well, you certainly don't intend to preach, do you?" "I guess it's okay for gals to be pastors. But not in my church." "I suppose there is one good thing about lady ministers — they're prettier."

I knew that what I planned to do was new and different. I knew that some people would need time to adjust to it. But I had no idea that resistance and hostility would be so strong. I supposed that only tradition prevented women from involvement in the pastoral ministry.

I learned fast. With so much woman-excluding theology thrown at me, I sought the support of other like-minded women. We studied together, trying to deal with the philosophical constructs and historical precedents that did not appear consistent with the sum of biblical teaching. And with the very real question of what the Bible *does* say about women.

I needed the support of other women and men in order to deal both with questions of understanding and with the emotional stress that always seems to accompany the challenging of the status quo. When a man announces to family and friends that he plans to "enter the ministry," there is much rejoicing and praising God. When a woman makes a similar announcement, there is a lot of muttering. Regardless of how I perceived myself, others saw me as a potential *woman*-pastor. Not quite the same caliber as a *pastor*. I began to understand the need for a feminist movement and my involvement in it.

Of all the responses to my plans, one was particularly haunting. "So you are going to be a minister? You need to be awfully strong and talented to be a woman minister these days. You'll have to be *great* in order to prove that women can do it!"

I didn't know I was called to be great. God was calling me to be faithful and obedient, to use my talents as best I could. But to be great? I'm not great, so maybe I had better not continue. I would hate to blow it for those who follow. I'm no Superwoman.

I thought about the few women I knew in places of authority and leadership. They were superior women. Strong; extraordinarily talented; very confident; generally far more capable than the men they worked with. They had to be. With all the odds of tradition and prejudice against them, they had fought for a place with the male-dominated system — and won. They had been important models for me. They were the exceptions that proved that women could make it in the professional world.

And yet mostly what they proved was that Superwomen could make it. For those capable, gifted — but not extraordinary — women there was still little room in the male system.

What about me? I was not one of those extraordinary women. Yet I firmly believed I was gifted by God for service as a pastor. Should I try to be Superwoman and fight to prove my 'alue'? Or get out because I simply was not exceptional?

I wondered if there were other women like me? Women who were gifted but not necessarily "great," and who were also called to ministries in the Church. What were they doing?

Many of them were feminists — Christian feminists. They were concerned not just with women having access to the system; they wanted to transform it. They believed that *all* women, not just a few exceptions, should have the freedom to choose where and how they would live and work. They were not only interested in getting a share of power; they wanted to redefine it. They were aware that the world is full of gifted, but not extraordinary women who, because of their unwillingness or inability to win a place in the structure, have been consigned to roles where they could not exercise those gifts to full capacity.

If changes were to be made, women had to work together. I began to identify as a Christian feminist because I believed that *all* women should be free to respond to God's call. (It was incredible to learn of women throughout the centuries who did not have that freedom to be fully obedient.) Feminism was no longer a dirty word for me, but a Christian one. It implied unselfish sisterhood. *My becoming a biblical feminist set me on a course of concern not only for my own career, my own freedom, but of concern for the freedom and wholeness of other women as well.*

My pilgrimage toward pastoral ministry and feminism began early, but was not without detours. I grew up (almost literally) in a small, evangelical church in the midwest. As early as I can remember, I heard from my parents and the women who taught me in Sunday School that Jesus loved me and wanted me to follow him.

There was no distinction made between the way Jesus loved and called boys and girls. We were all invited to have a personal relationship with Jesus and to be obedient to his teaching. So far as I knew it then, his teaching did not have different implications for boys and girls. As I grew older, I came to experience and understand Jesus' love, and made a commitment to follow him. That early commitment proved to be a strong foundation upon which a more mature faith developed. Also from this foundation grew my expectation that any career I later pursued would be related to the Church.

The swing set in our back yard was my first choir loft. Our living room staircase was the scene of my first sermons. Every Saturday morning I would assemble all of my dolls and stuffed animals in rows on the stairs, lead them in singing my favorite choruses, and then preach to them. I am told that my sermons were very enthusiastic and evangelistic, especially for a five-year-old. I like to think of that as valuable early training for life as a pastor!

Cousin Sharyl and I also liked to play church together. She was usually the preacher because she didn't mind being a "boy," and by that time we had learned, of course, that our preacher had to be a boy. (Detour number one.)

By age seven I had decided to be a minister's wife. At that point I did not care at all who the minister was; I just wanted to be the woman who got to live in the parsonage, have people

HAVE WE MISSED YOU?

Occasionally a member fails to receive one of our publications. *TSF Bulletin* is issued five times each school year (October, November, February, March, April). *Themelios* is published three times a year (usually September, January, April). Note: The January issue has not yet been received from England for North American distribution. Please let us know if you have not received any issues for which you have paid.

over for coffee, direct the choir, and teach Bible classes. The reason for that choice likely had something to do with the example set by the minister's wife in my church. She had an important and strong ministry in our community. I wanted to do what she did. Besides, it sounded exciting.

If I ever thought of being a pastor at that point, I quickly dismissed it. Women simply were not pastors. So, if I was going to be part of the minister's family at all, the only role available was that of wife. (Detour number two.)

While in junior high I began browsing in the occupational handbooks in the library. Such books had one section for girls and a separate one for boys. I was interested in education and social services. I also had a growing desire to find a church-related occupation. There were not many full-time options which covered all of those interests. (Ministers were not listed in the girls' section.)

I remember flipping through the boys' section and stopping at the entry on ministers. What a tidy way to combine all of my career ideas! But I was a girl and that was not an option for me. I all but forgot about it. (Detour number three.)

I left for college with vague and unenthusiastic intentions of becoming a counselor or teacher. I was interested in both, but alone each seemed lacking. The call to some kind of church work would not be still. Thus I chose North Park College (Chicago) because of its immediate proximity to a seminary. (My parents, who wholeheartedly approved of my early ambition to be a minister's wife, instructed me to get a part-time job working in the seminary library!)

But deep inside of me was a sense that God's call to me to serve could not be dependent on who, or if, I married. Through periods of doubt and questioning, this sense of calling grew. God used my participation in a small singing group to awaken my specific interests in pastoral ministry. I really enjoyed planning and leading worship services. A summer spent traveling from church to church gave me a clearer picture of the frustrations and opportunities which are a part of pastoral ministry. Once again I was caught by a desire to be part of such a ministry. But it had not yet dawned on me that I could be a pastor. So I told people I met that I was interested in Christian education. They were thrilled.

Meanwhile, my thoughts of marrying a minister were fading fast. The fellow I was dating had no such intentions, and dreamed of being a mail carrier or urban planner. As we moved toward marriage, I began to realize that if anyone in our family was going to be a minister, it would have to be me. When the thought crossed my mind, I was at once awed and at home with it. It was the perfect synthesis of all my other career plans.

I realized that while all along I thought I wanted to be a minister's wife, I had actually wanted to be a minister. I never recognized it because it wasn't on the list of options. I hadn't known of any women serving as pastors, and no one had ever asked me to consider it. Now for the first time my desired vocation had a name — pastor.

I suddenly became aware of women who were serving as pastors. They helped make my new career seem like a realistic possibility. God also provided a number of women friends to encourage me and give support as I planned to attend seminary. Today we studied Scripture, as well as church history,

and found numerous, though obscured, examples of women as ministers, sharing authority with men. I was especially struck by the way Jesus treated women. In a day when the teaching of Torah to women was strictly forbidden, Jesus took time to teach them the truths of the Kingdom, praising their interest and participation in his ministry.

I found Prisca and Aquila quite by accident. Sometime after I decided to attend seminary, my husband-to-be also decided to prepare for pastoral ministry. These friends of the Apostle Paul were exciting to discover in the pages of Acts. They were a precedent for the husband-wife team ministry we have begun to prepare for.

My family and friends were getting used to the idea that I really did plan to go to seminary and become a pastor. It wasn't a passing fancy. They expressed various degrees of enthusiasm, but were at least interested. My marriage changed all that.

Unfortunately, much of the interest previously expressed in my plans shifted to those of my husband. "How is Dave doing? How much school does he have left? What kind of ministry is he planning on?" People who knew that both of us were in school would instead ask me about my part-time typing job. When he went out for dinner, Dave was asked to pray because *he* was going to be a minister. *He* was given ideas for sermon illustrations. *I* was asked if I enjoyed cooking.

This is not all in the past. As time goes on, reactions have become more subtle. I have preached several times in local churches. Each time comments expressed to me afterwards have concerned my appearance, not the content of my sermon.

I have a hard time knowing how to deal with these reactions. Should I express honest anger and hurt or be patient and gracious? People are not exactly rejecting *me*; they simply cannot fully accept the *idea* of women as pastors. But I am not an idea; I am a woman. By making these comments, people do inhibit me from being the person I could and should be.

Part of my job as a pastor is to enable people to accept change and give them time to do so. Hitting them over the head is usually not effective. But I have a right to be honest and tell people that I hurt when they try to ignore who I am and what I am doing. To ask people to think seriously about my plans and ask for their support. None of this is easy.

I doubt that I would have stuck by my plans for ministry if it weren't for my husband Dave. I have received his respect, support and confidence. When others have tried to pretend that I wasn't really in seminary, he was out there telling people I was

a good preacher. When male classmates suggested that I good grades were maybe gifts of sympathetic professors, reminded me that I earned them. When I got discouraged, I decided that I just didn't have the stamina to be a pioneer, would remind me of my strength and my gifts. When I decided that fixing supper is the biggest challenge I can face, I reminds me of past victories. He pushes me to be all that I can be. And he lets me do the same for him. Friends tell me I'm lucky. I prefer to think that God knew exactly the kind of partner I needed and could love best.

I find it very exciting to see women not only moving into pastoral ministry, but helping transform it. I do not expect to be an "answer woman" or a perfect example to be revered and placed on a pedestal. I see my ministry more in terms of service than authority. The respect accorded a pastor is not something to be hoarded, but a tool for enabling the faith and ministry of others.

At the very heart of my pilgrimage has been the promise of Christian freedom. The abundant life which Christ offers has freed me from having to fit a role prepared for me by society. It has freed me from trying to meet all of the expectations of others. I am free to be myself — a woman gifted by God and called to service in the church. Not a superwoman, with extraordinary talents and strengths. But one who struggles to be faithful and obedient. And one who needs the strong arms of supportive sisters and brothers when I get discouraged. I have learned that this freedom is not a point at which I arrive, but a process and journey toward God's future. It is the awareness of hope and wholeness, and the confidence of finding meaning in each new day. Freedom is not something I possess. It is always ahead of me, luring me forward. Yet it has already broken in upon me. I experience and celebrate it as I choose to be God's woman.

TSF Bulletin does not necessarily speak for Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship on matters dealt with in its brief articles. Although editors personally sign the IVCF basis of faith, our purpose is to provide resources for and encouragement towards biblical *thinking* and *living* rather than to formulate "final" answers.

REVIEWS (Notes and critiques on recent books and periodicals)

BOOK REVIEWS

Reason Enough: A Case for the Christian Faith

by Clark H. Pinnock (InterVarsity Press, 1980, 126 pp. \$3.50). Reviewed by Mark D. Roberts, Ph.D. student in religion, Harvard University.

Clark Pinnock believes he has "reason enough" to embrace Christian faith. In a concise yet comprehensive and compelling discussion he explains why.

Pinnock intends his essay primarily for those intrigued by the Christian message who wonder: "Is Christianity in fact true?" (p. 9). But he also wishes "to help believers who from time to time find themselves asking the same question" (p. 9). Writing as one "sensitive to the pervasive influence of secularity in the

modern world" (p. 10), Pinnock often outlines and confronts the dogmas of atheistic secular humanism. He shows these dogmas and their implications to be both bleak and incredible in contrast to a Christian world view.

Pinnock organizes his presentation by dividing it into "five subject areas or categories of evidence," which he calls "five circles of credibility" (p. 13). The first three circles — Pragmatic, Experiential, Cosmic — defend theism in general while the last two — Historical, Community — focus specifically on Christianity. Their essential arguments are:

Pragmatic. In contrast to secular humanism, theism "makes it possible for us to have confidence in the dignity and worth of human life" (p. 36). Thus it not only fulfills our need for meaning, but equally it undergirds ethical altruism.

Experiential. The fact that multitudes of people have had religious experiences, combined with the quality of and similarity between these

experiences, points to the transcendent Reality which underlies them.

Cosmic. As opposed to humanism, theism provides the best explanation for the creation and design of the cosmos, especially its moral and mental dimension.

Historical. Given the historical reliability of the gospels and the "impressive and solid" (p. 88) evidence for the resurrection, one can reasonably conclude that the gospel of Christ is true.

Community. The Christian community, founded in response to the gospel, illustrates by its internal character and social impact that this gospel can create a new human reality.

In a particularly apt analogy, Pinnock compares these five categories of evidence to strands of a rope. As a rope derives strength from the combination of its strands, so Pinnock's case for Christian faith draws its cogency from the binding together of his five categories.