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Even as we attempt to center theological education in God, we become painfully aware of the broken, fragmentary nature of the undertaking. We are constantly tempted to identify our doctrines and definitions about God with the Reality which *is God.* But, he is always beyond our grasp; he refuses to be confined to our labels; he does not easily fit into our systems; he will not act in ways we prescribe for him!

Even as we focus theological education on the worth and preciousness of human beings, we become painfully aware that our normal impulses militate against that, and we have a difficult time modeling that commitment. Somehow, programs tend to become more important than persons, success more desired than growth, and statistics more valued than relationships.

Even as we lift up the centrality of Jesus Christ in theological education, we become painfully aware of our tendency to domesticate and tame him; to strip from him the rags of the Suffering Servant and shroud him in the glittering robes of triumphalism; to heap up so much historical and critical knowledge about him, that we are finally prevented from *knowing* Him.

Even as we attempt to ground theological education in the biblical Word, we are painfully aware of the gulf which separates the twentieth century from the time of the writers, and of our faltering attempts to find ways in which that Word can address our time. And so we are tempted to domesticate the book, using it to serve the purposes of our strategies, our agendas, our ideologies and belief systems. Or, we idolize the book, using it as a quarry of eternal truths which we then struggle to understand for our time.

Finally, *even as we attempt to focus theological education toward ministry and the church,* we are painfully aware of our own continuing participation in the failures and weaknesses of its life and ministry; of our clouded vision about its nature and mission; of our fragmentary understanding of the world to which the ministry of the church must be directed.

We carry the glory in earthen vessels. That is the agony of theological education! But we have no viable options. Indeed, as the Evangelist John recognized in his portrait of Jesus, *there is no glory without the agony!* Or, more precisely, it is only as we submit to the agony, as we allow it to be the matrix for growth, that we can fully experience the glory.

Theological Implications of the Arms Race

by Carole Fontaine

Those who speak on the relationship of Scripture to any modern enterprise come with a strong sense of their position's ambivalence. On the one hand, they have been radically confronted with words—words whose sacred character has allowed them to be authentically validated in the lives of believers over the centuries.

On the other hand, they know that Scripture's message to believers over those same centuries is conditioned by time. This is inherent in the very nature of language itself. Scripture came into being within a given historical matrix. Hence, it automatically reflects the character of that socio-economic milieu.

The same kinds of cultural conditioning will exist in modern hearers of the Word. Here we deal with especially insidious biases in the form of the basic presuppositions about life which we, the modern readers, bring to the text. This will be true whether we listen for a literal "truth," a sort of cookbook by which to concoct our lives, or for the finely-honed critical detail which sparks a professional's curiosity. Our modern conditioning is especially dangerous simply because, since it *is* ours, we are less likely to be aware of its influence on our understanding. It is no easy task to "time travel" between the generations without losing one's way.

Yet here I stand as a Christian and a faithful exegete of Hebrew Scripture, calling for the need "to study war no more." I am aware that there are some in my field, who, using the same types of biblical criticism which I employ, might find a very different sort of message coming from Scripture.

Indeed, I suspect we are all too well aware of the picture of the vengeful God of war of the "Old" Testament who is so frequently juxtaposed with the Sunday school portrait of Jesus, the gentle good shepherd. Perhaps all of us have wondered secretly how such a "Father" could produce such a "Son."

Fortunately for most Christians, the dilemma is easily solved by noting that the war god is, after all, located in the "Old" Testament, that rather embarrassingly thick group of pages right before Matthew. The Old has passed away, and we are governed by what is New. So unless we stumble over an improperly edited psalm as we are singing, we are usually all right in disregarding the strident tones of nationalism, racism, militarism and sexism which seem to blare from the pages of the Hebrew Bible like a trumpet's call to worship in a liberal's worst nightmare.

Yet, one must take a stand on such questions somewhere, to speak to one's world with a voice grounded in the lessons and experiences of past generations of the faithful. It was their encounter with the "Living God" which is, after all, the substance of Scripture. I am well aware of the tendency in my field and in me to become so involved over the proper translation of Armageddon that we are able to forget that we stand on its very brink. I wish I could reassure you concerning the military imagery in the depiction of Israel's God, the "might-makes-right" mentality, and the patriarchal orders that reserve important decisions, decisions which are critical to the lives of all, to an elite few. I wish I could tell you that all these things were cultural borrowings from Canaanite warlords. It is tempting indeed to explain away some of those quaint features in the Hebrew Bible war narratives—such as that of the "ban" or holy war in which all that breathes was to be exterminated as an offering to God. References to "primitive" nomadic cultures in which the virtue of "manly honor" tended to produce especially aggressive codes of behavior as the male ideal might alleviate some of our distress over the text. While many of these observations are valid, and *do* bring us more clarification about the concept of war and its relationship to God and God's people, still the fact remains: The Lord is a Man of War. We read this in Exodus 15.

Israel tells us this when singing of a nation of slaves at its greatest moment of triumph: after the crossing of the Red Sea and the subsequent destruction of the chariots of Pharaoh pursuing the band of fleeing slaves. Throughout both Testaments there is an undeniable witness which insists that God "fights" on behalf of God's people. We know too well the

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kind of complacency that such "triumphalist" theology may breed, because it always seems so obvious that we are God's people. Our enemies *must* be wrong, and things will naturally come right for us in the end. God is on our side. We are sure of it.

But who is this God-on-our-side? A God who condones the slaughter of innocent Canaanite children? A god of Auschwitz and Kampuchea? As Christians we may wish to propose here a different theological image as a corrective. We may choose to speak instead of that bleeding, rejected Messiah in Gethsemane, a man whose friends were so faithless that they feared to grieve openly as he died the painful slow death of a convicted criminal.

Yet what is one, twenty, a thousand crucifixions compared to the horrors our century has witnessed? The hideous and immediate threat of extermination of all life on this planet in a nuclear holocaust is a very real possibility which has never existed before. As a popular young comic often concludes his routines, "You've got to be crazy. It's too late to be sane."

Reading the Old Testament

So with the two-edged sword of Scripture—a militaristic image already!—let me offer a different reading of the Word of the Living God which addresses us from the past in Scripture. It claims us now in the outcry against impending nuclear destruction. I would like to suggest some important features which condition an authentic scriptural understanding of what our faith demands as we face threats the like of which no ancient prophet ever dreamed—not the God-on-our-side of popular religion, but a God upon whose side we can take our stand in perfect confidence; a God whose presence with us in the midst of broken, hostile environments has traveled the strange road from Eden to Golgotha. The worship of this God requires us to reject much which is comforting in the popular nationalistic theological assessments of the nuclear madness in which our world is engaged.

Then what do we make of this God whom we are explicitly told is a "man of war"? This deity is called the "Lord of Hosts," usually understood as the "heavenly army" which fights cosmically on behalf of Israel. To understand this God properly, we must give a context to the circumstances from which these characterizations arose.

The people Israel were born out of the Exodus experience; on this almost all critics agree, regardless of their various assessments of the amount of historical truth to be found in the Book of Genesis. Against impossible odds, a tired, hurried band of slaves of many ethnic groups escaped from the control of one of the mightiest states known in the ancient world. Ancient Egyptian records tell us that it was common practice to allow nomadic tribes to settle the Nile delta during famines. Semitic prisoners of war from Syro-Palestine had routinely been used for slave labor throughout the Second Millenium B.C.E. Yet somehow—dare we say, miraculously—"something happened," something which Israel could never forget. The people continued to ratify their commitment to the authenticity of this Exodus experience in covenant renewal ceremonies where they swore their sole allegiance to this Force—"The Holy One," the One who keeps watch over Israel. Literally, the appellation "Holy" meant "the One who is Absolutely Other," radically separate from anything else known in their world.

The people of Israel soon found that alliance with this strange Entity was no easy task, for this was a jealous God, as the God of the oppressed perhaps has the right to be. God demanded justice and equity to be lived out daily in the life of the society of all true worshippers. *This* ultimate demand is the origin of the Torah, often called "the Law," but better thought of as "the Way." Israel's God prescribed a way of life in which the rights and needs of all were to be met.

It is interesting to note that the Holy One seems to have been associated with certain "special interest groups" in the thinking of early Israel, as one scholar has recently put it. Who were they? As we might begin to expect, they were those who had no other protector but Divine Righteousness: widows and orphans (those with no male relatives to maintain them); and resident aliens (those who normally were accorded no rights within the societies in which they resided). This Holy Lord is also especially associated with the "citizen army" of early Israel, since this newly formed people were surrounded on all sides by hostile and imperialistic powers.

This was the "great sin" of Israel's history: thinking that the Holy One, the Redeemer, could be placated and manipulated with ornate worship and empty words instead of deeds of justice.

The Canaanite city-states functioned by means of a military aristocracy and ornate mythological cults. They served the purpose of wasting enormous economic resources on the "worship" of divine fertility and cults of the dead. They also supported the royal house and priesthood. The warlords of Palestine found Israel's new form of egalitarian organization a direct threat. As the Canaanite peasantry began to think about the divine in a new way—that perhaps God, and not the king or the hereditary elite, owned the land—they began to question why their children went hungry as they offered up their produce in the Cult of the Dead. Seeds of change had been planted.

The imperialist powers of Egypt and Mesopotamia felt the presence of this threat less directly. For them, Israel, because of its position as the land bridge between Africa, Europe and Asia, was simply in the way of their continuous attempts to wrest control of the major trade routes from each other. "Har" or Mt. Megiddo in northern Israel guarded the pass of the intersecting roads. It is from the Greek transliteration of this word that the term *Armageddon* comes. Har Megiddo had seen too many bloody struggles for the biblical authors to believe that the end of the world would begin any place but there, where the continents meet and collide.

Now we see the socio-economic and cultural features which undergird the "theology" of the Holy One as a warrior god. The first meaning, that of a great experiment in equality, was subsequently bastardized as Israel's monarchy interpreted this symbolism nationalistically. It is this interpretation which the classical prophets vehemently oppose. The narrow view of the Holy One as a national god constituted Israel's harlotry and running after false gods. This was the "great sin" of Israel's history: thinking that the Holy One, the Redeemer, could be placated and manipulated with ornate worship and empty words instead of deeds of justice. The prophets believed it was for this sin that the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah had been destroyed—and destroyed by the very national God who was to be always on "their" side.

For early Israel it was clear that their God engaged in real struggles to maintain society. God was encountered as a Force that was so "unearthly" as to prefer slaves over pharaohs, a

God who made old women laugh at the thought of becoming mothers of the Promise. This was no God of repressive Canaanite hierarchy, but one who turned young women into judges and heroines in a thoroughly patriarchal society. Israel's affirmation of the Holy One as a "man of war" and patron of the military reflects the people's experiential knowledge that they had *indeed* been saved through more than their own efforts. The metaphor witnesses to the fact that their very existence continued to be threatened by competing social orders with far more resources at their disposal; and yet, somehow, the people continued to exist in a new way, a way which affirmed life instead of death. Israel needed protection in a hostile world—as do we all.

When Israel spoke of the Holy One using the imagery of a war god, it was because of the knowledge that the faithful are *always* engaged in a struggle to survive and preserve the ideals of life and justice in a world that so often chooses death and injustice. Jesus of Nazareth and other rabbis of his time were bearing witness to the great theological truth of Israel's vision in the ambitious summary of the entire Hebrew Bible in two statements: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your might . . . and you shall love others as you love yourself. Here indeed hangs all the teachings of the Law and the Prophets, and the source for modern wisdom.

If we say the Lord is a "man" of war, we must understand the true meaning of this cry: this is a God of power, employed on behalf of the powerless. Here we have a God who is engaged in the great fight against death. Despite later Israel's growing ethnic insularity as a way of preserving that "special" identity as God's people in the midst of foreigners after the fall of the monarchies, here perhaps we can begin to see the continuity between the God of the Old and the New Covenants. The Exodus is reinterpreted in the Way of the Cross: "Immanuel," God among us, suffering with us, God for us, as we challenge the might of death. Here, perhaps, is a God whom we can worship in joy, hope and integrity, working shoulder to shoulder with all those who have gone before us, seeing their dreams unrealized, but trusting in the ultimate victory of the Living God.

When Jesus proclaims to bemused followers, "Do not think I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace, but rather a sword" (Mt. 10:34), we may now see that sword for what it is: a weapon of unflinching resolve which sweeps away the powers of greed and injustice that decree death—whether it be to individuals, society or our fragile planet. The promise of salvation offered in the Resurrection offers us the freedom to work for an "alternate future" here on earth. It is not an "exemption" clause which excuses us from our responsibilities here-and-now because we have been promised our "pie-in-the-sky" later in the "sweet-bye-and-bye."

What Does God Require?

What implications can be drawn for us today from this new context of understanding our traditions' relationship to war? What do we find here to help us understand what Scripture and the God of Life require of us? We stand weak and outnumbered against entrenched and powerful bureaucracies that grind mindlessly on toward a judgment day which will be darkness and not light, as the prophet Amos pointed out centuries ago. Government officials have told us that a nuclear freeze is bad military policy and bad arms control policy. Let us be clear: we know the way of the world and the hearts of those who choose violence. Does not nuclear disarmament spell a greater increase in conventional armaments, more expenditure of resources of life and energy, more illicit intervention on the part of the great powers into the affairs of the small? Nicaragua has already suffered at our hands more than once this century in our invasion and support of the brutal Somoza regime. The spectre of further intervention grows more solid every day, as our President and Defense Department wave the threat of "increased Soviet buildup," like some witch doctors' dead bones rattling in our face, in hope of turning back our purpose. Peace is impossible, they tell us. But what does Scripture tell us?

It is likely that wars, whether deemed holy or just, are more a testament to the human failure to understand God and one another, than to some divine approval of such wasteful enterprises.

First, we may take our position certain of the theological ground on which we stand. Even though others may dispute our readings of sociological issues at points, the Cross stands forever as a living witness to Christ against Culture, liberating us from the perspective that violence is our only choice and death our only end. We are called to say, as Deuteronomy (the book from Hebrew Scripture most quoted in the New Testament) confronts its hearers, "Choose Life!" We must choose as our God and Savior would choose, opting to say a radical "no!" to the acceptance of the violence that culture decrees. Do not be deceived: the price of our "no" to nuclear madness will not be cheap. We commit ourselves to a struggle which will probably not cease in our lifetime—all the more reason why we must begin to raise our outcry *now*. We may not see the end of our work, but, God willing—and on this point I can believe no other than that God *is* willing—we may hope that our efforts will keep us from seeing the end of our planet.

Throughout Scripture, there are poignant references to God's joy in creation, the goodness of matter and the created order, and its deep and abiding relationship to its Creator. Often in the midst of our human-centered arguments against God, Scripture turns our gaze away from ourselves toward the world around us. "Consider the lilies," we are told, in the midst of our plans and confusion. "Those who go down to the sea in ships—*they* have seen the works of the Lord!" we are informed in our land locked, isolated world view which sets human interests precisely in the center of our universe. "Are the trees men that you make war against them?" Deuteronomy (20:19) challenges us, referring to the ancient practice of defoliation of enemy territory during wars.

Genesis makes our position very clear: we were created to "till and to keep watch" over the earth. If we have interpreted our charge to "have dominion and subdue" as meaning to trample, rape and defile our planet as we please in order to suit our often questionable definition of progress, let us not blame Scripture or God, but ourselves, for such errant, greedy readings of the text. Creation suffers from our sins; it must be redeemed through us or it will perish with us. Our two fates are inseparable, but God is concerned for both.

The wicked city Ninevah is "saved" by its repentance at the message of the prophet Jonah (much to his disgust, I might add!). Jonah resisted his call, knowing that the immense compassion of God would probably end in forgiveness of this most hated ancient city, a center of inhumanity and imperialism.

With the kindly intervention of creation in the form of a "great fish" who knows its duty better than the prophet, Jonah nonetheless finds himself preaching words of life to the enemy of his people. Jonah hates his success—he does not believe Ninevah deserves salvation, and probably, by human standards, he is right. We should count ourselves fortunate that our Creator does not share such standards, or rather, feels equally free to dispense "second chances" as well as righteous retribution richly deserved. In a pointed object lesson, the sulking Jonah is taught the value of every living thing, when he laments over the death of the shade tree God has provided overnight to shelter him from the sun. The Holy One chastens the prophet with this sharp comparison:

> You pity the plant for which you did not labor nor did you make it grow, which came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should not I pity Ninevah, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, not to mention many animals? (Jonah 4:10-11)

Ancient Israelite pragmatists may have sought to characterize the Living God as a nationalistic war god, but in so doing, they were guilty of burying traditions of God's goodness to all beings. Ancient Israel may have fought "Holy Wars" under the rubric of this faulty theology, even as the Christian Church has proposed models of "just wars" since its recognition as a state religion, despite this contradiction to the teaching of the Church's first three centuries. However, it is likely that wars, whether deemed holy or just, are more a testament to the human failure to understand God and one another, than to some divine approval of such wasteful enterprises. No matter how we choose to evaluate these past conflicts, it is unthinkable to apply such models of the justification of culturally sanctioned slaughter to a nuclear world.

The arms race and nuclear proliferation constitute a very real modern equivalent of the ancient "Cult of the Dead," which is rejected by both Testaments. While children around the world go hungry, we squander our human, financial and ecological resources to produce items whose sole purpose is to cause death and blight. When political instability caused by the injustices of the use of the world's resources, and the greed of the powerful and the misery of the poor frightens us, we choose to send military aid and design anti-terrorist squads rather than speak of the real source of the problems and their resolution. Our governments condemn us, if not to nuclear holocaust, to a series of Afghanistans and Polands, Chiles, Nicaraguas, El Salvadors, Guatemalas. While the power brokers of this world choose to characterize our dilemmas as "guns or butter," let the people of God, empowered by faith, speak out to name a different reality: the possibility of choosing life for ourselves and our planet, instead of death. The answer is not *more* militarism, but less! More justice and less justification of "business as usual" in foreign policy will serve us better than all the missiles and helicopters on God's earth.

We are no longer faced with the polite dichotomy between spending our resources on shiny, new, "better" guns, rather than on butter, the "high-priced spread" of the well-fed elite. We can no longer afford either guns *or* butter—not when the people have no bread. We cannot offer "cake" while the world starves, creating the very conditions for the outbreak of war which we fear and attempt to hold off by brandishing our arsenals at one another. We must be prepared to sacrifice our high standards of expenditure for higher standards of world equality. We must, lest when we stand for judgment before our Lord, we be forced to ask, "Lord, when did *we* ever see You hungry?" (Mt. 25). We know the answer already: God, in our neighbors, our world, is hungry everywhere. While we continue to support the arms race, we exist in alienating contradiction to the teachings of Torah and Gospel alike. There can be no question of rendering unto Caesar when the survival of all life is at stake, for that is the province of the Holy One, the Living God.

Rarely have the people of God had so great an opportunity to serve God and the world, atoning for past omissions and signalling new possibilities for the future.

Our "call to worship," then, as the faithful bearers of the Judeo-Christian tradition, is a call to dissent—loudly, incessantly, and hopefully, even where there seems to be no hope. Will the rest of the world hear our "religiously" motivated cries against nuclear madness? Perhaps we should not be unduly shocked if we are dismissed as dreamers or viewed cynically in light of our past inability to turn aside from violence—better that we dream of peace and rice rather than of apocalypse and failure.

Rarely have the people of God had so great an opportunity to serve God and the world, atoning for past omissions and signalling new possibilities for the future. But will the Russians, the Pakistanis, Israel, Wall Street or Washington listen? Even cynics are beginning to recognize that *all* our fates are mutually threatened by the potential of nuclear annihilation. World War III will have no winners; a "limited" conflict is not likely to remain limited for long, and there will be only losers. We might suggest a new, more worldly slogan. Perhaps: "Nuclear War is Bad for Business"—or Pan-Islam, or world Marxism, or Zionism, or whatever people believe worthy of dying to support. We must teach each other instead to speak of those things worth *living* for. Let us take heart in our task for here we are taking our place at the throbbing heart of all theology: God's commitment to life. Recall those words, never more meaningful than now: Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God (Mt. 5).

How shall we proceed then, in serving our God and planet, demanding both reconciliation rather than violence from us, and stewardship of resources rather than reckless criminal waste? We should not think that we are the only "remnant" of those who seek to live the faith for themselves by working for the survival of the greater community. When the Israelites returned from their captivity in Babylon, they were bolstered by the beauty of the promises of the prophet Second Isaiah, but were soon disillusioned. The Palestinian situation was not an easy one for them socially, economically, or theologically as they sought to cope with their changed status in society, now that they were no longer a sovereign state, but a province under foreign rule. The people sought to rebuild the Jerusalem temple at least, but even that proved a difficult and disappointing enterprise. We are told that those who remembered Solomon's temple wept at the sight of the Second Temple because it bore so little of its former glory. Yet though it was not what they remembered, it was built through common struggle to the glory of God, and the Lord of Hosts had a "word" of encouragement to those engaged in the process. It is a word which seems especially apt for us today, as we work

into uncertainty, confident only of the end if we do not work on into the night. The word from Zechariah 4 contains not only censure but hope, as we labor to give birth to a more peaceful world: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of Hosts" (Zec. 4:6b).

Let us be encouraged: we do not work alone, though we may often feel we do. Through the Spirit of God all things, even peace, become possible, if we are willing to give them a chance. We know we will lose if we do not. We are ready to risk winning a world back from death and destruction. Let us not be afraid to do so—"by my Spirit," says the Lord of Hosts.

Paul and Galatians 3:28

by Daniel P. Fuller

According to Galatians 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free; there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

In what sense should we understand these negations? Except in the case of "neither slave nor free," they cannot mean erasing distinctions between groups of people.

Help comes in realizing that Paul borrowed these three statements from the wording of a baptismal ceremony. There are two other places in the Pauline corpus (I Cor. 12:13, Col. 3:11) where there are such formulaic statements declaring an end to the differences between groups that have been opposed to each other. Baptism is explicitly mentioned in the immediate context of two of these statements (I Cor. 12:13, Gal. 3:28) and implicitly in the third.

Concerning Colossians 3:11, Michel Bouttier notes that in its context, there is emphasis upon having died, with Christ, to the elemental spirits (2:20-23), and having been raised up to heaven, with Christ, where one is to foster a set of new affections (3:1-4). Then, because of union with Christ in his death and resurrection, there are exhortations to "put to death" or "put off" the evil practices and affections of the former life (3:5-10), and to "put on" a new set of affections (3:12f.). In between there is an argument with language resembling that of Galatians 3:28: "Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all" (3:11). Since the writer, both before and after 3:11, is echoing Paul's baptismal language of Romans 6:1-13, Bouttier therefore concludes that "the baptismal formula [of Col. 3:11] is enshrined in the development of chapter iii" (Bouttier, 1977).

In each of the three places where this baptismal formula appears, it is emphasized that the great benefits that come from being united with Christ are enjoyed equally by every believer, whatever his or her race, class, or gender. So, in the passage just considered (Col. 3:11), believers from races opposite from the Greek in two directions, the Jew on the one hand, and the Scythian, who is "a particularly uncivilized barbarian" (Windisch, 1964, p. 552) on the other, enjoy the same blessings of being freed from the elemental spirits. I Corinthians 12:13 argues the point of the preceding verse 11, that God apportions all his various spiritual gifts "to each one individually as he wills," by affirming that "by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit." The third statement, Galatians 3:28, comes between two climactic affirmations of the blessings enjoyed by faith in Christ. "In Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (vv. 27f.). Afterwards comes the affirmation, "If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise" (v. 29). Therefore the negations of v. 28—neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female—want to deny that the blessings of being united with Christ depend in any way upon race, class, or gender.

So the history of the interpretation of Galatians 3:28 from Chrysostom to the present shows a general agreement that each believer, despite his or her distinctives, should rejoice in the all-sufficiency of God's blessings attained by faith in Christ. However, divergent opinions emerge in understanding how the "neither-nor's" should affect the attitude and behavior of one believer toward an opposite in the pairs of Galatians 3:28. Can a slaveholder own a slave who, like him, is a member of Christ's body? If God dispenses his spiritual gifts "to each one individually as he wills," then should a church be on the lookout, among the women as well as the men, for those having the gifts requisite for official ministry? In this century there is disagreement in many American churches over this question, as in the last century there was disagreement over the application of "neither bond nor free."

Since the affirmation of this baptismal formula was so important for Paul that he (or his school) used a form of it three times, we believe that we should go to his writings to learn what we can of how he wanted the negations of Galatians 3:28 to be applied between believers in the matters of race, class, and gender. Like Michel Bouttier (but with different results), "we would like to review quickly how Paul himself received and lived out those few and various passages, pertinent to Galatians 3:28, by which we catch a glimpse of his thinking" (1977, p. 16).

"Neither Jew nor Greek"

Galatians 2 provides specific information on how Paul applied oneness in Christ to relations between Christian Jews and Gentiles. During his visit to Jerusalem, a certain group of Christian Jews (termed "false brethren"—2:4) sought to have Titus, a baptized Gentile, circumcised. In addition to baptism, they wanted circumcision to comprise the sign of the covenant. Making each Gentile believer submit to circumcision as well as baptism would have greatly impeded Paul's Gentile mission and very possibly stopped it altogether. So Paul resisted all efforts to have Titus circumcised, "that the truth of the Gospel might be preserved for you [Gentiles]" (2:5).

Paul's efforts succeeded, and Christians Jews had to accept the uncircumcised Titus as being fully an heir of the promises to Abraham's seed as any Jew. Paul also required a similarly profound change in a Jew's attitude and behavior toward a Gentile, when the situation arose where a Christian Jew, residing in the Diaspora, belonged to a church comprised of many baptized Gentiles, like that at Antioch (cf. Gal. 2:11–14). Because early Christians ate meals together in their household churches, Paul, Peter, and other Christian Jews joined with Christian Gentiles at these meals and ate whatever was served. However, Christian Jews at Jerusalem were troubled to hear this, so they sent a group to Antioch, apparently to inquire about this matter. As a result, Peter stopped eating

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