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Introduction

Vernon Grounds

2

Theological Education: The Glory and the Agony

Manfred Brauch

3

Theological Implications of the Arms Race

Carole Fontaine

5

Paul and Galatians 3:28

Daniel Fuller

9

Points of Dialogue Between Evangelical and Jews

Marc Saperstein

13

Taize-Style Soul Renewal

16

Book Reviews and Comments

(Itemized on Back Cover)

20

Taize-Style Soul Renewal

In 1940 Robert Schutz, a Swiss Reformed theologian, lived in the half-abandoned village of Taize, which is located on a hillside in Burgundy, France. God gave him a vision of a community that would be a sign of Christian unity and openness to human need. Eight years later on Easter, 1948, seven men, all sharing Schutz's vision, took life vows and became the nucleus of a monastic fellowship which has exerted a worldwide influence. In oneness of purpose they sought an answer to Brother Robert's original question, "How to break with the individualistic tradition, to make use of the immense possibilities which are liberated when people work together and live in a community?"

Stressing a down-to-earth activism undergirded by a discipline of worship and prayer, Taize has been a mecca for thousands of pilgrims, especially questing students. Schutz once said that he would travel anywhere to proclaim his confidence in what young people are capable of doing. "We have no method, no system. We have one passion: helping them to live creatively with the gifts they possess."

Appropriating its liturgy from the traditions of all branches of Christendom, Taize refuses to dichotomize prayer and action. As one of its leaders explained: "If you dedicate yourself only to activities you are easily submerged by them and you lose the fundamental inspiration and energy... on the other hand the same thing is true for those who lose themselves in contemplation and close their eyes to the suffering around them. The two dimensions keep each other in equilibrium." Soren Kierkegaard perceptively wrote: "Protestantism always needs the monastery... like a lighthouse to gauge where we are." That is the function Taize fulfills.

From this lighthouse on a Burgundy hillside come the following guidelines for personal soul-renewal—Ed.

The Call of God to Retreat

In order that, during your day, labor and rest may be quickened by the Word of God:

Constantly preserve interior silence in order to live in Christ;

Steep yourself in the spirit of the Beatitudes:

Joy — Simplicity — Mercy

God calls you to retreat. You are seeking God, but God has preceded you in your search. He has sought you before you began to seek Him. You heard His voice, and you came. In response to the call that was made to you, you have taken the first step towards making yourself available. You are here. Now is the time to offer yourself in complete submission.

In the very beginning, "unburden yourself and place all your cares upon God, for he cares for you." God knows everything: your physical and spiritual misery, your secret suffering, unacknowledged, your distresses. He understands them and he knows your needs. "He bears our sufferings and takes upon himself our sorrows." He will respond to your prayer; you will hear his voice if you listen faithfully in the silence and in recollection. Then abandon all your cares, your preoccupations, your personal problems. And say to yourself, "I have the time." Everyone complains of not having enough time. This is because everyone looks too much upon his life with human eyes. We always have the time to accomplish what God gives us to do. But it is necessary to be totally aware in all the moments that he gives us. "Have no care for tomorrow. Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness. Abandon yourself, give yourself, and there will be poured into your lap a good measure pressed down, shaken together, running over, for the measure you give will be the measure you get back."

Having detached your attention from yourself, focus it on the Lord Christ. He will enlighten you, for he is the light of the world. He calls you to oneness with himself, you who seek to discover his will by your attention, but who live in a kind of dualism, the source of interior conflict which makes you incapable by yourself of decisive commitment. He wants you to be one with him, for there is within you an adherence—secret but real—to the divine will, but it is in the deep parts of your being that God seeks you and finds you.

Finally, don't encumber yourself with preconceived ideas. Do not try to conduct your retreat according to your predetermined notions, and do not be irritated in not finding immediately and in detail that which you had hoped to discover. Be orderly, of course. Keep as closely as possible to the schedule that you set for yourself. But if this schedule is upset, if you are unable to pray at the time when you want to—to meditate as you had decided ahead of time to do—abandon yourself to the humor of God, and allow yourself to be directed by him.

Solitude and Silence

There are moments when the silence of God culminates in his creatures. In the solitude of retreat, the encounter of intimacy with Christ renews us.
(Rule of Taize)

The essential principle of retreat is contained in these two rules: 1) Retire to the solitude of your room, and 2) Constantly preserve interior silence in order to live in Christ. The true retreat is a solitude with God, in the silence.

In addressing his call to you, the Lord wishes to lead you apart into the solitude where he will speak to you. Thus has he done for many others besides you, before you. When God takes aside his servants, or Jesus his disciples, they are separated for the time being from the world, uprooted from the too secular design of their lives in order that they may be molded to true service, and reclothed with the Holy Spirit. His design for you is the same. He attracts you to himself, he leads you into the solitude where he nourishes you by his Word: your solitude is a gift of God. Take good care of it. For this desert where you are led is also the place of temptation and of battle. It is the Holy Spirit who led our Savior into the desert to be tempted by Satan. Let your solitude be union with God, and not some vainglorious solitude where you seek only personal satisfaction—where you only replenish your own spirit. In the difficult hours, when you find yourself ill disposed, bored, indifferent, do not be discouraged. For in the battle you wage, you are not alone. The one who saves from temptation, from sin, and from death battles with you. Have the acute awareness of the presence of Christ in your room. You have called him. He has come. He is here. Find again, then, the one thing necessary, the good part which will not be taken away from you—the only thing which endures in the Kingdom of Heaven: to be at the feet of the Savior, to hear his word, to love him, to contemplate him, to adore him, to render thanks to him, to obey him.

There is true solitude only where God alone speaks. You cannot be quiet and hear what people and the senses say to you. That is why, in retreat, solitude and silence are indissolubly bound together.

Exterior silence you will find here. You have come to a place of silence. And this is what God wishes for you. For what have you come here to seek? Is it contact with people? You will find enough of that outside, in the days of vacation

or of rest. It might seem natural to exchange some words with your neighbor. But you have come to seek quite another thing: the help promised by God when he called you to retreat. And in order to hear his voice—whether it be in meditation on his Word, or in adoration and contemplation—solitude is necessary for you, in the silence. Certainly you have come from noise—from agitation—and you drop into a place of quiet. The contrast runs the risk of seeming brutal, and you will then be tempted to flee from the retreat, to speak to this one and to that one, to break the silence which bothers you. Certainly, also, silence has no value in itself; it can be vain and without significance. There is the silence of the coward (Peter in the courtyard of the high priest); that of the traitor (Judas during the last supper). One can betray the cause of God by his silence, just as one betrays him by his words. Therefore, it is absolutely not a question of fleeing, but on the contrary, of ceasing from flight, ceasing from putting words and things between oneself and the living God.

Be then thankful for and respectful of the exterior silence which is given you here by God, who offers in the interior silence the grace by which the exterior silence will not be heavy for you but will, on the contrary, afford all its worth.

Interior silence demands at first forgetfulness of care, the quieting of discordant voices, and the subduing of tormenting care—in the continual beginning anew of a person who is never discouraged because always pardoned. It makes possible our conversation with Jesus Christ. (Rule of Taize)

Interior silence is the soul recollected in God, in the presence of Christ. It is a silence so full of God that only the things which are true and according to the will of God are imposed upon you, so that you realize that many thoughts that you cherish come from yourself and not from God—that many things have to be burned to ashes in order that you can rise up the new man.

To speak little to creatures and much to God. Silence to the world—silence to news—silence in the community of saints.

Silence in work—in movements. Silence of the whole exterior being, preparatory to listening to God. Exterior silence, symbol of the interior silence without which there is no spiritual life.

Silence of the imagination. Silence of the emotions, of sadness, of the vain noise of thoughts.

Silence of the memory. Silence of the past, the vain regrets, the bitterness. Remember only the mercy of God.

Silence of the heart. Silence of desires, silence of antipathies, silence of love insofar as it is exciting.

Silence of self-love. Silence of the view of one's sin, one's incapacity. Silence of praises. Silence of my human self.

Silence of spirit. Silence of useless thoughts; silence of the subtle reasonings which enfeeble the will and wither love. Silence of personal examination.

Silence of judgment. Silence as to persons. Do not judge.

Silence of the will. Silence of the anguish of the heart, the sadness of the soul. Relinquishment.

Silence of oneself. Don't listen. Don't complain. Don't console. Silence yourself, forget yourself, separate yourself from yourself.

Silence with God. Offer yourself to God, adore him, listen to him, rest in him. This is the silence of eternity. This is the union of the creature with God. And when, in the silence, God does not respond, this again is an effect of his love. He demands of you then the waiting of one who hopes because he loves. "It is good to await in silence the help of the Lord."

Meditation and Contemplation

In your life of prayer and meditation, seek the method that God sends you and put it immediately into practice. Read then a

little—but lingeringly.

(Rule of Taize)

Meditate on the Word of God as often as you are able to do so, for this should be at the center of your retreat. You have come to learn to read it, to reread it, to meditate on it with a renewed fidelity, to seek that which it commands you. *The Word of God is a gift to you. It gives life.* "All ye who thirst, come to the source of the waters. Lend your ears, and come to me. Listen and your soul shall hear."

The Word of God is received. "Today, if you hear my voice, do not harden your hearts."

The Word of God enlightens you. "Your Word is a lamp to my feet; a light to my path. The revelation of your Word enlightens."

The Word of God protects you from evil. "I lock up your Word in my heart in order not to sin against you."

The Word of God is loved and meditated upon. "Turn my eyes from the sight of vain things. Make me to live in your way."

The Word of God gives peace. "There is great peace for those who love thy law." "The law of the Lord is perfect, comforting to the soul."

In the silence of the retreat, the Word of God penetrates, nourishes and feeds the mind. Meditation is one of the essential acts demanded of him who places himself before God. It reads the Word to his heart, holds it there, as if attached by a continuing attention. One learns, as did the Virgin Mary, to keep and to ponder in one's heart the words received from God.

To meditate is to discern, to contemplate and to remember the truth of the Word of God. It is to say with the disciples of Emmaus: "Remain with us, Lord." Meditation requires time, silence, tranquility—rest of the body, of limbs, then of heart and mind. Meditation is not an intellectual act; it is a seed that should increase in its time, in the silence, the peace of the spirit. Indeed, if the intelligence is submitted to God, it no longer directs itself; it is integrated with the mind of God; it becomes enlightened under the action of the Holy Spirit. Meditation rules the natural instincts, the disturbed sensations, the sympathy and antipathy, the human relations. The natural intelligence takes then a value, a power, and a radiance that come from God. He gives it a creative power. In meditation the intelligence is fortified with new perceptions; it realizes that which results in the thought of God. To meditate, in short, is to be in the presence of God, confronting him alone. Then your meditation brings his instruction, his message, his will for you. "Teach me to do your will, for you are my God."

To meditate is not only to know, it is also to love. By meditation the love of Christ and for Christ becomes real in you. It is the center of your being. This love prevents you from falling back upon your own thoughts; it causes you to think of others, to pray for them. You should say with St. Paul: "It is not I who lives, it is Christ that lives in me." Meditation is the work of the Holy Spirit in you. If you do not resist the Holy Spirit, like the good ground in the parable you will bear much fruit—the fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Just as there is an intellectual way of reading the Word of God (dissecting, trying the weight of words, looking for contradictions), there is also a contemplative way which sees the Savior, his way of facing his Father, of facing people; and it is this way that helps you in your daily behavior, in your intimacy with God—to contemplate and to believe, to believe and to contemplate, to turn oneself toward the light, to let oneself be enlightened, then silent, motionless, to remain in his presence. "I love you, Lord, you who are my strength."

It is given to certain ones to be called to go up on the Mount

of Transfiguration, and to see Christ glorified. It is the Supreme vision of perfect sanctity. "Yes, it is the wish of my Father, that whoever sees the Son and believes in him has life eternal, and I shall raise him up at the last day." He who, in retreat, is called to contemplate his living Savior recognizes Christ as his only hope and brings his own dimness into the only eternal light in order that his darkness may be dispelled. The Transfiguration is to see the joy of sacrifice offered for the suffering and sinful world; it is the visible redemption of the world. "By your light we see the light." The disciple who is called to contemplate the perfect Light is at first abased, cast to the ground, then enlightened. He remains then, before Christ, seeing only him, his open hands pleading for glory. He asks that the glory of God descend upon him and cover him. He who prays on the Mount of Transfiguration bears with him before the glorified Christ the sinners, the suffering, the tempted, the anxious, the desperate—because the sullied world and all of creation must be recreated in the divine mystery of the Transfiguration in order that all those who are saved may be used for the praise and glory of God.

Praise and Intercession

In the course of the retreat, your praise and intercession are expressed in the common prayer (the services), and in personal prayer.

tercede is a favor and an honor. We are collaborators with God, declares the Apostle Paul. To intercede is to join the ranks of those who cry to him day and night. Intercession forms a bond which unites the community in Christ. Perseverance in intercession is possible because the Spirit himself intercedes for us. Christ lives always in intercession for us.

Do not neglect then to join with the community "to praise, to bless and to sing to Christ your Lord," for the Christian prayer is the prayer of Jesus Christ. Pray for the Church, the Body of Christ, directed by the Holy Spirit; pray for the community. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Consider the service, the sacrifice of praise and intercession that you owe to your Lord in acknowledgement and obedience.

The corporate prayer does not relieve us from personal prayer. One sustains the other. Each day let us take a time to renew ourselves in our intimacy with Jesus Christ. (Rule of Taizé)

God communicates his Spirit with those who pray, so that they become "living souls." Those who abandon prayer, this breathing of the soul, die asphyxiated. Account will be required of us concerning our life of prayer as a talent which has been entrusted to us and that we must indeed deserve. Not to deserve this talent is to be submerged in laziness, in indifference, or in activism.

The practice of silence is the discipline par excellence of

Everyone complains of not having enough time. This is because everyone looks too much upon his life with human eyes. We always have the time to accomplish what God gives us to do.

The prayer of the service has its place in the communion of the saints. But to realize this communion with the faithful of all time, we must devote ourselves to ardent intercession for the men of the Church. The Lord can do without our intercession and praise. Nevertheless, it is the secret of God how he requires us, his collaborators, always to pray, without ceasing.

(Rule of Taizé)

The morning office prepares us to hear the voice of God. It opens the way for our daily obedience.

The noon office is to recall us, those of us who are in danger of letting ourselves be carried away by daily preoccupations, so that for the Church, to live is to live in Christ in the joy of the Kingdom which comes.

The evening office establishes God in the silence of the night. It gives to rest its true worth. To him who submits body and soul to the Creator, the nocturnal hours bring the renewal which makes a rebirth of awakening.

Be present for all these offices. They are the festival hours of the day. It is a time of joy when God enters into dialogue with the Church gathered together before him. He reveals to it the mystery of his grace through the Scripture, and the Church speaks to him in placing at his feet the offering of praises drawn from his Word. The community prays the Psalms at each office and models its prayer on them. Each day the community is reminded of the biblical revelation in its entirety. It listens to the reading of the Old and the New Testament.

It is not necessary to seek a solution to this or that personal problem. Contemplate rather the greatness and bounty of God, his eternal plan for all people; praise your Savior and open yourself to his Word so that it bears fruit in you. Relate yourself, moreover, to the community, in its acts of obedience to the Word. "Pray for one another." The brother who directs intercession is sustained by the prayer for all, for it is in the name of the whole community that he presents the subjects for intercession gathered together before the service. To in-

those who desire to penetrate the sanctuary of prayer. The feeling of "unreality" which obsesses the novice in prayer is due to the fact that he is engaged in a monologue and not in a conversation. For the goal of prayer is not only to express the most profound aspiration of the soul, but to know that God is there. So always begin your prayer by an earnest attention to the presence of God. Then pray this prayer: "Lord, teach us to pray. Who will teach us to pray if not Thou, oh God of prayer. To pray as though seeing Thee, speaking to Thee, listening to Thee, replying to Thee, as though being aware of Thy presence, listening to Thy Word."

Harassed and disturbed people like us do not know how to await the prayer that Christ wishes to formulate in us—that he wishes to pray through us. It is only as we learn to wait patiently in the silence that our prayer ceases to be a long and discouraging monologue, a vain repetition. Between us and the riches of God there is nothing. Between us and the eternal realities there is no barrier—only this silent space where our prayer advances to receive the Spirit who will transform the life. One should pray with a spirit neither troubled nor overwhelmed; not hesitant, defiant, divided, nor forestalling the will of God by some secret passion. It is necessary neither to make effort nor to bind up one's spirit. It is the Spirit of God whom we have known how to await in the silence who prays in us—for God is so great that one is able to pray to him only by his Spirit. The Holy Spirit teaches us to pray. He restores the soul, guides it, illuminates its vision, reveals to it the depth of the infinite riches of the love of Christ. In the depths of our being he intercedes with inexpressible sighs. It is he who causes us to say to God, "Our Father."

He who prays recollects his soul before God, and this single desire, this effort, prepares for total renunciation; for only he who has a single desire is able to renounce all. He sees his desires—those selfsame desires which he had dared to put into words—blotted out one after the other. He no longer speaks

to God, but prayer becomes the act by which he listens to the Word. It is a silence full of obedience and adoration. Thus, he is ready to throw himself into the struggle with God and to triumph, for the man who prays truly battles in prayer, and triumphs because God triumphs in him.

Do not forget that you are not kneeling alone, but that all Christianity is at your side. A man is united with God only when he is united with his brothers. The Christian who prays is no longer able to be withdrawn. When Christ taught us to say "Our Father," it was with the feeling of human solidarity. No man can consider himself alone before God. In intercession, this feeling of solidarity is expressed—to pray for close relatives, for those who travel along with us, to carry them off, to place them standing in the light of God. On the road where God penetrates souls, we advance also. We no longer see with the eyes of the flesh which understand only the flesh. We perceive in spirit and in truth. The secret of the radiance of the Church is in silent and constant intercession—abandonment to the grace of God which reveals to us simultaneously our sin and his love. He thus keeps us from pride and discouragement. He who intercedes receives again the grace of loving. For one cannot pray for another person without putting oneself in that person's place; one lives with him, from his point of view; one shares his fears; one thrills with his hopes. The prayer of intercession draws us nearer to our neighbor than any other thing. To pray for others is to cause to shine upon their countenances the light of God. It is to understand them and to love them.

Nevertheless, this does not mean that you should be distressed if you are not able to voice long prayers to God. Pray very often. Short and frequent prayers are generally preferable to longer prayers which run the risk of becoming dangerously intellectual. But if the Lord grants you to pray at length with fervor, yield to him joyously with gratitude.

And because, at the feet of the Lord we have chosen the best part, let us abandon ourselves to the living Word of God, there to plumb the most secret depths of our being in order to be in control not only of our spirit but also of our body. Christ, the Word made flesh, gives himself to us visibly in the sacrament. Nourish yourself at the feast, with thanksgiving—at the consecrated Lord's Supper—and do not forget that it is offered for the infirmities of the people of God. It is there for you who are always weak and infirm.

(Rule of Taizé)

The Struggle of the Retreat

The retreat should be for you the opportunity to take your bearings in your life as a Christian. For this it is necessary to subject yourself to as complete an interior examination as possible, without fear of humiliation, but with the firm desire of attaining by the end of the retreat renewal of your spiritual life. In order to examine yourself with honesty and objectivity, you must ask yourself a certain number of questions which allow you to consider your Christian life from all its aspects.

The following questionnaire (to which it is not intended that reply be made simply by "yes" or "no") is to serve as a guide to aid you to maintain the objectivity necessary for your interior self-examination.

Who am I in relation to God?

1. Are there in me some serious questions—a profound uneasiness which destroys all communion with God?

2. Am I aware of the fact that if I take myself seriously I am not able to take Christ seriously? It is necessary that He increase and I decrease.

3. Have I a feeling of guilt that paralyzes me? Do I know how to see clearly into myself in the moments set aside for this purpose?

4. Do I live under the pardon—under the mercy—of God?

5. Does my Christian life show forth the joy of security?

6. Knowing that the demons love deviousness, do I increasingly simplify everything in my innermost being and also in my daily life?

7. Am I aware of the fact that the older I grow the stronger should joy and Christian freedom be in me?

8. What am I doing *today* to make relevant in my life the Gospel in its freshness?

9. Am I forewarned of the temptation of minimizing in my life the demands of the Gospel (the real Christian life at its minimum)? In order to think straight, let me ask myself: have I secularized my Christian life to the point that I find myself blushing on certain occasions because of my calling as a Christian?

Who is my neighbor?

1. If I live under the mercy and pardon of God, do I give my neighbor the benefit of this reality? "Forgive us as we forgive others."

2. Do I live in a sealed chamber, with a set of secular associates (family circle or circle of friends), or within a selected set of Christian associates? (Take note: there can be a Christian ghetto.)

3. Am I informed concerning the present condition of the world? What am I doing about it? (Reading, sociological information, etc.)

4. Do I so live in the fear of the peril which menaces mankind—war, ideologies, etc.—that I am no longer able to trust myself to the Lordship of Christ in the world?

5. In my quest for the unity of Christians, do I respect certain fixed spiritual demands without which my search might become vain or hypocritical?

6. In the pursuit of my Christian vocation, do I trust *primarily* to the Lord those whom he has entrusted to me, or do I seek *first* a solution with human means?

7. Does my natural timidity—or its opposite, the absence of spiritual perception—afford an excuse for remaining in a state of worldly relationship with my neighbor?

8. Am I alert to break in myself all authoritativeness, yet living without lack of power to sustain those entrusted to me under the plan of God—not forgetting the demands to be imposed, and restoring confidence on every occasion to the weak?

9. Am I consistent according to the commandment of love in fortifying myself with mercy and in asking it of Christ as the most essential gift for my vocation as a Christian?

Your interior examination runs the risk of not "coming off" in solitude, especially if you have scarcely ever before this time had an opportunity to practice it. It has brought to the surface, it has put in full light a wound, a thorn in your flesh, that you have always tried to conceal from all eyes, beginning with your own. And this rediscovery is unbearable for you. If an interior hindrance weighs on you—if you feel the load of a grievous burden which makes you heavy, which raises a screen between you and the light which ought to shine on you and penetrate you with joy—you should be relieved of it. And perhaps it is here that the temptation begins—the temptation to flee, to escape, to refuse to see that this grievous burden is sin. Silence then is unbearable; it is not the silence in which God speaks, but in which he says nothing and in which the discordant voices of the world, of sin, and of the devil are all powerful. But it is important that you do not remain prisoner of your own thoughts, of your own sins. The retreat should deliver you from yourself and permit you to escape yourself—to seek a new way.

Call upon the minister of the Church; he is one of the persons who is charged with listening and keeping secret that

which he has heard. He shares your difficulties, your suffering, and carries them to Christ in intercession. Be then that which you are before God, with all your misery and all your hopes. Submit the problems posed by your intimate life. Humble yourself, allow yourself to be led.

Discharge yourself of your burden; avail yourself of the services of your minister as your confessor. Confession is an integral part of retreat; it is more than an opening of oneself. For he who hears you represents all the Church that you injure—that you endanger—by your sin. To the Apostles the Lord promised to loose him whom the Church loosed. Confessions are the seeking after absolution, the assurance of the pardon of God which does not come from self. Forgiveness is the concrete sign of the pardon of God. It is a grace that only the Lord himself gives. It permits you to receive fully the mercy of God. By it you are cleansed, pure, joyful. It recalls to mind your baptism. Thus healed and renewed you are able in complete freedom to discover again, in the communion of the Church, the will of God for you.

The Call to the Service of God

The plan of God in calling you to retreat is to consecrate you in his service in renewed obedience. It was in retreat that Elijah, who despairingly believed himself to be alone in serving God, heard God say: "I have kept for myself in Israel seven thousand men—all who have not bowed the knee before Baal and whose lips have not kissed him." It was in retreat that the Lord said to him: "Go, take again the road to Damascus. You shall anoint Hazael and Jehu as kings. You shall anoint Elisha as prophet in your place."

God himself sets in order the work of his servants. Zeal without knowledge often appears very disastrous. The more fervent the zeal, the more vehement the inspiration, the more overflowing the love—the more necessary is a watchful knowledge which controls the zeal, tempers the inspiration, directs the love.

Service has been directed in the Church—to some the ministry of the apostles, to others that of prophets. It is important that you be bound one to the other in love and in the unity of the Body of Christ—that which can be produced only if the service has been directed by God. For if each is allowed to be carried away by his own enthusiasm, according to the inspiration he has received, and if each follows haphazardly in accordance with his personal desires his own enthusiasm, he does not go forward according to the will of God for the entire community. If anyone is not content with the function that is assigned to him, but attempts any sort of enterprise without discretion, there will then be not unity but rather confusion. The calling is not a spontaneous spouting forth of our better "me," but an initiative which comes from beyond and above. It is God who calls, and he alone. God models the man before making the man's tool. God leaves to those whom he selects only their absolute poverty in order to enrich them by his grace and to invest them with the power of His Spirit. The calling is to obedience without reservation—not an approval of our whims, of our natural enthusiasms, of our abundant ambitions, or our elevated aspirations. Let us recall how Jesus announced to Peter that his obedience would lead him where

he would not want to go. Let us recollect how Paul was led by the Spirit.

You cannot pretend to exercise this function of knowledge, of discernment, by yourself. If you tried, you would most certainly be swept along by your subjectivity. It is the Church which, through her ministers, sets in order her ministry. To know the will of God for you, it is necessary for you to entrust yourself to a minister of the Church. He will be able to distinguish in you that which is truly the call of God to his service from that which grows out of your subjectivity.

Thus, in retreat, after having learned the joy of the community life in adoration and prayer, you will realize that he who goes apart to listen to God receives love for his brothers and is ready to work with them in a common mission where each has his place established by God.

The Return

In retreat, God speaks to you; through his Word his truth has enlightened you, his love has enveloped you, and the road of obedience has opened before you. You are going to leave the silence and peace of this time set apart, and find yourself again in the world of today, in the difficulties of your daily life with its problems and its struggles.

Watch carefully over your own soul all the days of your life in order that you do not forget the things that your eyes have seen. Now it is necessary to go forward; to proceed in the light you have received; to reach to that which you can only catch a glimpse of—and even to that which you do not yet imagine. "To him who has it shall be given, and given in abundance." This is the law of progress in every domain, and particularly in the Kingdom of God. To proceed, to put into practice, to adapt what one has received—this is the only way of possessing it. The Christian life is never static, but always active service, a progression.

From the light which has been lavished upon you, seek that which remains of it in your heart; do not get caught up by one idea, by one memory, but learn to open your heart, to love better, and let the graces received burst forth in work more humbly, more simply accepted in Jesus Christ. Then that which formerly was great in your eyes will become small, that which was small will become great; everything will recover its true value, and Christ will truly be the radiating center of your life. Thus you will be able to be simply and faithfully a witness and to carry the message of grace to the place where God calls you, to live so that his love radiates around you, his joy illumines your home, and his peace comforts the suffering hearts that are entrusted to you.

You have become aware of your calling. The calling makes of you an instrument of God. It puts you under his discipline. It takes you in dependence and total obedience. It renders you powerless by yourself, but it makes you a sharer in the power of God and in his action in the world. It tears you away from yourself and your human place; it records your name in the design of God. It constrains you to live by faith and to depend on the power of God.

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." We have with us Christ, the Living Word, Christ who has said to us, "I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

BOOK REVIEWS

Beyond Fundamentalism

by James Barr (Westminster Press, 1984, 1985 pp., \$9.95). Reviewed by Clark H. Pinnock, professor of theology, McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ontario.

Besides being a world-class semitic scholar,

James Barr is a tireless critic of fundamentalism. Having been one himself once, given his generous definition of who a fundamentalist is, he is eager to persuade people to move beyond it. The problem as always is *how far* beyond fundamentalism does he want us to move? What theological truths does he

want us to confess if any? After all, the area "beyond fundamentalism" includes everything from unitarianism to evangelicalism. I'll bet ninety percent of TSF members want to move beyond fundamentalism and have been working at this for years. But where exactly does he want us to move to?